Editorial Policy on Clinical Transplantation Articles from the People's Republic of China

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Published online: 12 June 2010
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For many years Western journals have resisted requests to publish clinical transplantation articles from the People's Republic of China because of concerns over human rights issues and, in particular, the ethics of using organs from executed prisoners, often without consent. Changes in policy and definition of death in China have meant that other sources of organs for transplantation can legally be used. In particular living-donor liver transplantation has expanded substantially in China over recent years and does not raise the same ethical concerns as cadaveric transplantation. In view of these changes in policy and recognizing the valuable contribution that Chinese surgeons may make to clinical practice, the *World Journal of Surgery* has introduced a new policy regarding clinical transplantation manuscripts. The journal has decided to consider manuscripts for publication where explicit signed statements are made affirming (1) that consent was obtained to the use of

donor organs for transplantation either from the donor in life or from the family of the donor and (2) that none of the donors were prisoners who had been executed. These two statements are distinct and must both be met before a manuscript will be entered into the review process. These criteria are designed to provide reassurance that ethical standards of organ donation have been met in keeping with the editorial policy of the *World Journal of Surgery*.

The *World Journal of Surgery* and its editorial board reserve the right to impose any sanctions that it considers appropriate should evidence come to light that these criteria have been breached by authors or where false information has been provided. Such sanctions may include retraction of published manuscripts, imposition of a time-limited ban on publication or informing other journal editors of breach of ethics policy, research governance, or deception.

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