

**International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation**  
**Statement on Transplant Ethics**  
**Approved April 2007**  
**Updated October 2014**

Thoracic organ transplantation improves the length and quality of life of patients with severe heart or lung disease. It is a societal endeavour bound by ethical principles. The donation of organs from a deceased patient must always be made freely and without coercion. The gift of an organ by a live donor, such as a pulmonary lobe transplant, must be made in the same fashion and with informed consent. To ensure that these principles are adhered to, the transplant process must be transparent, legally regulated and open to both national and international scrutiny.

The ISHLT endorses the view of the World Medical Association that the sale of organs from both live and deceased donors is unethical and violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Obtaining organs for transplantation from the bodies of executed prisoners contravenes the principle of voluntary donation. A condemned prisoner and his relatives cannot consent freely. Furthermore, such practices provide a perverse incentive to increase the number of executions and it lays the judicial process open to corruption.

ISHLT members should discourage patients from seeking transplantation in countries where transplantation is not open to external scrutiny and the ethical standards of the ISHLT cannot be assured, regardless of whether payment for organs is involved. ISHLT members should work with their own governments to ensure that such 'transplant tourism' that contravenes these ethical principles is made illegal.

Members of the ISHLT should not participate in or support the transplantation of organs from prisoners or the sale of organs for transplantation. Any ISHLT member who has been found to have contravened this ethical principle may have their rights and privileges as a member suspended or removed by the ISHLT Board.

Members of the ISHLT should refrain from knowingly teaching visiting physicians the art and science of heart and lung transplantation if it cannot be ascertained and guaranteed that those to be trained will not use their newly acquired knowledge for transplants based on organs from executed prisoners.

Individuals submitting data about clinical transplantation, or the use of human tissue, for presentation at any of the ISHLT's meetings, to the Society's Registry or for publication in the Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation will be asked to confirm that the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki formulated by the World Medical Association, the Declaration of Istanbul, and of this ethical statement by the ISHLT have been adhered to.

#### References

Rothman DJ, Rose E, Awaya T, Cohen B, Daar A, Dzemeshevich SL, Lee CJ, Munro R, Reyes H, Rothman SM, Schoen KF, Scheper-Hughes N, Shapira Z, Smit H. The Bellagio Task Force report on transplantation, bodily integrity, and the International Traffic in Organs. *Transplant Proceedings* 1997; 29: 2739-45. Also available at the International Committee of the Red Cross web-site:

[http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList302/87DC95FCA3C3D63EC1256B66005B3\\_F6C](http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwpList302/87DC95FCA3C3D63EC1256B66005B3_F6C) (accessed 1st May 2007)

Declaration of Helsinki. [http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/index.html.pdf?printmedia-type&footer-right=\[page\]/\[toPage\]](http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/index.html.pdf?printmedia-type&footer-right=[page]/[toPage]) (accessed 1st May 2007)

Declaration of Istanbul. [http://multivu.prnewswire.com/mnr/transplantationsociety/33914/docs/33914-Declaration\\_of\\_Istanbul-Lancet.pdf](http://multivu.prnewswire.com/mnr/transplantationsociety/33914/docs/33914-Declaration_of_Istanbul-Lancet.pdf)