



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH MALAYSIA**

#### Procedure in Organ Donation

18 February 2013

1. This statement is released in response to a front page news article in *The Star* dated 18 February 2013 titled "Organ-ised Harvest".
2. I wish to emphasise that the Ministry of Health Malaysia has neither made any such statement nor embarked on any such initiative to increase organ donation rate by targeting patients involved in road accidents or homicidal cases.
3. Saving lives has always been **the top priority and an important professional responsibility** of all healthcare personnel and also the Ministry. All patients are treated equally with adequate and appropriate medical care in accordance with the highest ethical standards. It is therefore inappropriate to imply that a certain group of patients are being targeted for "organ harvesting".
4. In accordance with subsection 2(2) of the Human Tissue Act 1974 [Act 130], consent by family of the deceased is required before organ or tissue donation can be carried out by a registered medical practitioner. In addition, subsection 3(3) of the same Act also requires, apart from consent by family, written authorization by a magistrate to be obtained before organ donation can be carried out from any deceased person whose death is under police investigation.

5. I therefore wish to reiterate that based on the laws of this country there are certain procedural requirements that need to be complied with during the process of organ or tissue donation involving the deceased whose death is being investigated by the police and this includes patients who died as a result of road traffic accidents and homicide. Thus, to ensure a more efficient and effective way of handling such deceased donors, the Ministry of Health Malaysia in collaboration with the Royal Malaysian Police and the Federal Court of Malaysia have developed a guideline document on this (Director General of Health Circular no. 4 Year 2013). The guideline is also intended **to facilitate the process of donation** once consent by family has been obtained.
  
6. The Ministry believes that the article by The Star was meant to increase public awareness on relevant issues in organ donation and transplantation. However, the Ministry feels that it is important to correct some information to avoid unnecessary misperception by the public on the country's healthcare system. The Ministry always **appreciates the contribution and collaboration** with the media in supporting the Ministry's initiative in helping many patients in need.

**DATUK DR NOOR HISHAM ABDULLAH**  
**b.p Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Malaysia**

**Putrajaya**