

detected, and no change in albumin levels was detected in SED throughout the storage period.

Conclusion This study has demonstrated that the ATS vials are suitable for provision of SED for clinical use to patients. Feedback is now being gathered from a patient focus group relating to usability of the vials.

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P23-A137 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION FOR CORNEAL DONATION BETWEEN LIONS EYE BANK SAAR-LOR-LUX, TRIER/WESTPFALZ IN HOMBURG/SAAR AND LUXEMBOURG

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10.1136/bmjophth-2023-EEBA.22

Purpose With the increasing demand for corneas, eye banks must optimize and extend their sources of tissue donation. On the other hand, corneal transplantation is a specialized procedure performed in hospitals with high quality standards and ideally an integrated eye bank. In this report we would like to focus on an international win-win-win agreement between the Department of Ophthalmology at Saarland University Medical Center (Homburg/Saar, Germany), the LIONS Eye Bank Saar-Lor-Lux, Trier/Westpfalz and the four major non-university hospitals without corneal transplantation competence in Luxembourg.

Methods In 2012, at the initiative of the Luxembourgish Ministry of Health and Department of Ophthalmology (Homburg/Saar, Germany), an international agreement was established with the Centre Hospitalier du Luxembourg (Luxembourg). Administrative and legislative rules were developed. Luxembourgish nursing personnel attended a practical training program for corneal excision at the Department of Ophthalmology in Homburg/Saar allowing them to harvest the two first corneal donors on site by themselves during the first year. In the following years two more hospitals, the Centre Hospitalier Emile Mayrisch (Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg) and the Hôpitaux Robert Schuman (Kirchberg, Luxembourg), joined the cooperation.

Results From 2012 until 2021, three hospitals in Luxembourg donated 779 corneas to the LIONS Eye Bank of the Saarland University Medical Center in Homburg/Saar (Germany). In return, 308 Luxembourgish patients have received a corneal transplantation at the Department of Ophthalmology in Homburg/Saar. In 2022, the extension continued and an agreement with a fourth hospital in Luxembourg at the Centre Hospitalier du Nord (Ettelbruck, Luxembourg) was signed providing even more donations.

Conclusion The cross-border collaboration for corneal donation and patient treatment has proven to be successful with both numbers of harvested donors and transplanted patients rising. However, international legislation for tissue donation needs to be accurately respected and a quality management system established to provide continuous quality of the donor tissue.

P24-A114 BRINGING TOGETHER THE EYE BANKING COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT EUROPE AND BEYOND – PROMOTING EYE DONATION IN AFRICA

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10.1136/bmjophth-2023-EEBA.23

Purpose It is estimated that globally there are more than 12.7 million corneal blinds with the vast majority of those living in the developing world. There is huge demand for corneal transplants worldwide as currently only one out of 70 patients can be provided with a cornea.

Following the spirit of EEBA in bringing together the international eye banking community we present on our efforts and vision in contributing to the elimination of avoidable blindness in Africa by promoting sustainable eye donation programs.

Methods At the congress of the South African Tissue Bank Association (SATiBA) in November 2022 a dedicated Round Table Discussion takes place on eye donation in Africa, organized by the World Union of Tissue Banking Associations (WUTBA) together with the Global Alliance of Eye Bank Associations (GAEBBA), SATiBA and the German Society for Tissue Transplantation (DGFG). Individuals, national and global players in tissue medicine meet aiming to promote and advocate corneal donation in sub-Saharan Africa to establish patient care that is self-sustaining from within the countries.

In preparation for the meeting a questionnaire was completed by the participants to understand the current situation in individual countries: Responses by ophthalmologists, tissue bankers, awareness and tissue donation coordinators from Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and South Africa were evaluated.

Results The survey revealed that all countries are establishing national health acts with references to tissue donation or have them in place with regulations still to be detailed. These are fundamental to strengthen confidence in tissue donation and to start developing donation infrastructures. In all countries there is doubt about donation after death showing the need for advocacy towards the public.

The aim of the Round Table is creating a momentum of networking and sharing experience to support the African countries in building local infrastructures and becoming independent from tissue imports in the future.

Conclusion What frameworks must exist to successfully establish donation programs in Africa? What help can be provided by countries and organizations that have stable donation programs? These and other questions will be attempted at the Round Table. Bringing together experts, bundling synergies, and creating a momentum to promote cornea donation on social, political, and community level will be a step towards the vision of creating a world in which nobody is needlessly visually impaired.

P25-A123 INDO – GERMAN GIZ COLLABORATION – IMPACT AND WAY FORWARD IN GLOBAL EYE BANKING

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10.1136/bmjophth-2023-EEBA.24