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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District



**COMMUNITY BLOOD
SERVICES OF ILLINOIS**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Take Part in National Minority Donor Awareness Week

Local Agencies to Combine Efforts to Raise Awareness

Champaign, IL – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD), Life Goes On, Be The Match® and Community Blood Services of Illinois will come together on Monday, August 4, 2014 in an effort to reach out to community members for National Minority Donor Awareness Week. Representatives from the Secretary of State and Be The Match® will be at CUPHD, 201 W. Kenyon Road, Champaign, in the main lobby from 1:00-4:00 PM for anyone wishing to sign up for the organ and tissue registry as well as joining the marrow registry for those 18-44 years old. Community Blood Services of Illinois will also have the bloodmobile available for anyone wishing to donate blood.

National Minority Donor Awareness Week is August 1-7, 2014. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, minorities make up 57 percent of those currently on the organ donation waiting list. In 2012, 11,309 minority patients nationwide received organ transplants; there were 2,762 minority deceased donors and 1,711 minority living donors. While people of all ages and ethnicities can save and enhance lives through donation, organs are matched to recipients by a variety of factors, such as blood and tissue type, which can vary by race and ethnicity. Skin color is not a barrier when it comes to organ donations and transplant; however, the odds of a transplant being successful are much greater when a minority recipient receives an organ from a minority donor.

Although most ethnic groups donate in proportion to their percent of the U.S. population, the need for transplants in some groups is disproportionately high. Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic and African American populations are more likely than someone who is Caucasian to suffer from end-stage renal (kidney) disease, often as a result of high blood pressure, diabetes and other conditions that can damage the kidneys. This leads to an increased need for kidney transplants.

Of the marrow's 12 million people, only 7 percent are African American. An African American patient will only find their match 66 percent of the time whereas a Caucasian person will find their match 93 percent of the time. Bone marrow and stem cells can be used to cure diseases such as sickle cell anemia and leukemia.

For more information, visit www.bethematch.org or to register to be an organ and tissue donor, go to www.lifegoeson.com or call (217) 782-6258.

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