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Organ donation picks up in capital Over 10,200 People Have Pledged To Donate Their Body In Past 7 Years

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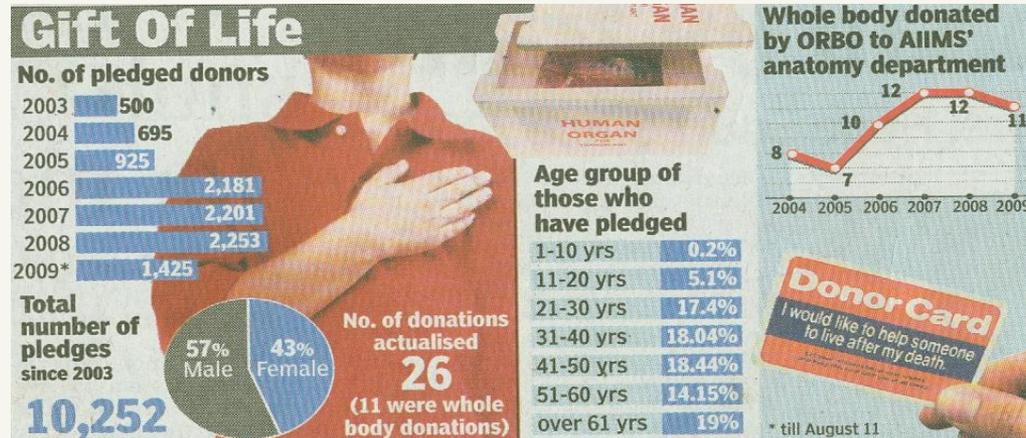
New Delhi: Brain death is finally gaining acceptance in Delhi. And this has given AIIMS' anatomy department a reason to cheer..

An analysis of the brain death registry in the country's only public sector Organ Retrieval Banking Organisation (ORBO) in AIIMS shows that in the past seven years, over 10,200 people have pledged to donate their body if they ever become brain dead.

Of these, 26 died and donated their bodies over the past seven years. Among them, 11 donated their entire body leading to harvesting of nearly 37 different organs and tissue for re-use including vital ones like the heart, kidneys, liver and lungs.

The increased awareness for pledged donations after being brain dead has resulted in AIIMS's anatomy department receiving an increasing number of bodies for medical education of its under-graduate and postgraduate medical students.

In 2004, the department received eight whole bodies from ORBO for medical education. The number increased to 12 last year.



This year till August, ORBO has already given the department 11 whole bodies for its students. The analysis shows that since 2003, ORBO has given the department over 62 freshly donated bodies to work on.

ORBO in-charge Dr. Aarti Vij says the number of pledges for donation in the brain death registry is steadily increasing. While in 2003, only 500 people pledged their bodies, the number stood at 2,253 last year. This year till August, 1,425 people have already pledged their bodies

While 600 other forms are still being accounted for.

Dr. Vij said, "People have now started to accept brain death donation. The registry is fast picking up."

Professor of anatomy at AIIMS Dr. T S Roy told TOI, "Earlier, 50 medical students worked on a single body. Now thanks to ORBO, one body is designated for 10 students, increasing their hands-on experience."

Dr. Roy said, "As against unclaimed bodies in which vital organs may have got destroyed, whole

Fresh bodies received through brain death donation help students learn the anatomy better."

According to Dr. Roy, the bodies are mainly required for MBBS students who are taught the human anatomy in detail. A group of 10 students are designated one whole body to work on over one whole year. Fresh bodies are also required for post-graduate students and super-specialty workshops.

ORBO's analysis also shows that the age group of over 61 years

pledged their bodies the most – almost 19%. This was followed by the age group 41-50 (18.44%) and 31-40 (18.04%). "While several have pledged organs and tissues, many have pledged their entire body after death. The maximum pledges were for cornea, kidney, heart, liver, lung and pancreas. Some have even pledged their skin." Dr. Vij said.

She said, "Among the top reasons for refusal to donate were religious myths and strong emotions with the deceased. Communication issues relating to brain death was also a reason."

According to the registry maintained by ORBO, while some have pledged their organs for medical research, most have agreed to donate them for use on other patients needing a transplant of vital organs to survive.

One whole body donation can help over 40 needy patients. Indians have been slow to accept brain death as the end of human life. They think the patient has hope to recover till his heart beats. However, patients who are brain dead have suffered complete and irreversible loss of all brain function and are clinically and legally dead.