

# Human Organ and Tissue Transplantation

*From the Eighth Plenary Meeting of the Fifty-Seventh World Health Assembly in Geneva*

**T**he Fifty-Seventh World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolutions WHA40.13, WHA42.5 and WHA44.25 on organ procurement and transplantation;

Having considered the report on human organ and tissue transplantation;

Noting the global increase in allogeneic transplantation of cells, tissues and organs;

Concerned by the growing insufficiency of available human material for transplantation to meet patient needs;

Aware of ethical and safety risks arising in the transplantation of allogeneic cells, tissues and organs, and the need for special attention to the risks of organ trafficking;

Recognizing that living xenogeneic cells, tissues or organs, and human bodily fluids, cells, tissues or organs that have had *ex vivo* contact with these living xenogeneic materials, have the potential to be used in human beings when suitable human material is not available;

Mindful of the risk associated with xenogeneic transplantation of the transmission of known or as yet unrecognized xenogeneic infectious agents from animals to human beings and from recipients of xenogeneic transplants to their contacts and the public at large;

Recognizing that transplantation encompasses not only medical but also legal and ethical aspects, and involves economic and psychological issues,

## Allogeneic Transplantation

1. URGES Member States:

- (1) to implement effective national oversight of procurement, processing and transplantation of human cells, tissues and organs, including ensuring accountability for human material for transplantation and its traceability;
- (2) to cooperate in the formulation of recommendations and guidelines to harmonize global practices in the procurement, processing and transplantation of human cells, tissues and organs, including development of minimum criteria for suitability of donors of tissues and cells;
- (3) to consider setting up ethics commissions to ensure the ethics of cell, tissue and organ transplantation;
- (4) to extend the use of living kidney donations when possible, in addition to donations from deceased donors;
- (5) to take measures to protect the poorest and vulnerable groups from "transplant tourism" and the sale of tissues and organs, including attention to the wider problem of international trafficking in human tissues and organs;

From the Eighth Plenary Meeting of the World Health Assembly, 22 May 2004, A57/VR/8. WHA57.18, agenda item 12.14.

Address correspondence to: Luc Noel, M.D., World Health Organization.  
E-mail: noell@who.int.

Copyright © 2004 by World Health Organization. Reproduced by permission.  
ISSN 0041-1337/04/7804-493

DOI: 10.1097/01.TP.0000137052.23326.E6

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to continue examining and collecting global data on the practices, safety, quality, efficacy and epidemiology of allogeneic transplantation and on ethical issues, including living donation, in order to update the Guiding Principles on Human Organ Transplantation (1);
- (2) to promote international cooperation so as to increase the access of citizens to these therapeutic procedures;
- (3) to provide, in response to requests from Member States, technical support for developing suitable transplantation of cells, tissues or organs, in particular by facilitating international cooperation;
- (4) to provide support for Member States in their endeavours to prevent organ trafficking, including drawing up guidelines to protect the poorest and most vulnerable groups from being victims of organ trafficking;

## Xenogeneic Transplantation

1. URGES Member States:

- (1) to allow xenogeneic transplantation only when effective national regulatory control and surveillance mechanisms overseen by national health authorities are in place;
- (2) to cooperate in the formulation of recommendations and guidelines to harmonize global practices, including protective measures in accordance with internationally accepted scientific standards to prevent the risk of potential secondary transmission of any xenogeneic infectious agent that could have infected recipients of xenogeneic transplants or contacts of recipients, especially across national borders;
- (3) to support international collaboration and coordination for the prevention and surveillance of infections resulting from xenogeneic transplantation;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to facilitate communication and international collaboration among health authorities in Member States on issues relating to xenogeneic transplantation;
- (2) to collect data globally for the evaluation of practices in xenogeneic transplantation;
- (3) to inform proactively Member States of infectious events of xenogeneic origin arising from xenogeneic transplantation;
- (4) to provide, in response to requests from Member States, technical support in strengthening capacity and expertise in the field of xenogeneic transplantation, including policy-making and oversight by national regulatory authorities;
- (5) to report at an appropriate time to the Health Assembly, through the Executive Board, on implementation of this resolution.

## REFERENCE

1. World Health Assembly. Document WHA44/1991/REC/1, Annex 6.