

Joint Event on
3rd International Conference on
MEDICAL SCIENCES, HYPERTENSION AND HEALTHCARE
and
World Congress on
ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION AND ARTIFICIAL ORGANS
August 24-25, 2018 Tokyo, Japan

Trends in organ transplantation: Donors after Cardiac Death (DCD) in west Pomeranian in Poland

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Introduction: Over the last 50 years, organ transplantation has become a routine medical procedure, bringing immense benefits to hundreds of thousands of patients. In the last 20 years the use of human organs for transplantation constantly increased. It is currently the most cost-effective way of treatment of end-stage renal disease and the only available treatment for end-stage failure of organs such as the liver, lung and heart. The lack of enough transplanted organs is a fundamental limitation and problem facing transplantologists worldwide.

Aim: The aim of this study was to evaluate the knowledge and training needs of the medical staff of Intensive Care Units and Cardiology Intensive Care Units in terms of harvesting organs from donors after death due to irreversible cardiac arrest (DCD).

Material and Methods: The study involved 368 people from hospitals in West Pomeranian, Pomeranian and Lubusz voivodeships. The study was conducted from January 2013 to August 2015 among the medical staff in ICU and Cardiology Intensive Care Units. The questionnaire used for the survey consisted of 23 questions: 20 closed and 3 open questions.

Conclusions: The main factors in the activities related to the collection and donation of organs are, knowledge and qualifications of ICU workers. The attitude of the medical personnel to the idea of transplantation is extremely important. There is a psychologically difficult moment, when it comes to realize that the efforts of keeping the patient alive became futile and his death became a fact. Referring to the results of studies in other countries of the European Union, there is a general inquietude and immense difference in personal attitudes toward organ donation from patients after brain death versus DCD. Emphasis must be placed primarily on the transparency of procedures to avoid any possible confusion. It is necessary to conduct regular training to medical staff so it can feel properly qualified. It will substantially increase the comfort and affect the certainty in making decisions.

Biography

Edyta Skwirczynska is a Psycho-Oncologist and Psychologist at the Independent Public Clinical Hospital, working in General Surgery, Transplantation, Gastroenterology, Oncology and Gynecology departments. He is working as an Assistant Professor at the Pomeranian Medical University of Szczecin at the Department of History of Medicine and Medical Ethics.

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