

Increased awareness on organ donation key to saving lives of Filipinos requiring kidney transplantation

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- In observance of June as National Kidney Month, the REGALO Organ Donation Advocacy called on Filipinos to give the gift of life by signing up as an organ donor and keeping their organ donor card with them at all times.

Quezon City, June 22, 2017 – For many patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD), the only option for survival is a kidney transplant. Unfortunately in the Philippines, the number of living and deceased kidney donors remains dismally low. According to the Philippine Renal Disease Registry, in 2015 there were 18,603 new patients that started dialysis nationwide. By December 2015, there were 32,077 patients on dialysis. In the same year, only 475 Filipino patients (3.4%) received a kidney transplant.

Dialysis exacts a heavy financial toll. The cost of hemodialysis (HD) per patient per year is P405,600; for peritoneal dialysis (PD), it is P279,180. With around 95% of patients in the country on HD, the total cost per year for HD alone reaches over P14B. Total cost per year for PD is almost P520,000.

“As we celebrate June as National Kidney Month, I call on Filipinos to give the gift of life by volunteering to be a living organ donor, especially for your siblings or relatives who are undergoing dialysis. You can also choose to sign up as a deceased organ donor in case of brain death and keep your deceased organ donor card with you at all times. Let your family and friends know that you are willing to share a vital part of yourself after death so that others may live,” said Dr. Romina Danguilan, Organizing Committee Head, REGALO Organ Donation Advocacy.

Dr. Danguilan was one of the resource speakers during the National Kidney Month Media Briefing held on June 22, 2017 at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTi) in Quezon City. She is Deputy Director for Medical Education and Research of NKTi, which is a REGALO partner. Launched in August 2016, Renal Gift Allowing Life for Others (REGALO) is a coalition founded by the Maria Corazon Torres Y Javier (MCTJ) Foundation, Kidney Foundation of the Philippines (KFP), Kidney Transplant Association of the Philippines (KITAP) and Novartis Healthcare Philippines. Since then, Sanofi, Astellas Pharma and Multi-Product Line Pharma have joined the coalition to support its aim of increasing awareness on kidney transplantation and encouraging more Filipinos to become organ donors.

“Kidney transplantation is the best form of renal replacement therapy. Patients who receive a kidney transplant become fully rehabilitated and have optimal quality of life and the highest survival rate. For kidney donors, donating one kidney and living with one kidney generally does not affect life expectancy and quality of life and, more importantly, they help save lives,” said NKTi Executive Director Dr. Rose Marie Rosete-Liquete.

“While filling the need for organ transplantation may be a daunting challenge, sustained collaboration between

government and the private sector will go a long way in raising awareness on the importance of organ donation. The Department of Health is certain that REGALO brings us one step closer to saving thousands of lives,” said Health Secretary Dr. Paulyn Jean B. Rosell-Ubial.

“Every day, people die waiting for a suitable organ donor. The selfless act of organ donation can save lives. Let us all work together to raise awareness and encourage more Filipinos to give of themselves by signing up to be an organ donor,” Dr. Enrique Ona, President and Chairman, MCTJ and KFP.

“Novartis fully supports REGALO in protecting the rights and wellbeing of both organ recipients and donors in the country. We also support the efforts to inspire more Filipinos to share the Gift of Life to patients in urgent need of organ transplantation,” said Ms. Cheryl Maley, President and Managing Director, Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

Highlights of the media briefing included the launching of the Tagalog version of the Handbooks for Organ Recipients and Donors; presentation of the REGALO Organ Donation Commemorative Print Ad; and testimonial of kidney transplant recipients Ms. Gabrielle Anne Gabaton and veteran broadcaster Mr. Joe Taruc. REGALO is planning to translate the handbook to other major Filipino dialects. For more information about REGALO and organ transplantation and donation, please visit the Regalo Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/RegaloOrganDonationAdvocacy/>.



In observance of June as National Kidney Month, the REGALO Organ Donation Advocacy called on Filipinos to give the gift of life by volunteering to be a living and deceased organ donor to patients with end-stage renal disease who need a kidney transplant to survive. Photo shows from left: Dr. Remedios Uriarte, Executive Director, Kidney Foundation of the Philippines (KFP); Ms. Teresita Prima, President, Kidney Transplant Association of the Philippines; Dr. Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial, Secretary, Department of Health; Dr. Enrique Ona, President and Chairman, Maria Corazon Torres Y Javier (MCTJ) Foundation & KFP; Dr. Rose Marie Rosete-Liquete, Executive Director, National Kidney and Transplant Institute; Dr. Romina Danguilan, Organizing Committee Head, REGALO Organ Donation Advocacy; and Ms. Christine Fajardo, Corporate Affairs Head, Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

About Maria Corazon Torres Y Javier (MCTJ) Foundation

Established in 1991, the MCTJ Foundation serves as a coordinating body for organ donors and recipients who will undergo organ transplantation. It also secures and manages donations from kind-hearted individuals and

organizations in order to provide financial support to underprivileged beneficiaries.

About the Kidney Foundation of the Philippines (KFP)

The KFP was established more than 40 years ago with the primary mandate of delivering specialized health services to patients suffering from kidney and other related diseases. It established the first dialysis facility in the country and works in partnership with other hospital facilities like the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTi) in facilitating the kidney transplantation of qualified patients.

About the Kidney Transplant Association of the Philippines (KITAP)

Founded in 1985, KITAP is dedicated to uplifting the lives and protecting the rights of kidney transplant recipients, donors, and the immediate family of recipients. It currently has 1,400 members.

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