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Session : Vitallink Symposium 2

Date & Time, Place : November 17 (Thu), 10:30-12:00, Room 5F-2

Session Title : Enhancing Public awareness in Deceased Organ Donation and Transplantation

Impact of school education in deceased organ donation

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Organ transplantation in Korea largely relies on living donors. Korea's fertility rate had dropped to 0.81 in 2021 and the number of marriages is also decreasing. According to the trend, it is expected that an organ failure patient would become more difficult to receive an organ transplant from family members than now. The activation of deceased donor organ transplantation is important. In order to promote a social consensus and change people's attitude for deceased organ donation, it is essential to nurture the value of sharing and to understand deceased organ donation in school education. Vitallink, an NGO established by medical professionals, has been developing the youth sharing education program including deceased organ donation since 2015 with school teachers. The guidebook called 'The Seed of Hope, the Fruit of Sharing' is composed of 14 chapters, the first part of which deals with the value of sharing and the latter part consists of understanding of deceased organ donation. In 2019, Vitallink collaborated with teachers to conduct the 'Sharing & Life-sharing' classes based on the guidebook and did a brief survey (5 questions) after class in one high-school. During the covid-19, school education had been converted to online, so the education was revised accordingly to a four-hour class 'Respect for Life', which was composed of loving myself, empathizing and coexisting with others, and practicing sharing. Teachers who developed this program conducted pilot class in elementary and middle school. In July 2022, the classes of the 'Respect for Life' were opened for the first and third-year students at one middle school. We will present this four-hour class 'Respect for Life' program and the response from the students after the classes. We have experienced positive changes in our lives while developing this Sharing & Life Sharing education program. If this program is established in schools, the culture of deceased organ donation is expected to change affirmatively with time.