

立法會

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Panel on Health Services

Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 8 February 2010

Promotion of organ donation

Purpose

This paper gives an account of the past discussions by the Panel on Health Services (the Panel) on the promotion of organ donation.

Background

2. In his 2006-2007 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced the policy initiative to develop an organ donation computer database in consultation with relevant organisations to make it more convenient for prospective donors to voluntarily donate organs after their death, and for such a wish to be more reliably kept and retrieved by authorised persons, such as Transplant Co-ordinators of the Hospital Authority (HA).

Past discussions

3. At the meeting on 10 November 2008, the Panel was briefed by the Administration on its plan to launch a new campaign to further promote organ donation to tie in with the launching of the Centralised Organ Donation Register (CODR) by the Department of Health (DH) on 24 November 2008. Members noted that DH, in collaboration with HA and relevant non-governmental organisations (NGOs), would roll out the campaign with a series of promotional activities over the next 12 months in the community with a view to enhancing public acceptance of and promoting action for organ donation.

4. Members expressed concern that despite the efforts made by the Administration over the years to promote organ donation, the number of people willing to donate their organs after death was still on the low side. Hon Audrey EU asked whether the Administration had conducted any study to find out the characteristics of people willing to donate organs after death, as such information, if

available, would help to shed light on how the promotion campaign should be run to greater effect.

5. The Administration advised that organ donation was being gradually accepted by the community. A telephone interview conducted by DH in April 2007 revealed that about 70% of respondents were willing to donate their organs after death, as opposed to only 29% and 37% in 1992 and 1994, and that prospective donors tended to be younger, more educated, with females more than males. Based on these findings, the new promotion campaign on organ donation would focus on appealing to the working population, such as those working in private companies and NGOs, and university and secondary school students.

6. Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou suggested that to better promote organ donation, consideration should be given to instilling in youths that organ donation was a charitable life-saving act through civic education in schools; making the new promotion campaign more family-centred having regard to the importance of family's acceptance; disseminating organ donation message in hospitals/clinics; giving out inexpensive souvenirs to people registered to donate organs after death; and encouraging television stations to spread the organ donation message in their programmes.

7. Hon Andrew CHENG suggested that the Administration should collaborate with, say, NGOs, in making home visits to garner family's acceptance of organ donation, and publicising the long waiting list for transplant.

8. Hon Alan LEONG suggested rallying the support of social groups, such as university students, who had registered their wish to donate organs after death to promote organ donation amongst their peers, and launching a donor recognition scheme to honour the charitable act of organ donation.

9. The Administration pointed out that the new campaign to promote organ donation was aimed at reaching different sectors of the community. For instance, DH would collaborate with schools and educational institutions to organise exhibitions and seminars to enlist the support of students to further garner support for organ donation in the community; arrange for organ donation pamphlets to be distributed through utility bills in order to reach every household in the community and appeal to social leaders, including Members of the Legislative Council (LegCo), to express support for organ donation. Notwithstanding, the Administration welcomed all possible ideas of further promoting organ donation in the community.

Latest development

10. At the special meeting of the Panel on 16 October 2009 to receive a briefing from the Secretary for Food and Health on the 2009-2010 Policy Agenda, Members were advised, amongst others, that over 40 000 members of the public had registered on CODR as at 30 September 2009. The Hong Kong Medical Association was also seeking consent of the existing registrants of its Organ Donation Register to transfer

their data to CODR. The Administration would continue to step up the promotion of organ donation and CODR jointly with the relevant organisations.

Relevant papers

11. Members are invited to access LegCo's website (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>) for details of the relevant paper and minutes of the meeting.

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Legislative Council Secretariat
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