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PROMOTING EYE DONATION: THE SOCIAL ROLE OF HOSPITALS

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Blindness due to a defective cornea can be easily cured by corneal transplant. This is a relatively simple and inexpensive treatment for providing vision to scores of corneal blind patients. Eye donation rates need to be increased substantially to meet the requirement of corneas worldwide and more so in developing countries. Tertiary care hospitals can play a pivotal role in this as these hospitals manage a large number of terminal sick patients. Tradition the thrust of such hospitals is providing specialized medical care & something like eye donation does not get attention it deserves. A hospital conscious towards this noble social cause can be the difference between the organs of an expired patient providing life to a needy patient or being burnt/ buried with the expired patient. In this context, an intervention involving all the main stakeholders in promoting eye donation in a hospital namely nurses, counselors & management of the institute was put into place by the study institution which is a 2000 bedded tertiary care public hospital in India. There was a significant increase of 93% in number of corneas donated in the hospital after this intervention. This shows that hospitals can play a huge role in meeting the demand for corneas by scientifically implementing cornea retrieval programs. Use of technology complemented with initiative & dynamic leadership by hospitals can provide immense impetus to this pressing & noble social cause. The study hospital is now attempting to broaden the scope of this program to promote donation of other organs from brain dead patients.

Biography

Anil K Gupta is a medical graduate and completed his masters in hospital administration from All India Institute of Medical Sciences, India. He subsequently worked as Assistant Professor in the department of hospital administration at AIIMS before shifting to Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, India. He has been serving as the Medical Superintendent at PGIMER for almost two decades now. He also heads the department of hospital administration at PGIMER. He has several publications in reputed national and international journals to his credit. He has also served as a consultant to World Health Organization.

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