

## Correction

Xiang YT, *et al.* China to halt using executed prisoners' organs for transplants: a step in the right direction in medical ethics. *J Med Ethics* 2016;42:10.

- The authors misrepresented the term 'law' in the first sentence of the third paragraph (p. 10) when they wrote: 'Up to January 2015, the law stipulated...', in the first sentence of the fourth paragraph (p. 10) when they wrote: 'Undoubtedly, the new law that forbids the use...' and in the third sentence of the fourth paragraph (p. 10) when they wrote: 'When all parties celebrate the release of the new law,'

The authors intended the following: 'Up to January 2015, the local regulation stipulated...' in the first sentence of the third paragraph, 'Undoubtedly, the first National Guideline on Organ Donation that forbids the use...' in the first sentence of the fourth paragraph (p. 10) and 'When all parties celebrate the release of the new guideline,' in the third sentence of the fourth paragraph (p. 10).

- The authors intended to add a new reference after the first sentence of the first paragraph (p. 10) 'On 1 January 2015 the Chinese government announced banning the use of organs from executed prisoners for transplantation',<sup>1</sup>
- The authors intended to update the reference after the first sentence of the second paragraph (p. 10) '..., reaching a peak in 2006 with approximately 11 000 organ transplants'.<sup>2</sup>
- The authors intended to update the rest of the reference numbers of the second paragraph (p. 10) 'However, China has one of the lowest levels of organ donation with only 0.6/1 000 000 people offering organs while alive or postmortem.<sup>3</sup> The low donation rate finds its explanation in the traditional Confucian culture teaching that the body is offered by the parents at birth and therefore it must be kept intact after death; otherwise, the soul cannot be reincarnated.<sup>4</sup> China is home to a thriving illegal trade in human organs, making would-be donors distrust the transplant management and distribution systems, thereby further lowering the donation rate.<sup>3</sup> As a result, only 35% of organs come from live donors; over 90% of the deceased donors are executed prisoners.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, approximately 300 000 people need urgent organ transplants in China each year, but only about 10 000 transplantations are performed, signaling a severe shortage of donor organs.<sup>1</sup>
- The authors intended to update the reference after the first sentence of the third paragraph (p. 10) '..., unless the prisoners themselves or their family members provided informed consent'.<sup>5</sup>
- The authors intended to update the reference number after the second sentence of the third paragraph (p. 10) '..., branding it as a profit-driven and unethical practice'.<sup>6</sup>
- The authors intended to update the reference number after the second sentence of the last paragraph (p. 10) '..., other reasons for the regulation include the fewer death sentences in past years and the abolishment of death penalty in China in the future'.<sup>5</sup>

### The updated reference list is as follows:

- 1 Xu J. Path smoothed for organ donors. The State Council, the People's Republic of China, 24 Aug 2015. [http://english.gov.cn/policies/latest\\_releases/2015/08/24/content\\_281475174618144.htm](http://english.gov.cn/policies/latest_releases/2015/08/24/content_281475174618144.htm) (accessed 10 Feb 2016).
- 2 Huang J, Mao Y, Millis JM. Government policy and organ transplantation in China. *Lancet* 2008;372:1937–8.
- 3 Hatton C. China to stop harvesting executed prisoners' organs. BBC News, 4 Dec 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-30324440> (accessed 2 Jan 2015).
- 4 Shi BY, Chen LP. Regulation of organ transplantation in China: difficult exploration and slow advance. *JAMA* 2011;306(4):434–5.
- 5 Huang J, Millis JM, Mao Y, *et al.* A pilot programme of organ donation after cardiac death in China. *Lancet* 2012;379:862–5.
- 6 Caplan AL, Danovitch G, Shapiro M, *et al.* Time for a boycott of Chinese science and medicine pertaining to organ transplantation. *Lancet* 2011;378:1218.

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