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Ethical challenges in organ donation

Salil Jain

Fortis Memorial Research Institute, India

In developing nations like India non communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension and chronic kidney disease are now assuming epidemic proportions. As renal transplant is the best option for a patient of end stage renal disease the need for organs is ever increasing. To streamline organ donation and curb unethical practices, the Govt. of India enacted the "Transplantation of human organ act" in 1994. This accepted brain death as a form of death and made sale of organs a punishable offence. Despite this act there have been constant reports of organ sale in India and the implementation of the law has left a lot to be desired. To overcome these legal and ethical issues various strategies have been devised.

1. Increasing the deceased donor pool by education, mandating of presumed consent, giving incentives or expanding the donor criteria
2. Increasing living donation by doing transplants across the blood group barrier, paired exchanges, accepting borderline diabetics as donors, incentives in financial and non-financial manner
3. Alternative organ sources like animal organs, artificial organs, stem cells and aborted fetuses

Biography

Salil Jain did his Medical Graduation and Post-graduation in Medicine from Mumbai University in 1995 and subsequently got trained as Nephrologist and Renal transplant physician. He also did a Fellowship in Adult Nephrology and Renal Transplantation from University of Toronto, Canada. His main interest is in field of renal transplantation and in last 15 years he has been involved in promoting deceased donor transplant, paired exchange transplant and ABO incompatible renal transplant. Presently he is working as senior consultant at Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurgaon, India.

drsaliijain@yahoo.co.in