

Amendments to the HOTA Act will help more patients with organ failure

Despite introducing laws that seek to increase the availability of donor organs for transplantation, Singapore continues to face a progressively longer transplant waiting list and a growing shortage of organs available for transplants. More than 140 people have since died while waiting for new organs. In view of

this shortage, the Ministry of Health is in the midst of proposing amendments to the Human Organ Transplant Act 1987 (HOTA) so as to create a better supply of organs available for transplantation to patients. The table below summarizes some of the key issues.

| Current HOTA | Proposed Changes to HOTA |
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| <p>Only kidneys from accident can be used for transplantation unless the person had earlier opted out of this system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Applies to all Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents between 21 and 60 years of age (with the exception of Muslims). | <p>Inclusion of non-accidental deaths victims who are brain dead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Death from medical conditions o Estimated increase in the number of available kidneys for transplantation by 24 each year. <p>Inclusion of livers and corneas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In view of a shortage of suitable cadaveric livers available for transplantation and urgency of transplants within a short period of time for survival. o Increase in the local availability of corneas so that reliance on corneas from overseas will be reduced and the quality of corneas for transplantation can be improved. <p>Regulation of living donor organ transplants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ethical issue about abuse of this option for organ trading is to be addressed. o Concerns regarding endangering of donor's health |

(Source: Proposed amendments to the Human Organ Transplant Act (HOTA), Ministry of Health)