



# TRANSPLANT TOURISM

## "A MORAL DILEMMA"

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual John C. McDonald Transplant & Dialysis Access Symposium  
October 8-10, 2016

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## FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES

I have nothing to disclose

## OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Identify the perils of transplant tourism
- ❖ Discuss shortage of organs
- ❖ Identify factors behind transplant tourism

## MEDICAL TOURISM: GLOBAL HEALTHCARE PHENOMENON \$60 BILLION WORLDWIDE (2006)

- ❖ Patients traveling across national borders for healthcare elsewhere
- ❖ Not available in their home country
- or
- ❖ perceived to be superior (better quality and delivered in a more timely fashion)
- ❖ Insurance companies incorporate medical tourism into their plans and offer discount to patients agreeing to overseas travel

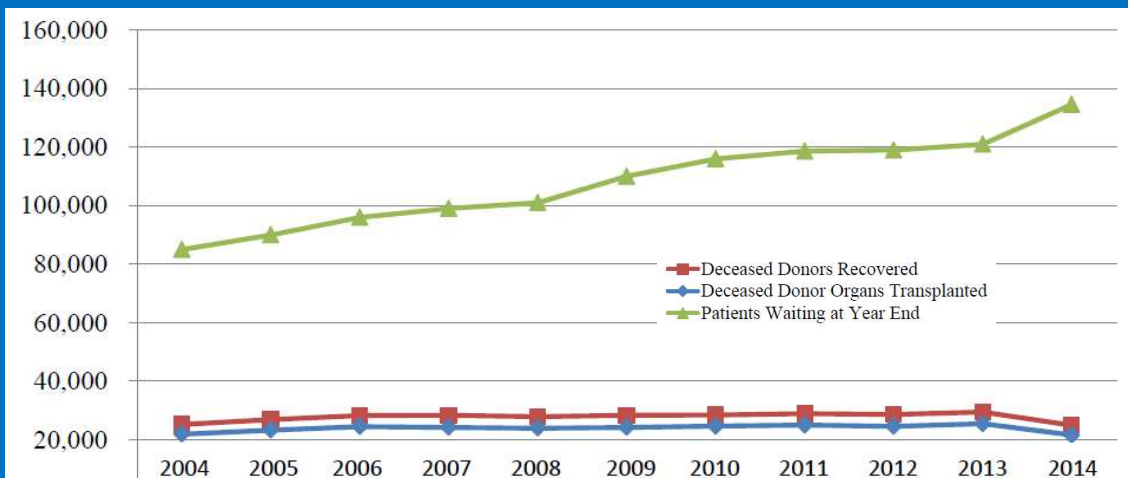
## TRANSPLANT TOURISM

Practice of traveling outside the country of residence to obtain organ transplants.

Worldwide, the disparity between the supply and demand for organ transplant remains an important issue in organ transplantation.

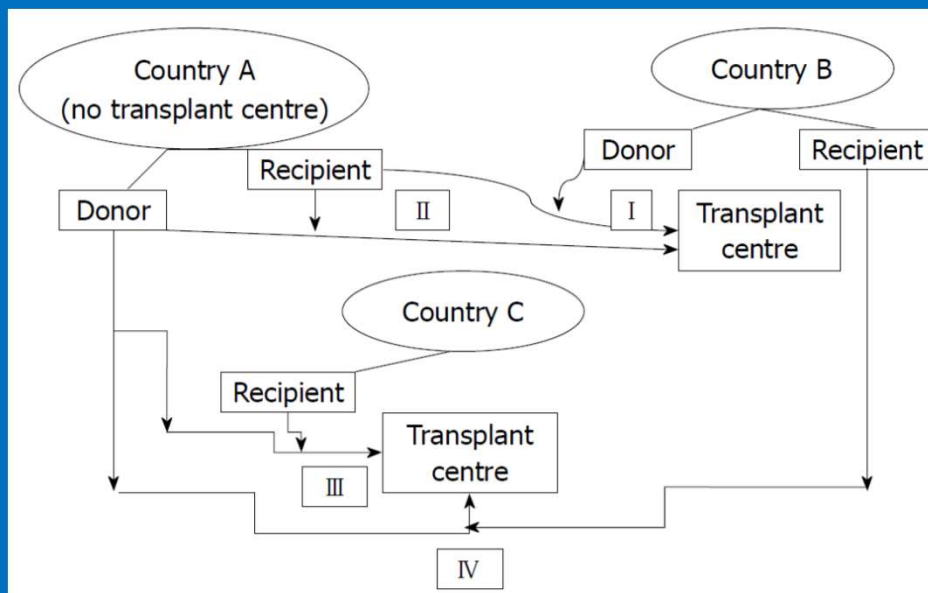
Transplant tourism unlike general medical tourism, has always been surrounded with controversy regarding the source of organs, donor's care after transplant and recipient outcome

