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Alcor News Bulletin

Number 26: May 8, 2004

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Two Cases in April

Alcor's patient population has reached 63 with the addition of two members this month. Both cases originated in Florida and involved four-day standby efforts.

During the first case, A-1772, Tanya Jones traveled to Florida to participate. The patient was suffering from pancreatic cancer (one of the more insidious forms of cancer), having been diagnosed less than six months earlier. With the support of his family and physician, the patient was admitted to a local hospice for care, and the transport team was able to remain nearby so as to be ready at the time of pronouncement.

This was the first case in some time that used a team of Florida paramedics for stabilization and transport. Though largely unfamiliar with the particulars of cryonics care, these paramedics had nearly all the skills necessary to

participate. Little training was required, and what little there was revolved mostly around the details of negotiating with the family, hospice, and mortuary personnel. Stabilization procedures included surface cooling, medication administration, and blood washout.

As our first whole-body case in some time, this patient received the glycerol perfusion upon reaching Arizona. Terminal concentrations were reached, and the deeper cooling proceeded without incident.

Our second Florida patient was a young man admitted to the hospital for liver problems. His condition was initially considered to be a side-effect of experimental HIV medications he was taking, but later determined to be the result of Hodgkin's disease. Once the diagnosis indicated the drug protocol was not at fault, his doctors immediately changed their approach and began treating the underlying condition. A-1562 was rushed into chemotherapy, but was so weak that we were uncertain he would survive the treatment. A standby team was deployed and later sent home when the patient responded fairly well.

When the initial call came in, we spoke with the hospital about prompt pronouncement and what aspects of the stabilization our team would be able to implement. Though the administrators and legal department were unwilling to allow us to perform our procedures on site, they did agree to administer an abbreviated medication protocol and pack the patient in ice until such time as the release could be completed. Most of the non-experimental medications would be provided by their pharmacy and given after pronouncement by the nurses. These instructions were included in the patient's chart for later reference.

Unfortunately, the patient's illness was too severe, and his decline continued. In accordance with his wishes, the doctors withdrew medication and life support a few days later. When we heard this would be done, we dispatched the local paramedics to manage this case; and within 24 hours, the patient was pronounced.

Given the high infectious status of this patient and the lack of experience of our paramedics with washout protocols (and that no Alcor staff was on-site for this case), transport procedures were limited to surface cooling and medication support. The patient was shipped to Alcor on the first available flight and washout was done at Alcor.

Under the circumstances, we expected the cryoprotection to be problematic due to the lack of field washout. We were pleasantly surprised to see one of the fastest applications of the vitrification protocol in the short history of this procedure being used on patients. Flow rates and pressures were good, and the uptake of cryoprotectant was notably uniform. There was good retraction of the brain, and little edema observed throughout the five-hour procedure.

Both patients have been cooled to liquid nitrogen temperature. One (the whole body) has been transferred to long-term storage as of this writing; transfer of the other is expected shortly. [TJ]

Technical Case Reports

We have completed the format design and internal publication of the first of our technical case reports. The original contains highly confidential information, but a public version, with names of involved parties removed, will be published in Cryonics magazine, replacing the standard narrative format.

With the establishment of a format for analysis and reporting, we expect to compile technical case data on all cases missing reports. In time, we intend to also go back and re-examine past cases. Not a new idea, the intention behind this effort was to assemble the data necessary to actually compare cryopreservation procedures on an analytical level.

Though it is difficult to compare preservation methods when you cannot take tissue samples of the important organs (like the brain), Research Associate Todd Huffman is working with other scientists to establish non-invasive criteria. Some of the elements under investigation are lactic acid and creatinine kinase levels, and vascular resistance (an idea of Hugh Hixon's). More sophisticated analysis comparing cooling rates and ischemic injury is also under development. These technical reports are intended to cover the good, the bad, and the ugly of a cryonics case, and to provide a record of changes in protocols and procedures that occur as the result of our learning experiences.

