

Hualien

15th Anniversary of Liver Transplant

September 27, 2018

Organ transplantation is the only option for many patients when medical limits occur. The Organ Transplantation Team, established in 1995 in Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, has been 15 years since the first liver transplant in 2003. On September 27, Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital invited all liver transplant patients and medical teams to share their experience. Lee Ming-Che, Director of the Hualien Tzuchi Hospital

Organ Transplantation Center said that in order to complete every organ transplant operation, one must be grateful to include the medical care, nursing, medical technology, administration/volunteer work, team's intentions, as well as the trust of donors, recipients and their families.

Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital is the only hospital that offers organ transplant in the east coast in Taiwan. Currently, transplant operations include heart, liver, kidney, cornea, bone, skin and bone marrow transplants. Among them, liver transplantation has operated for 15 years. This time, three recipients were specially invited to the occasion. They were Zhang

The 15th anniversary of the liver transplantation of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, Lin Chin-Lon, CEO of Tzu Chi Medical Foundation; Lin Shinn-Zong, Supt. of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital; Professor Lai Hong-Shiee, Director of the Center for Surgical Medicine Development; Director Lee Ming-Che of the Organ Transplantation Center; Zhang Wen-Yi and Li Wen-Yu, Ma Xiu-Yi, who had live transplanted for years, shares joy with the public.





Zhang Wen-Yi (right), who had organ transplanted for 15 years, showed his scarred abdomen, thanking the donors for their selfless love and the care of the organ donation group, so that he can regain his health.

Wen-Yi and Li Wen-Yu, who had received liver organ donation for 15 years, and Ma Xiu-Yi, who had received live liver transplantation for eight years.

Tzu Chi Medical Foundation Chief Executive Officer Lin Chin-Lon said that “Humanistic Medicine with Reverence in Life” is the core concept of Tzu Chi’s Medical Mission. Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, established in 1986, can now provide advanced and international medical services, allowing people in the eastern region to seek medical treatment locally. Thanks to the compassionate vision of the

founder of Tzu Chi, Master Cheng Yen, the diligence of all colleagues, and especially grateful for the trust of the people.

In November 1998, Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital was approved by the government for cadaveric liver transplantation. The first case of liver transplantation was successfully completed in February 2003. Live liver transplantation was approved in November 2005. The first live liver transplant was successfully completed in July 2007. 41 cadaveric liver transplants and 17 live liver transplants were completed as of August 2018. Prof. Lai Hong-Shiee, Director of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Surgical Development Center, said that previously people had a lot of misunderstanding about organ transplantation and donation, but with the efforts of the team and volunteers, many people now accept organ transplants and donations, and even willing to mark “approval for organ donation” on their health insurance cards. Professor Lai especially thanked the people of the eastern region for their affirmation, which resulted the organ donation rate in the eastern region ranked first in Taiwan.

“In the past, people from Hualien have to cross the mountains to western Taiwan to seek medical treatment, but now I cross through the mountains to come to Hualien.” Zhang Wen-Yi, a recipient from Nantou, said that his relationship with Director Lee Ming-Che

is not only fifteen years, but also from before. When he was young, he was often ill; had multiple abdominal surgeries; had seen multiple hospitals from all regions; and ended in the eastern region Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital to find a turning point in life. Long-term hepatitis B virus infection, which later led to severe cirrhosis and ascites, organ transplantation was Zhang Wen-yi's last resort.

"I will always remember that for my surgery, Director Lee Ming-Che did not sleep for 40 hours." Recalling the surgery 15 years ago, Zhang Wen-Yi pulled up his clothes and let everyone see the surgical wounds. Zhang said that because of his previous multiple surgeries, he had severe abdominal adhesions. From the preparation for the operation to the end of the transplant operation, Director Lee spent two days without rests; however, all the medical teams and volunteers accompanied during his stay. "I am really grateful to everyone for their support, which resulted in my speedy recovery." Coordinating nurse Chou Kuei-Chun said that for ten years after the operation, Zhang Wen-Yi would send a Mother's Day card every year, asking the center colleagues to transfer the card to the donor's mother, thanking the donor and mother for their selfless act.

In July 2003, 42-year-old Li Wen-Yu received a liver transplant at Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. At that time, he suffered

from type B and C hepatitis for a long time. He was rushed to the hospital immediately after expectorated blood at home, but the examination found that he had severe cirrhosis. During the three years of waiting for a liver transplant, he repeatedly admitted to the hospital. During his ordeal, his wife, who was previously a homemaker, began to seek work, and it was still not enough for the family until the



Prof. Lai Hong-Shiee, director of the Center for Surgical Development, mentioned that with the efforts of the team and volunteers, many people today can accept organ transplants and donations, and the donation rate in the eastern region ranks first in Taiwan, especially thanks to the affirmation of the eastern people.



Lee Ming-Che, director of the Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Organ Transplantation Center, said that the completion of each organ transplant operation comes from the care of the medical staff, medical technicians, administrative and volunteer teams, as well as the trust of donors, recipients and their families.

donors saved their family.

Li Wen-Yu said that waiting is a very difficult process. Because the family is very ordinary, the benefits of having Tzu Chi Hospital in Hualien were truly felt, especially when they did not need to spend large expense traveling northward. Even if the liver transplant opportunity required traveling far to Taipei, there was no way for him to wait in Taipei. What surprised him was when he received news of liver transplant. After the rebirth, he made a wish to put it to its fullest. Li Wen-Yu, who participated in “organ donation gratification ceremony” almost every year, said despite receiving a liver and unable to donate his organs because of the anti-rejection drugs, nevertheless, he will

donate his body for medical research in the future.

“Thanks to Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital for changing my life from black and white to colorful.” Ma Xiu-Yi, who has undergone a live liver transplant surgery for eight years, said that because she lives in Hualien, she really feels the benefits of having Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital.

The survival rate of cadaveric liver transplant patients in Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital is 84.1% in the first year, 77.2% in the fifth year and 58.2% in the tenth year. The survival rate of live liver transplant is 70.3% in the first year, 51.6% in the fifth year and 51.6% in the tenth year. Superintendent Lin Shinn-Zong said that it was not easy to adhere to one thing for fifteen years. It was even more rare to continue the life that is about to disappear. A successful organ transplantation donation requires the support of donors and family members, the trust of recipients and their families, and the gratitude of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. The input of medical departments, as well as coordinating caregivers, social workers, anesthesia department, operating room, surgical care, the ward, the nursing department, the inspection and medicine department, the HLA genotype test, the volunteers and other teams work together added to their love to respect life and protect life. (By Huang Szu-Chi)