

Press Release

For Immediate Publication

Heart travels from Chandigarh to Fortis Escorts, Delhi in just 2 hours to save life of 13-year-old

32-year-old donor from Faridabad was on ventilator for 22 days after slipping into Coma

New Delhi, April 7, 2017: Doctors at **Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, New Delhi** performed a life-saving heart transplant on a 13-year-old child from Agra. This 6th heart transplant at FEHI was made possible when a 32-year-old female, a resident of Faridabad, was declared brain dead at PGI Hospital in Chandigarh after being on ventilator support for three weeks. The family of the donor consented to donate organs; i.e. heart, kidneys, and liver following informed counselling, following which the harvested heart was flown down to Delhi.

The Cardiac Transplant Team from FEHI flew down to PGI Hospital, Chandigarh and retrieved the heart from the donor at 11.20 am. The police and traffic authorities immediately created a green corridor for transferring the harvested heart to Delhi. The heart left in an ambulance from PGI Hospital following a pre-decided route to reach the airport. It was swiftly moved into a chartered flight to reach IGI Airport by 1 pm. A green corridor was created, covering a distance of 18 kilometers in barely 18 minutes at 1.23 pm, despite the heavy traffic.

The child recipient was suffering from a heart failure due to viral myocarditis and had an EF (ejection fraction) of barely 15-20% (normal heart functions at 55-60%). After two prior admissions at FEHI in the past one year due to heart failure, this was the third time that the child had been admitted after his condition deteriorated. The child was under the treatment of **Dr S Radhakrishnan, Director, Paediatric Cardiology, FEHI** and **Dr Vishal Rastogi, Consultant and Incharge, Heart Failure & Left Ventricular Assist Program, FEHI**.

The transplant was conducted by Dr Z S Meharwal, Director of Cardiovascular Surgery and Transplant Surgery, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute who explained how this transplant was made possible. "When we first heard that the donor was a 32-year-old person, it looked that the match might not be possible. This child is second time lucky since a heart was brought in a few months ago from an elderly patient and hence could not be put in his body. This time, the body weight of the donor was around that of the recipient and

hence their chest cavities were nearly comparable, though we still had to use special techniques to connect arteries of the donor heart with those of the recipient. This enabled us to carry on with the transplant,” said **Dr Meharwal**.

“The recipient had viral infection which had affected his heart. Such patients usually recover in a matter of six months to a year. However, in this case, his condition rapidly deteriorated which led to heart failure,” explained **Dr Radhakrishnan**. “The child was very sick and was in urgent need of a heart transplant. He had also suffered a stroke a couple of months ago due to his failing heart and was admitted in the ICU for close to a month. In fact we had two more patients with a matching blood group on the list, however, this teenager got priority because of his critical condition,” explained **Dr Rastogi**.

Speaking on organ donations, Dr Ashok Seth, Chairman, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute and Head, Cardiology Council, Fortis Healthcare said, “India suffers from a paucity of voluntary Organ Donation and the noble and brave donation of this 32 year young girl and her family has provided hope of life to not just our 13 year old recipient but at least four other lives that they have saved. Such exemplary acts are a reminder to all that how numerous patients awaiting organs who are close to death can be 'Given back a life '. It was unfortunate that we did not get the cooperation of the commercial airlines in bringing the heart from Chandigarh to Delhi, and thus did so in a chartered flight. If more patients have to be saved in a timely and affordable manner through organ donation, then intercity transfer across States would have to become a norm and I would urge the Ministry of Aviation to consider regulations in which all stakeholders including airlines develop policies to become an integral part of this life saving effort.”

Dr Somesh K Mittal, Zonal Director, FEHI, said, “*We have come a long way since we conducted our first heart transplant here. Our team is humbled by the donations made by the donor families to save so many lives. We are indebted to the swift and timely support from NOTTO, Clinicians & Nursing staff, Police & Traffic authorities and the kin of donors, who made the transplant, a reality.*”

About Fortis Escorts Heart Institute

Fortis Escorts Heart Institute (FEHI), Delhi, a pioneer and centre of excellence in cardiac care, is celebrating 28 years of path-breaking work and service to the numerous heart patients, who have benefitted from treatment, at this outstanding facility. Armed with clinical expertise and cutting-edge medical technology, the hospital has set enviable benchmarks in Cardiac Bypass Surgery, Minimally Invasive Surgery, Interventional Cardiology, Non-invasive Cardiology, Pediatric Cardiology and Pediatric Cardiac Surgery. Till date, FEHI has successfully completed over 1,79,000 Coronary Angiographies, over 97,000 Cardiac Surgeries and almost 62,000 Coronary Angioplasties, in addition to several life-saving procedures. The hospital also performed India's first Trans Catheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) and Bioresorbable Vascular Scaffold (BVS); Asia Pacific's first Directional Atherectomy, Angioscopy, Drug Eluting Stenting, etc. Over the years, FEHI has cloned a Heart Care Network of 19 hospitals and Heart Command Centers in

India and abroad. It has also launched the revolutionary e-ICU program, enabling remote and timely access to critical care. Fortis Escorts Heart Institute has won numerous awards and accolades, the most recent among them being the 'Best Cardiology Hospital' at the ICICI Lombard & CNBC TV18 India Healthcare Awards for 2012, 2013 and the No 1. Ranking in the Private Cardiac category Hospital by The Week Nielson Best Hospitals Survey, 2014 and 2015.

About Fortis Healthcare Limited

Fortis Healthcare Limited is a leading integrated healthcare delivery service provider in India. The healthcare verticals of the company primarily comprise hospitals, diagnostics and day care specialty facilities. Currently, the company operates its healthcare delivery services in India, Dubai, Mauritius and Sri Lanka with 45 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and over 346 diagnostic centres.

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