

77th World Health Assembly - Delegates Approve Groundbreaking New Agreement on Transplantation

World Health Organization

On 29 May 2024, Member States (with the initiation of Spain) approved a new resolution on increasing availability, ethical access and oversight of transplantation of human cells, tissues and organs.

Transplantation is a life-saving treatment. The latest data of 2022 from the Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation indicate that more than 150 000 solid organ transplants ($\leq 10\%$ of global needs) are performed worldwide annually, which is an increase of 52% compared with 2010. However, there is still an apparent insufficient growth in and asymmetrical development of transplantation worldwide with many countries not having established the appropriate systems, including legislation, governance, specialized workforce, infrastructure and financing.

Lack of availability and equitable access to transplant may lead to death or unethical or illegal practices such as transplant tourism and organ trafficking. The resolution aims to improve availability of transplantation, especially in countries with limited resources.

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The resolution aims to introduce measures to prevent and combat trafficking in people for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs, and to protect victims and survivors of these crimes by strengthening legislative frameworks.

Member States committed to take a set of actions including integrating donation and transplantation activities into health-care systems, so that deceased donation is routinely considered as an option at the end of life, and living donors are protected from exploitation and provided with proper follow-up care.

WHO is tasked to develop a global strategy on donation and transplantation, to be presented to the Assembly for adoption in 2026. WHO should also examine establishing a World Donor Day to raise public awareness and enhance understanding on the need for altruistic donation of human cells, tissues and organs.

To cite : <https://www.who.int/news/item/30-05-2024-seventy-seventh-world-health-assembly---daily-update--30-may-2024>

