

Kaiser Permanente

Contributed by Administrator

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Kaiser Permanente has agreed to pay a \$2 Million fine and give \$3 million to an organ donor program due to mismanagement of a kidney transplant center.

The State of California's Department of managed Health Care has imposed the largest fine in its five-year history against Kaiser Permanente.

The nation's largest health maintenance organization will pay \$2 million and give an additional \$3 million to an organ donor program due to mismanagement of a kidney transplant center. The Northern California kidney transplant program was suspended in May by Kaiser due to regulatory pressure and patient lawsuits.

In 2004, Kaiser had ordered nearly 1,500 kidney patients to transfer from University of California hospitals to Kaiser's new transplant center. However, Kaiser failed to discuss the transfer with regulators. That failure caused the delay of procedures for several patients.

In 2005, only 56 kidney transplants were performed at Kaiser's San Francisco center. During that same period of time, approximately twice the number of people died while waiting for a kidney. Other California transplant facilities reported that greater than twice as many people received kidneys as died while waiting.

Lucinda Ehnes, Director of the Department of Managed Care, indicated that Kaiser's administrative oversight was inadequate and lacked the number of personnel to accomplish the transfers. In addition, Kaiser failed to provide timely access to specialists.

Kevin Donohue, a deputy director at Kaiser, stated that there were no "strict indications" that any patients died as a result of the specified problems.