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# Cadaver organs saved three every week

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On January 27 in 2019, the state health department had issued a general resolution (GR) outlining rules for State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (SOTTO), joining the ranks of 10-odd Indian states with such a mechanism in place.

SOTTO officials said that a total of 171 organs were transplanted from cadaver donations. Out of the total, four hearts and four lungs were sent to Maharashtra whereas the remaining organs – 104 kidneys, 53 livers, three hearts and three pancreases – were transplanted in city and statebased patients.

The Institute of Kidney Disease and Research Centre (IKDRC) was made the nodal agency for SOTTO to streamline organ donation and transplant across multiple cities and towns.

Dr Himanshu Patel, head of department (nephrology), at IKDRC, said that the primary difference after SOTTO is hospital approach. “The GR has made the declaration of brain death compulsory for the hospitals and sending the details to SOTTO for the same. It would lead to improved numbers in the future,” he said. “The move has also instilled confidence among relatives of the braindead patients for one of the fears of the donors is misuse of the retrieved organs.”

But it’s a long way to go for even reaching the desirable levels – compared to 104 kidney transplants from cadavers, Gujarat

performed 622 transplants where kidneys were retrieved from living donors, giving a ratio of 1:6. Experts point out that the scenario forces close relatives to donate organs to save lives of their dear ones.

What could be the way forward for the state? For a starter, Gujarat is yet to create an online repository on lines of states such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu which can make the process more citizenfriendly and transparent.

Dr Somnath Chattopadhyay, head of department, Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Surgery and Liver Transplant at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital (KDAH), said that organ transplant is a complex procedure involving multiple stakeholders. “Coordination between all the stakeholders is crucial. Right from the ‘grief counsellors’ – the NGO representatives that talk to relatives of the brain-dead patient – to the traffic police that creates green corridor, everyone has a role to play,” he said. “In cities like Mumbai, the coordination issue doesn’t arise with improved donations. Bureaucratic hurdles should not hamper the process.”