

*Dear Transplant Nurse....*

*I am currently on the transplant list waiting for a new set of lungs. While I have not yet had my surgery, you may think I don't know what you do. Let me tell you...*

*YOU are the person that will have my best interest at heart, more so than my family, more so than me. You will be there to wipe my tears, my nose or anything else that needs wiping. You will use your gentle strength to push me into this new journey, one that I can only dream about yet fear the most. You will use every bit of your knowledge and skill to help me understand and accept what my body can do and what it must do, even though I'll be telling you, "I can't". You will see and hear me at my worst and you will turn the other cheek because you possess a dedication to heal the human spirit far greater than anyone I will come in contact with during my hospital stay. When I am ringing my "bell" for the hundredth time, you will be the one with a comforting smile, (although dead tired) to say "what can I do for you?" You will be the one I turn to when the doctor leaves my room and with drug crazed eyes I will mutter "what did he say?" You will be the person my family leans on, talks with and thinks they can help you do a better job if they're around 24/7. You will be the one to never see me again after recovery, but you will be the one I will talk about and remember until the day I die. So you see, I do have an idea of what WE will be going through and if I forget to say it, and dear God I hope I don't....thank you from the bottom of my heart for getting me back into the game of life. Stand up and take your recognition, you will never be forgotten.*

*Respectfully,*

*Debbie Ray*

Double lung transplant list as of 10/06  
UMC, Tucson AZ

Update 10/4/08 from Debbie....

Dear Mr. Gleason, thank you for the wonderful feedback on this project. So happy to know it was a complete and utter success. Since my writing of Sept. 5, I have had my double lung transplant (9/18/08) just the day before my birthday...TOP THAT! Those nurses have a special place in heaven, what they are able to do is nothing less than a miracle. The world is a far better place with them as the main caregiver. I felt privileged to be part of your letter project, thank you.

Sincerely;

Debora (Debbie) Ray  
UMC, Tucson AZ