

T- 12011/04/2014-NPCB
National Programme for Control of Blindness
Directorate General of Health Services
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi.
Dated: 28th July' 2014

To

All State Programme Officers (NPCB)
(Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, NCT of Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal)

Subject: Observance of 29th National Fortnight on Eye Donation from 25th August to 8th September 2014 under National Programme for Control of Blindness- reg.

Dear Sir,

As you are aware, there are approximately 0.12 million corneal blind persons in the country and many other with visual impairment due to corneal diseases and about 20,000 new cases are added every year. Majority of such blind persons are young and their sight could be restored only by a corneal transplantation. Though there has been a progress in Eye Donation, approximately about 45,000 to 50,000 eyes are collected every year with the sincere efforts of all Eye Banks working in government and nongovernmental sectors, as against the requirement of 0.12 million implantable corneas. The collection of donor materials is very low even in metropolitan cities and towns, which have the facilities for treatment of corneal blindness. In order to highlight this fact and to intensify educational and motivational efforts, a national "Fortnight on Eye Donation" is observed all over the country from 25th August to 8th September every year.

2. The objective of Eye Donation Fortnight is to create mass public awareness and to bridge the gap between demand and supply of cornea and to come forward and pledge their eyes for donation after death. People should make Eye Donation as a family tradition, ultimately transforming pledges into actual donation after death. The major part of the problem lies with young blind persons in the productive age group who lose their vision due to Vitamin "A" deficiency, malnutrition, injuries, and infections, congenital and other factors. Therefore, there is an urgent need to create awareness among the general public about the preventive aspects of corneal blindness and to come forward to pledge their eyes for donation after demise so that corneal blindness could be treated.

3. *It has been decided* that all the State Programme Officers (NPCB) to give stress upon to keep a tag on the Hospitals where mortality rate is high (at least 4 to 5 deaths per day) which has the potential, and where the Eye Donation Counselor / social workers can contact the Eye Donor Family through the Nurses posted in ICU's, where Medical Donor Information with cause of Death & associated Causes are well known, so that quality tissues could be harvested, after proper screening through Hospital Cornea Retrieval Programme (HCRP) in collaboration with Eye Banks as well eye donation centre.

4. **It is also decided to strengthen IEC component through Mass Media in Metro's viz. Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmadabad, and Bangalore etc. including big cities where more than 1000 people die every day. These are big Source of donor material that can give a big volume of Eye Collection in India. In case, we are able to motivate even 10% of them on daily basis, we can retrieve more than 70,000 corneas only from 5 or 6 Metros, where people are more educated & Eye Bank facilities are also available. We can clear the backlog as early as possible.**


5. Further, *it is also requested* to give stress upon the Joint Campaign with regard to IEC for eye donation with all the eye banks together functioning in your State instead of individual's eye bank campaign. **The funds for this activity are to be drawn from approved funds for IEC in the PIP. The following IEC activities are to be organized during the Eye Donation Fortnight in order to celebrate the observance befitting manner in your State:**

1. Involve Teachers and school children in spreading the message on eye donation by holding poster painting competition, slogans writing in Hindi, English and regional languages on the spots,
2. Involve religious institutions and leaders to spread the message of eye donation,
3. Put eye donation display board/ banners on mortuaries, cremation grounds, hospitals and the public gathering place like railway stations, bus stops etc.
4. Send Bulk SMS Message on Eye Donation,
5. Organize Radio / TV Talk on Eye Donation,
6. Publish Eye Bank Contact Numbers with Facts on Eye Donation / Article in local Newspaper,
7. Display Glow Sign Board on Hospitals / RIO/ Medical College / State Health Society,
8. Organize Walkathon / Rally to promote Eye Donations,
9. Spreading motivation messages on Eye Donation through a vehicle such as Auto, Tanga, Rickshaw with display material & loudspeaker and a team of health worker (Grief Counsellor, PMOA).

6. It is also requested that during the fortnight, Medical colleges, Regional Institutes of ophthalmology and NGO hospitals are encouraged to collect more eyes through Hospital Cornea Retrieval Programme (HCRP) and get it transplanted to the corneal blind patients. An appreciation certificate is also be given by DHS/SHS to institutions / individuals who perform maximum number of Eye collection/ corneal transplantation during the fortnight to accelerate the Eye Donation movement/collection.

7. In the last I would request you to provide a feed back in the form of a brief report together with photographs/ success story to this office latest by 30-9-2014 positively so that the event could be publicized in the forthcoming NPCB-India quarterly News Letter.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr.N.K. Agarwal)
Deputy Director General (NPCB)
Phone No: 011 -23061594

Copy to:

1. All Director of Regional Institute of Ophthalmology.
2. All Regional Directors, Health & Family Welfare.