

Dell Seton Comprehensive Abdominal Organ Transplant Program

When Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas at Austin opened in 2017, 79% of Austin residents in need of a kidney transplant had to leave Austin and travel more than 70 miles on congested Texas highways for transplant surgery and for all of the required pre- and post-op visits.

For the nearly 70% of Dell Seton patients who are un- or under-insured, this travel presents an often insurmountable barrier to care.

This, coupled with the rapid growth of Central Texas, has demanded that we accelerate our investments in technology, patient care sites, and medical talent to keep us at the leading edge of exceptional care and to ensure we meet the needs of the more than 72,000 Texans living with end-stage kidney disease.

In November 2021, we launched our Comprehensive Abdominal Organ Transplant Program to further the world-class care we can provide to Central Texans. Dell Seton has constructed and equipped a 15-bed unit, as well as a new 10,000-square-foot Transplant Clinic, which provides easy access to Central Texans in need of this life-saving care.

Our first kidney transplant surgery successfully took place in February 2022, pancreas transplants began soon after, and liver transplant services are expected to

begin in the summer of 2025.

In 2022, only 43% of patients in need of a transplant left Austin for care.

To meet the needs of our community members who need abdominal transplant services, the Comprehensive Abdominal Organ Transplant Program has identified the following funding priorities:

- Establish a comprehensive abdominal transplantation service line with the addition of liver transplants.
- Provide patient support for post-transplant immunosuppressive medications.
- Conduct transplant research focused on increasing access to transplantation through innovative, high-impact programs.



Our vision is to deliver excellent outcomes and patient experience from transplant evaluation to post-transplant care.

To learn more, visit: supportseton.org/futureofcare or contact Byron Webre by calling 512-324-7794 or emailing bwebre@ascension.org

Victoria's Story

Just two days after the Abdominal Transplant Center completed its first kidney transplant, Ascension Seton Associate, Victoria, was on the operating room table for her left kidney retrieval.

Victoria was the first altruistic kidney donor at the Abdominal Transplant Center.

Victoria didn't know anyone with kidney disease, but her passion for helping people led her to research the idea of organ donation. Her selfless act ultimately was a gift of life for someone else—someone she didn't even know.

“Knowing that I’m physically fit and fortunate to have good health made me think of what I can do to help someone who is not as fortunate. Then it became a question of ‘why wouldn’t I do it?’” says Victoria. “It’s in my nature to help people and this is another way of giving back. I would encourage anyone who is thinking about being a living organ donor to do it.”

Following Victoria's left kidney retrieval, her kidney was flown to New York where it has saved more than one life. Victoria's kidney was the first in a chain of at least four kidney donations. The mother of Victoria's recipient donated one of her kidneys, which went to save the life of someone in Baltimore, and so on down the chain.

Victoria and her recipient met up in New York in February 2023 to celebrate their one-year “kidneyversary!”

“It’s great to be part of something that is bigger than me and my kidney. If I had another spare to give away, I’d do it all over again. I hope my story inspires others to become living kidney donors.” - Victoria



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