INDIAN TRANSPLANT NEWSLETTER Publication from MOHAN FOUNDATION

## Down Memory Lane

## India's First Multi-Organ Donation



## K. Ganapathy

Distinguished Professor Tamilnadu Dr MGR Medical University Emeritus Professor National Academy of Medical Sciences Former Secretary & Past President Neurological Society of India Past President, Telemedicine Society of India Director, Apollo Telemedicine Networking Foundation Apollo Telehealth Services

It was reassuring to read that organ donations and transplants are slowly inching towards the pre-pandemic levels in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu has always been in the forefront of health care. I recollect with nostalgia, the public reaction to an article published in The Hindu on Jan 21st 1996 [ref: Indian Transplant Newsletter Vol. II Issue No: 6 (June 2000)] where I had shared my emotional turmoil in facilitating South Asia's first multi-organ transplant after brain death certification. Several months earlier I had presented a paper at the annual conference of the Neurological Society of India at Kochi in December 1994 on viewing the critically ill head injured patient as an organ donor. The presentation and subsequent publication created a furore. Most neurosurgeons at that time opined that we should not take proactive measures in encouraging organ donation for fear of being branded as

'Organ procurers'. However, the response from the general public even then was encouraging. Serendipity or otherwise, I had retained a few of the dozens of letters which the editor of The Hindu had forwarded to me. It is difficult in 2022 to understand a world without email, a world where one had to write on a post card or inland letter or go to the post office and buy a stamp to applaud and send encomiums to the team which did India's first multi organ donation. These sample letters which have been preserved, speak for themselves. From 1996 to possibly 2002 or so, I would have certified at least a hundred brain deaths. This was all done pro bono 24/7. It is most heartening to see the outstanding work being done by the MOHAN Foundation and similar organisations pan India. We have a long way to go . These letters say it all even after 26 years.



The enormity of the task behind the whole episods was clear to me only when I was the article 'k gift of the 'by barn in the article' is a strict of the 'by barn in dated 211.1%. The asthor though a medical man has very vividly and meticulously described the professional and ethical skill and thought behind the successful carrying out of the Multiple Organ Transplant Operation. To say the least the entire article thrilled me. The way in which the learned author has projected the mean very operation and emission of the inclusion of the medical profession in the Consumer Protection Act. May God help the Octors.

The consciousness of the attending Doctor to obtain the independent consent of the wife of the brain-dead-patient in accordance with the Transplantation of the Human Organs Rules, 1995 keeping at bay the selfish interests of the medical profession is not only very telling and impressive but also shows the extensive care taken by the medical profession.

I canapathy as I do not know his address. I will be only too happy if you can convey my congratulations to Dr. K. Ganapathy for his lucid article and also my appreciation of the deep thought and insight which he has bestowed in his article.

With warm regards and wishing you & your team all the best,

(T.S. KRISHNAMOORTHY IYER

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