

Name of Student: Leung Pui Han

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ABSTRACT

Even though bone marrow transplantation has been successfully performed in a substantial number of patients with hematological disorders and cancers, it still hardly bypasses the problems of constant shortage of donor and the morbidity and mortality especially associated with allogeneic transplantation. Promising clinical results indicated umbilical cord blood overcomes those problems as a better alternative source of hematopoietic stem and progenitor cells for transplantation. Study on Chinese pregnant women's perspectives on umbilical cord blood transplantation has been conducted in a representative Hong Kong regional hospital. The result unveiled they lack the knowledge in this emerging technology. Despite of this, over 70% of the women responded indicated they would consider umbilical cord blood donation. They were enthusiastic regardless of their age, parity, educational level or family medical history. They donated probably for the reasons of charitable feeling's, obligation to help and less likely the expectation of reciprocal help from others. Most of them expressed donation would be a means of using the waste tissue. Nearly all of those having blood donation responded positively on donating placenta probably they viewed as an extension of confidence in the ethical management of the former. While people who did not have the "take" experience (blood transfusion) would also support the donation as it is the making use of discarded material. The possible reasons for those decide not to have umbilical cord blood collected or donated include the safety concerns of the mother and neonate, husbands' objection, their fear of the uncertain usage of placenta, controversial problem of confidentiality, storage fee, fear of getting less attention from the health care team, all of which could stem from the deficiency of knowledge. The majority (90%) expressed interest on this emerging technology and wish to know more. Only a few subjects agreed cord blood donors should be reimbursed. These data will be useful in designing an educational program in the future, hoping that more consent for cord blood donation will be obtained, a prerequisite which is crucial for the setting up of an umbilical cord blood bank.