

A CHALLENGING CASE OF DONOR AND RECIPIENT BELIEF

C Ho, E Baker

St Helier Hospital, Carshalton, Surrey

INTRODUCTION TO CASE In July 2003, a man of 41 years became a living donor to his brother of 43 years, a father of four children. The recipient had required haemodialysis for the preceding fifteen months. Whilst many renal units are familiar with increased numbers in their living donor programme, this case was special as both donor and recipient were Jehovah's Witnesses.

CARE AND MANAGEMENT The transplant preparation and work-up programme began one year prior to the transplant, but this was mostly because of physical complications in the donor before the first planned operation date in November 2002. There were many ethical dilemmas to discuss with the recipient and donor families and the whole renal team in the pre-transplant period. These cumulated in both the donor and recipient signing a 'Health Care Advance Directive' prior to the operation and this directive included details of whether they would accept blood transfusion, blood products, blood salvage and prolongation of life. The transplant sister was entrusted by the donor and recipient to discuss the details of the directive with the health care team.

EVALUATION Prior to the operation, the donor's haemoglobin (Hb) level was 15.9 g/dl and the recipient had a haemoglobin level of 12.2 g/dl. Both dropped their Hb levels by around 2 g/dl following the operation, so the challenge of managing anaemia in this situation did not arise. Three months after the operation the recipient returned to work when his serum creatinine was 143 $\mu\text{mol/l}$.

CONCLUSION This paper will present the ethical dilemmas facing the renal team and the care and management of both donor and recipient in the pre-, peri- and post-operative phase. The renal care team learnt that with careful management of haemodynamics and good communication between the patients and staff, the challenges of different cultural and religious beliefs can be overcome to give a very successful outcome.