

Transplantation in Asia II - Update in Organ Transplantation in South Asia

Update in organ transplantation in Vietnam

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Organ transplantation in Vietnam began in 1992, with the first successful kidney transplant from related living donor. Since then, transplantation activities have been rapidly developed and expanded.

Number of transplant centers was increased remarkably, from 2 in 1992 to 23 in 2023, and they are located in all 3 regions. In the period from 1992-2012 we have performed only 934 organ transplantations. In the period from 2013-2022 the number of organ recipients reached 7297 (by the 31 Dec 2022).

Surgical techniques for organ removal from living donors have been improved: from open surgery to laparoscopic and recently robot-assisted surgery. Surgical techniques for recipients also improved: from kidney to non-kidney transplantation including liver, heart, lung, intestine, and limbs; from a single organ to multiple organs including kidney-pancreas, kidney-liver, kidney-heart, heart-lung. At the beginning the recipients had to move to centralized transplant centers for having the intervention, at present the organs are transported to recipients' hospitals for transplantation.

The most important step was the establishment of deceased donation program, since Vietnam National Coordinating Center for Human Organ Transplantation has been founded in 2013, accompanied by the Society for Organ Donation Promotion and the Vietnam Society of Transplantation since 2015. Many activities to promote deceased donation are conducted: training health staff and professionals about brain death and circulatory death, campaign in community using mass and social media, law amendments...

Our challenges are the lack of registry system on national scale, national or regional wait list, transparent allocation system to ensure the equitable access; shortage of medication, reagents, devices and consumables and interrupted supply; shortage of human resources with heterogenous level of competencies between health professionals at different health facilities; organizational centralization of services. The organ transportation still depends on commercial flights, deceased donation is progressing very slowly, organ shortage leads to illegal transplantation