

Social media not greatly affecting organ donation registration

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STAFF REPORTS

Social media can play a part in health education, but a Purdue health communication expert said it shouldn't be a substitute.

In a recent Purdue news release, professor of health communication Susan Morgan said it's admirable that Facebook has included an organ donation status, but it's not a cure-all.

"It looks easy compared to rounding up volunteers of grassroots communication efforts," Morgan said. "But if social media were that powerful we would see more changes and a greater increase in donor registrations."

Facebook's feature allows users to "Share Your Organ Donor" status, which also connects users to online organ registration resources. There hasn't been an impact on registration numbers since the feature came out.

"Facebook is powerful, and it is great to see the focus on registering to be an organ donor, but how does posting lead to action?" Morgan asked. "Its reach to millions of Americans is appealing, but we need to remember change is on a more personal and individual level."

She said getting the word out about health and social issues through social media is a good start, but now, health communicators and educators need to focus on how to motivate people to act.

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