

Results Collections depend on the cooperation of the clinical teams and we have had very good engagement from them. The UoL works closely with St Pauls Eye Unit and the physical proximity between the two has been helpful. The location of the storage fridges close to theatre is important to limit extra effort for busy clinical teams. Regular training of consenters was key to ensure compliance with SOPs. In 11 months, we consented 419 donors and collected 673 samples including corneal tissue, iris, sclera, lens/capsule, retinal membranes, tenons, muscle, aqueous, vitreous, blood.

Conclusion After the success of collections from one site we plan to expand to collect from multiple sites including Aintree and Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

P28-A146 THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON EYE BANKING IN THE LUBLIN EYE BANK, POLAND

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Purpose The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Lublin Eye Bank activities.

Methods We compared the corneal donors screening rules, number of harvested corneas before, during, and after the pandemic (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 years).

Results In 2019 we had 182 corneal donors and 360 harvested corneas; in 2020 – 114 donors and 227 corneas; in 2021 – 151 donors and 300 corneas, and in 2022 till the 15th November – 115 donors and 228 corneas. From the 11th March 2020, when the World Health Organization had declared a global pandemic, our Eye Bank ceased all activities until the 10th May 2020. We started then, according to recommendations of Polish Transplantation Society, performing a nasopharyngeal swabs specimen collecting for every corneal donor. In 2020 we noted only 1 positive donor, whereas in 2021 we had 9 and in 2022 - 12 SARS-CoV-2 positive donors, respectively. Overall mean reduction in the number of corneal donors and obtained corneal tissues of 6,3% was observed in the Lublin Eye Bank

Conclusion

1. COVID-19 pandemic had an influence on the Lublin Eye Bank activities.
2. Fortunately, the pandemic did not have a major impact on the number of donors as well as the corneas collected in our bank.

P29-A135 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CORNEAL DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION IN HONG KONG

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Purpose With many health and policy issues arising from COVID-19, the Hospital Authority Eye Bank of Hong Kong encountered challenges related to ocular donor suitability and availability. This review aims to analyse the impact of a global

pandemic on corneal donation and transplantation in 2020 and 2021, compared to the pre-COVID period in 2019.

Methods This cohort study evaluated data collected from the Hospital Authority Eye Bank from January 2019 to December 2021. The number of corneas harvested, including voluntary donations initiated by the deceased's relatives and approached cases by Eye Donation Coordinators, tissue distributed, transplanted and disposed, the reason for disposal as well as the usage of the transplanted corneas in 2020 and 2021 were compared to the pre-COVID period of 2019.

Results The number of corneas harvested dropped by 17.6% in 2020 compared to the pre-COVID period of 2019, and rose almost back to baseline in 2021. However, despite having near-normal number of harvested corneas in 2021, the number of corneal transplants using fresh corneas were still reduced by 30% in 2020 and 27% 2021. The observation can be explained by the seven-fold increment in disposal due to suboptimal quality from a cancer donor in 2021. The proportion of corneas used for optical, therapeutic and tectonic purposes remained stable throughout the three years.

Conclusion COVID-19 yielded brief periods of service interruption and reduced number of eligible donors, leading to a noticeable rise in solicitation from cancer donors in 2021. The pandemic resulted in a longer corneal transplant waiting time. Nevertheless, The proportion of different corneal transplantation remained stable, with even the development in new techniques such as Descemet's Membrane Endothelial Keratoplasty and enhancement in services such as provision of ultra-fresh Keratolimbal allografts despite the limitations in the COVID-19 era.

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P30-A119 MICROBIAL CONTAMINATION OF AMNIOTIC MEMBRANE

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Purpose This retrospective study aims to compare the rate of microbial contamination in fresh, non-preserved amniotic tissue as opposed to decontaminated cryopreserved tissue, thereby being able to determine the efficiency of the decontamination procedures applied during amniotic tissue preparation in the Cornea Bank Essen.

Methods The amniotic tissue was retrieved from donor placentas acquired through elective c-section. Tissue preparation was performed according to standard operation procedures of the Cornea Bank Essen. Briefly, the tissue is rinsed with sterile balanced salt solution (BSS) and decontaminated with BSS containing anti-infectives. Preservation included the application of a cryopreservation solution containing anti-infectives and glycerin. The tissue is stored at a temperature of -80°C. Screening for microbial contamination of amniotic tissue in its pre- and post decontamination status is part of the process.

In this study, data from 107 placentas prepared in the eye bank were retrospectively evaluated for the microbiological status to determine the effectivity of the procedure.

Results Out of the fresh, non-preserved amniotic tissue, 53 were tested positive for microbial contamination. The most common species identified were *C.acnes* and *Staphylococcus*