

18 January, 2002

Ms. Doris Chan  
Clerk to Bills Committee  
Legislative Council  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
of the People's Republic of China

Dear Ms. Chan,

**RE: Bills Committee on Human Organ Transplant (Amendment) Bill 2001  
Meeting on 25 January, 2002**

We have concern about Section 5B. Transplants involving organs removed for a donor's therapy.

In recent years, a surgical technique has been developed to transplant a liver from a patient suffering from familial amyloid polyneuropathy to a patient waiting for liver transplantation. The patient with familial amyloid polyneuropathy suffers from nerve, kidney and heart damage because his liver produces an abnormal protein (mutated form of transthyretin) which is deposited in the nerves, kidney and heart. Removal of his liver will remove the source of the abnormal protein and replacement of a new liver will lead to recovery. His liver, which is normal in appearance and functions other than production of the abnormal protein, when being transplanted into another person, will not produce ill effect in the recipient until 30-40 years later. Therefore, livers from patients with familial amyloid polyneuropathy have been used for liver transplantation for those who are in urgent need of liver graft, e.g. patients with liver cancer. In essence, a patient with familial amyloid polyneuropathy receiving a liver graft from one person can donate his original liver for transplanting into another patient. This technique, called "domino liver transplantation", is now practised in many parts of the world and the result is excellent.

The proposed Section 5B, if passed, will make "domino transplantation" in Hong Kong impossible because the liver obtained from the patient with familial amyloid polyneuropathy has to be transplanted into a "specific" person who agrees to receive the liver and whose medical condition is considered by the transplant team to be appropriate to receive the liver graft. We strongly urge deletion of the phrase "not for transplanting it into any specific patient". Since transplanting a liver from a patient with familial amyloid polyneuropathy to another patient is similar to transplantation between genetically unrelated persons, the regulation pertaining to that of transplantation between genetically unrelated persons should apply to such situation.

Yours sincerely,

S.T. Fan  
Professor  
Sun C.Y. Chair of Hepatobiliary Surgery

STF/by