In time, enough data will have been assembled to allow us to compare different transport scenarios and cryoprotection protocols, and any comprehensive analyses will also be published in Cryonics. [TJ]

Changes in Financial Methodology

On January 1, 2004, Alcor undertook the daunting task of reorganizing its financial reporting methodology. While we continue to use "fund accounting" for the time being, we have implemented the following enhancements to give us far more useful accounting data:

1. A new account numbering system for the chart of accounts;
2. Fund consolidation into a single database vs. five separate databases;
3. Implementation of transaction classing to separate financial reports;
4. Use of a systematic cost and income allocation formula for consistency;
5. A detailed transaction entry system to give us far more granularity in our financial reports;
6. Elimination of General Journal entries for transfer accounts to provide a better audit trail of inter-fund transfers.

These modifications to our accounting system have not been

without some pain during implementation, and as is usually the case for major change in any environment, it has taken longer than originally planned.

For the first time in many years, however, Alcor now has real-time financial data readily available to help us manage our resources more effectively. We have the ability to present accurate financial reports at our monthly board meetings without the inconvenience of working with obsolete data that result from reports produced several weeks or months later.

In addition, our real-time financial data vastly improves our ability to make sound financial decisions in a more timely fashion. These new capabilities represent a significant step forward in Alcor's fiscal management. [JW]

The Retirement of Joseph A. Hovey

We're all a little sad to announce the retirement of Joe Hovey from the Alcor staff. A suspension member since 1988 and a full time employee since August 1989, Joe has held many positions with Alcor, including bookkeeper and information manager, Comptroller, Corporate Secretary and Treasurer, and Vice President. Prior to joining the Alcor staff, Joe's employment history included working for big government (the CIA), big industry (RCA), and several small companies, mostly in the fields of accounting or computer applications.

Joe has helped Alcor significantly over the years, filling thankless roles behind the scenes, providing advice and support to the staff and Board throughout. Though he's officially retiring, we can still look forward to seeing Joe around the office, as he will be providing some contract fundraising assistance to the organization in the future.

On behalf of the Alcor staff and Board of Directors, I'd like to thank Joe for his fifteen years of service and encourage him to continue attending the parties and events we hold. [TJ]

Personal Statements Needed

I'm looking for statements endorsing cryonics, to be included in a future Alcor handbook and possibly other Alcor promotional materials.

Personal endorsements are a very effective way to encourage other people to sign up. Are you willing to donate 10 minutes of your time to write between 250 and 400 words explaining why you chose cryonics, and why it is important to you? If so, please send your statement in plain text as email to:

If possible, please avoid HTML, Word, or other formatting.

Plain text in the body of your email is preferred.

You may remain anonymous if you wish, but please include as much as possible of the following information:

- * Your age when you signed up
- * Your age now
- * Where you live (approximately)
- * Your primary occupation, if any
- * Any factors that made you hesitate to sign up
- * Any personal benefits you have received from being signed up
- * What cryonics means to you
- * What you hope to achieve ultimately from cryonics
- * Any other family members who are signed up

Also please append the following statement: "I affirm that the text in this email message was written solely by me. I assign copyright without compensation to Alcor Foundation for unlimited use of the text to promote cryonics in any medium throughout the world."

IMPORTANT: If you are willing to provide a photograph, this will enhance the value of your statement. Digital images should be no smaller than 400 x 600 pixels and no larger than 700 x 1000 pixels. Color and grayscale are both acceptable. If the image originated in color, please do not convert it to grayscale. If you send an image in JPEG format (recommended) please use a high-quality compression setting. Other acceptable formats include PNG, Photoshop, PDF, and TIFF. GIF and BMP are acceptable only for grayscale images with a full range of 255 tones. Files originating from either PC or Mac are acceptable.

Alcor will notify you if your statement will be published.

Your text will not be edited in any way without your permission.

Thank you!

--Charles Platt

Membership Statistics

On April 30, 2004 Alcor had 662 members on its Emergency Responsibility List. Three memberships were approved during this month, one membership was reinstated, and two suspensions were performed. No cancellations occurred. Overall, there was a net gain of two members this month. Alcor also has 121 applicants for membership. There was a net gain of one applicant in April. [JC]

Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2004 at 11:00 AM (PST), also 11:00 AM local Arizona time.

Board meetings are held on the first Saturday of the month at the Alcor facility (7895 East Acoma Drive in Scottsdale, AZ). Members are encouraged to attend.

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End of Alcor News bulletin #26 dated May 8, 2004.
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