

# Medical schools launch organ donation, transplant courses

China performs the world's second largest number of organ transplants, but a shortage of qualified transplant doctors is impeding progress. Now the country has sped up training of doctors, with the help from the international community.

Seven Chinese universities will conduct postgraduate training in organ donation and transplants this year.

The laKeTLOD (Knowledge transfer and leadership in organ donation from Europe to China) is co-founded by the European Commission and Chinese universities. Launched Tuesday at Shanghai Jiaotong University, laKeTLOD expects to enroll 20 postgraduate students in a course on organ donation and transplants this autumn.

Specialists from three universities in France, Italy and Spain will offer training in accordance with European guidelines.

Twenty-two Chinese doctors have already been through a three-month online course and will be in Spain from May 21 for a week of further training. They will then offer courses on what they have learned to 140 healthcare postgraduates over two years in universities in Beijing, Kunming, Nanchang, Nanning, Shanghai and Wuhan.

Marti Manyalich, President of Spain's Donation and Transplantation Institute (DTI), said at the launch that training is not just about sharing knowledge, but about transferring the course to China, adapted to local needs and delivered in Chinese.

"Seven universities are not enough. We must train more Chinese professionals in the next decades," said Manyalich.

Spain has more organ donations per capita than any other country. It has been at the forefront of training on the subject for thousands of healthcare professionals worldwide since the 1990s.

China has the largest number of organ donations per year in Asia, and the second number of organ transplants globally after the U.S., but lags far behind on a per capita basis.

"But China is changing," said Francis Delmonico, representative of the World Health Organization and former president of the Transplantation Society.

Organ donation is a challenge in China due to lack of training and health professionals, said Wang Qian, Dean of International Cooperation Office of China's Capital Medical University, one of the participants in laKeTLOD.

Currently, 169 Chinese hospitals can perform transplants with the number

expected to reach 300 in the next five years.

“We are waiting for the Chinese versions of textbooks and more medical specialists to join the program,” said Chen Xiaosong, who will teach the course at Shanghai Jiaotong University.