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Challenges in setting up a heart transplant unit in India

Manoj Durairaj

Ruby Hall Clinic, India

The heart transplant scenario in India as compared to the West is still at a nascent stage in most cities and regions. As compared to the past, more heart surgeons are taking up the challenge of doing transplants and in the next few years India will be witnessing a sudden spurt in more regional hospitals starting the program. As donor and recipient awareness is also building up, the total number of transplant centers is expected to exponentially rise. Newer centers, especially in the smaller cities face a lot of challenges. The most important challenges which are faced by a center wanting to start a transplant program are organizational support, government permission, organ

distribution network, donor issues, recipient issues, putting together a likeminded Heart Failure management team, financial support, infrastructural hurdles and follow up of patients from rural areas who are on immunosuppression drugs. I will be sharing my personal experience in setting up a Heart Failure management team in my hospital and my talk will be dissecting out the travails in our journey of doing the first heart transplant in our city. The lessons learnt the hard way by us will surely be helpful for centers thinking of starting their own heart transplant programs.

manojdurairaj@hotmail.com