



**For Immediate Release**

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**Cornea Transplants in United States Increase 1.85% in First Half of 2017**

**WASHINGTON D.C. (August 28, 2017)** - The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) reports that cornea transplants in the United States increased by 1.85% during the first six months of 2017 over the corresponding period in 2016. Observers had anticipated a possible reduction in the number of transplants due to alternative therapies for corneal diseases. Data reported by EBAA member eye banks indicates that these predictions were premature.

EBAA represents 100% of the eye banks in the United States. Since its inception in 1961, EBAA has collected information on the number and types of transplants performed by its members, as well as other statistical data. This report includes data from eye banks accounting for 87% of the corneas transplanted in the U.S. last year.

Cornea donation differs from organ donation in significant ways; corneas can be recovered up to 24 hours after the donor has died, and can be kept viable for up to fourteen days after recovery. As a result, there are no waiting lists for cornea transplants. After meeting the needs of patients within the United States, EBAA member eye banks provided over 26,000 corneas in 2016 to patients in other countries, where shortages are common. Corneas that are determined to be medically unsuitable for transplant are provided for research seeking cures for ocular diseases or for education and training purposes.

	January - June 2016	January - June 2017	Difference
Corneas Recovered	58,785	59,703	1.56%
U.S. Transplants	21,458	21,855	1.85%
International Transplants	11,172	11,214	0.38%
Research & Education	11,147	11,507	3.23%

“Facilitating the gift of sight from donor to recipient is incredibly gratifying. I am very pleased that EBAA member banks have increased the number of people we served thus far in 2017”, said Kevin Corcoran, EBAA President and CEO. “We remain committed to supporting research that can bring sight to more

people, but human-donated corneas remain the only solution when conventional treatments are ineffective.”

Because corneas are so readily used for transplant, research or education purposes; almost everyone can help restore sight to those with vision impairment or blindness. To register to be a donor, please visit [restoresight.org/register](http://restoresight.org/register)

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### **About the Eye Bank Association of America**

*The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), established in 1961, is the oldest transplant association in the nation and sets standards, provides education, and engages in advocacy to support eye donation, and cornea transplantation and research. EBAA has led the transplantation field with the establishment of medical standards for eye banking, and comprehensive training and certification programs for eye bank personnel. Over 90 member eye banks operate in the United States, Canada, and Asia. These eye banks made possible 75,938 sight-restoring corneal transplants in 2016. To learn more, visit [www.restoresight.org](http://www.restoresight.org).*

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