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Dr Ronnie Goldberg
C/O the "Have a Heart, Give a Part" Project
Rotary Club of Williamstown
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Thursday 9th December 2010

Dear Ronnie,

An update on our progress at the Alfred Hospital. As you are aware, with the support of the Rotary Club of Williamstown and Australian Rotary Health, a few years ago we were able to start seriously exploring the possibilities of an alternative source of human organs for transplantation. In particular we were looking at the situation where the heart had stopped rather than the more typical circumstances where brain death had occurred.

Our research, as supported by Rotary, was successful and we have since gone on now to show that these organs can be very successfully transplanted in to humans. We have done 61 lung transplants this year at the Alfred and 16 of these have been donation after cardiac death donors. We have done 35 human transplants in total in the last 4 ½ years. All the other lung transplant programs in Australia now have similar program to be able to use such organs and there are over 55 transplants having been done in Australia just of lungs. Kidney transplants, liver transplants, pancreas transplants and other tissues and eyes have also come from the same donors and are responsible for quite a surge in transplantation activity in 2010. The Rudd Government put money in to organ donation and championed donation after cardiac death transplantation and this has been the main thing that has increased these organ donor numbers. We are busy but very pleased with the successes of these transplants.

We have presented this work at the International Society of Health and Lung Transplant meeting earlier in the year in Chicago and at the World Transplant Meeting in Vancouver in August. The work was applauded and indeed we are in the highest scored abstracts and presentations winning an award at the Chicago meeting. Only this week, we have been communicating with groups in the United Kingdom and USA about ways of making the whole process more efficient and further increasing numbers in these countries.

Again, these advances have been really exciting and we are very pleased to have been set upon the path with the help of Rotary. Good luck with all of your other endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

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