Reviewer's report

Title: What ICU nurses in different Austrian hospitals know and think about the Austrian organ donation law

Version: 2, Date: 23 May 2014

Reviewer: Joseph Verheijde

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The authors, elaborating in their previous publication, again noted that the ICU nurses at University Hospital in Graz were more critical in their view on the Austrian organ donation law than their colleagues in other hospitals that have a Christian background AND are not at all or marginally involved in the organ procurement and transplantation process.

The working assumption is that nurses working at hospitals run by religious congregations feel compelled to accept Christian values in their role as nurses.

Two major concerns appear to present themselves (despite that the authors note that "the differences between these two specific types of hospitals promote such speculations:

1. The study did not look at the diversity of religious belief or non-belief among nurses working at either the University Hospital or the other group of hospitals.
2. The study did not study the impact of dominant Christian belief systems on the attitudes of nurses on organ donation law and practices.

It should also be noted and for the authors to include that the Roman Catholic Church is not unique in their acceptance of organ donation from brain-dead individuals. Both religious and secular organizations have widely accepted the acceptability of organ procurement under these circumstances. This begs the question what makes the Catholic institution unique in its influence on attitudes toward organ donation/procurement among ICU nurses. Phrased differently, do secular hospitals worse in promoting positive attitudes to organ donation than religion-based hospitals?

Of interest is the fact that the "informed" cohort appears more willing to comply with the wishes of the donor family than the "uninformed" group. I am assuming here that in such cases the families do not agree with organ procurement and informed nurses would agree to not proceed and thus implicitly overriding the implied consent underlying the opt-out system.

Authors correctly point to a second explanation for their findings in that ICU nurses at University Hospital of Graz are routinely confronted with medical and emotional aspects of organ procurement and transplantation practices.

I agree with the authors' conclusion that further studies are needed on the
psychological aspects of organ procurement and transplantation practices. Although authors did not make any conclusion about the impact of religion or religion-affiliation on the attitudes of ICU nurses towards the transplantation practice.

I would recommend expanding the manuscript to include the issues I outlined above in the discussion section.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.