

8 THE DONOR OF TOMORROW: CHALLENGES POSED BY THE PANDEMIC, DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE, AND INCREASED TRANSPLANT REQUIREMENTS

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In the Corona pandemic, the importance of donor health for the supply of patients with high-quality transplants has once again become particularly apparent in the field of cornea donation.

And there are further challenges ahead: Due to new operation methods such as lamellar techniques an earlier stage of disease can be treated hence patients are being operated at younger ages. At the same time, with demographic change, potential donors are getting older.

Therefore, the demand for a high-quality transplant without pre-operations seems to be difficult to fulfil in the future. This is particularly important in the highly developed industrialised countries, where the indications for corneal transplantation are different and the expected quality characteristics are therefore other than in emerging or developing countries, for example. At the same time, the new surgical methods present the tissue banks with new tasks to meet the surgeons' demands.

In the DGFG network, the average age of corneal donors is currently 69.7 years while the requests for transplants with a high endothelial cell density (ECD) increase. The ECD continues to be one of the main criteria for a high-quality cornea and is more likely to be found in younger donors. As mentioned at the beginning, however, the average life expectancy in Germany is already currently around 80 years.

It seems that it is impossible to find the perfect donor of tomorrow. With the increase in the need for high-quality transplants, the question must be asked whether donor shortage is a home-grown problem in industrialised countries. What developments need to be initiated to counter the trend towards donor shortage? Could greater flexibility at the medical and/or regulatory level be a solution? The presentation aims to shed light on these and other questions and would like to discuss this with the experts.

9 SUPPLY OF NON-CLINICAL OCULAR TISSUE FROM A TISSUE AND EYE SERVICES RESEARCH TISSUE BANK

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Introduction NHS Blood and Transplant Tissue and Eye Services (TES) is a human multi-tissue, tissue bank supplying tissue for transplant to surgeons throughout the UK. In addition, TES provides a service to scientists, clinicians and tissue bankers by providing a range of non-clinical tissue for research, training and education purposes. A large proportion of the non-clinical tissues supplied is ocular tissue ranging from whole eyes, to corneas, conjunctiva, lens and posterior

segments remaining after the cornea is excised. The TES Research Tissue Bank (RTB) is based within the TES Tissue Bank in Speke, Liverpool and is staffed by two full-time staff. Non-clinical tissue is retrieved by Tissue and Organ Donation teams across United Kingdom. The RTB works very closely with two eye banks within TES, the David Lucas Eye Bank in Liverpool and the Filton Eye Bank in Bristol. Non-clinical ocular tissues are primarily consented by TES National Referral Centre Nurses.

Methods and Results The RTB receives tissue via two pathways. The first pathway is tissue specifically consented and retrieved for non-clinical use and the second pathway is tissue that becomes available when tissue is found to be unsuitable for clinical use. The majority of the tissue that the RTB receives from the eye banks comes via the second pathway. In 2021, the RTB issued more than 1000 samples of non-clinical ocular tissue. The majority of the tissue, ~64% was issued for research purposes (including research into glaucoma, COVID-19, paediatrics and transplant research), ~31% was issued for clinical training purposes (DMEK and DSAEK preparation, especially after COVID-19 cessation of transplant operations, training for new eye bank staff) and ~5% was issued for in-house and validation purposes. One of the findings was that corneas are still suitable for training purposes up to 6-months after removal from the eye.

In 2021, the RTB received 43 applications for ocular projects from new customers and supplied to 36 different projects, meeting 95% of all orders placed this year.

Discussion The RTB works to a partial cost-recovery system and in 2021 became self-sufficient. The supply of non-clinical tissue is crucial for advancement in patient care and has contributed to several peer-reviewed publications.

10 EYE DONATION IN PALLIATIVE AND HOSPICE CARE SETTINGS: PATIENT VIEWS AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES!

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Eye donation in Palliative and Hospice care settings: patient views and missed opportunities.

Background There is a global shortage of donated eye tissue for use in sight saving and sight restoring operations such as corneal transplantation. In the UK the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) report that over two million people are currently living with sight loss with this figure predicted to rise to approx. four million by 2050. Patients who die in palliative and hospice care settings could potentially donate eye tissue, however, the option of eye donation is not routinely raised in end-of-life planning discussions. Research evidence suggests that health care professionals (HCP) are reluctant to discuss eye donation as they perceive it as something that will distress patients and family members.

Aim This presentation will share findings regarding the views of patients and carers, including: their feelings and thoughts about the option of eye donation being raised with them; who they think should raise this issue; when this option should be discussed and who should be included in the discussion.