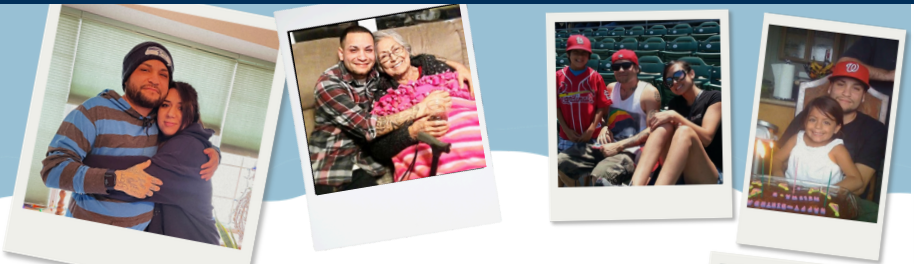


PATRICK NAVARRO

1984-2026

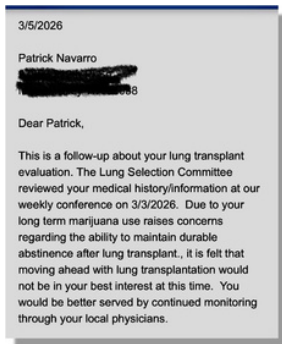
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Patrick was a husband, father, brother, and survivor. The circumstances surrounding his death underscore the urgent need for federal reform to ensure that no patient is treated as less worthy of life-saving care because of their need for cannabis medicines.

The final months of medical cannabis patient Patrick Navarro's life, and the ordeal his family endured, were the catalyst for ASA's ***Stigma with a Body Count: Medical Cannabis & Organ Transplant Policies***. The report documents a problem that remains hidden until a family in crisis brings to light the discrimination in organ transplantation programs. **The Navarro family showed that access to life-saving treatments for medical cannabis patients is still shaped by stigma rather than medical evidence.**

Patrick, a transplant survivor, was hospitalized at UCSF with acute lung failure. Like many patients with complex chronic illness, he used medical cannabis to manage severe neuropathic pain related to diabetes. As Patrick's condition worsened, his family was told that because of his medical cannabis use, he would need to demonstrate six months of abstinence before he could be considered for the lung transplant list. Patrick did not have six months.



Two months later, Patrick received written notice that UCSF had declined him for lung transplantation. The reason was explicit: ***“long-term marijuana use raises concerns regarding the ability to maintain durable abstinence after lung transplant.”*** At the moment he most needed individualized, evidence-based care, his access to life-saving treatment appeared to be decided based on a view that medical cannabis was a sign of substance abuse rather than as part of his clinical reality.

Devastated, Patrick's wife, Cindy, reached out to Americans for Safe Access, shedding light on an issue that many thought had been resolved in 2015, when California passed a law intended to prevent this kind of discrimination. Patrick's experience revealed both a broader structural problem and a serious educational gap at the transplant program level.



The Navarro family not only had to confront the stigma and bias faced by patients like Patrick, but also live with the question of whether discrimination narrowed his chance to survive.

Today, Americans for Safe Access unveiled the Navarro Family Organ Transplant Resource Center in honor of Patrick, his wife Cindy, and his family. This resource serves as a hub for patients, caregivers, advocates, attorneys, and healthcare professionals seeking information and support on medical cannabis and organ transplantation. The Center provides educational materials, practical guidance, and policy resources to help families understand transplant program policies, identify potential discrimination, and tools to advocate for evidence-based care.



Navarro Family
Organ Transplant Resource Center
a project of Americans for Safe Access

www.SafeAccessNow.org/Transplant_Center

Without federal rights, patients will continue to experience discrimination.