## ORGAN DONATION AND WAITING LIST



"Based on OPTN data December 31, 2014

## TYPES OF TRANSPLANT TOURISM



**Model I:** Recipient (R) travels to country B where donor (D) and transplant center are

**Model II:** R and D travel to another country for transplantation

**Model III:** D travels to country C where R and TC are

**Model IV:** D and R residing in different countries travel to another country (C) for transplantation

## REASON FOR TRANSPLANT TOURISM

- ❖ Lack of knowledge and trust about transplantation and the system as a whole
- ❖ Lack of a transplant system in many parts of the world where corruptions is especially widespread
- ❖ Poor and uneducated population are usually the victims of organ donation (selling organs)
- ❖ Using organs from executed prisoners has been opposed strongly human rights activist and transplant society all over the world

## PROBLEMS ESPECIAL TO TRANSPLANT TOURISM

- ❖ Usually a criminal activity (different from medical tourism)
- ❖ No proper work up of donor
  - Infections
  - Malignancy
  - No commitment from local transplant team and follow-up of donor or recipient
  - Upon arrival from transplant trip to country of residence recipient may have problems due to lack of information about donor work-up or infections that may have been present in the donor
  - Increased rate of rejection

## CASE

A 33 year old woman received a deceased donor kidney transplant in China, admitted 5 months after transplant with FHF secondary to Hep B and renal failure. Underwent a liver transplant (which failed) and subsequently a successful liver and kidney transplant, developed protracted and complicated ICU admission ultimately died of multiple system failure 20 months after transplant.

## FACTORS DRIVING TT

- ❖ Need for transplantation
- ❖ Organ donation
- ❖ Bribery and corruption
- ❖ Cultural issues and disregard to the rule of law

## PROS AND CONS

- ❖ Current systems of organ procurement which relies on altruistic donation is inadequate to meet the current and future need for transplantation
- ❖ A regulated market in organs from living vendors is the only plausible solution for organ shortage
- ❖ Exploitations of vulnerable vendors (poor human beings)
- ❖ Violating human dignity

Hippen BE. *J Med Philos* 2005; 30: 593-686  
Clemmons A. *J Healthc Manag* 2009; 54: 231-240

## IRANIAN MODEL

### Regulated systems of paid donations

- ❖ government pays all hospital expenses
  - immunosuppression
  - give an award and health insurance to donors (LURD)
- ❖ in addition, family pays the donor (a reward gift, but a source of problem)
- ❖ under close scrutiny of government and transplant society

*Ghods AJ. Clin J Am Soc Nephrol 2006; 1:1136-1145*

## DECLARATION OF ISTANBUL ON TRAVEL FOR TRANSPLANTATION

Organ trafficking

Transplant commercialization

Transplant tourism

Organ trafficking entails the “recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring or receipt of person, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception or the abuse of power, or a position of vulnerability, of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation by the removal of organs, tissues or cells for transplantation