

## Rationing Transplants: An Ethical Problem

You are a member of a surgical team in a leading U.S. hospital. Recently your hospital received an organ donation from the family of an accident victim. There are three eligible transplant candidates and your team must decide which patient will receive the liver transplant using marginal analysis.

### Potential Liver Transplant Recipients

1. A 45-year-old former pro-football player with a wife and children has been awaiting a liver transplant for 6 months. His health insurance will cover the cost of the operation.
  2. A 30-year-old female working as a sales representative for the regional telephone company has been awaiting a liver transplant for 25 months. She has no family. She plans to marry as soon as her health improves as a result of the liver transplant. Her health insurance will cover the costs of the operation.
  3. A 40-year-old Canadian male construction worker with a wife and five children has been awaiting a liver transplant for 18 months. Until recently, he provided most of the family's income. Now his wife works at part-time jobs to earn the family income. His insurance would cover about one-half of the costs of the operation and post-operative medical care.
4. Analyze your results, which recipient will receive the liver transplant? Explain your decision, including the justifications for this decision.
5. Did your group violate the concept of thinking at the margin? Explain.