

Liver Transplantation in Sri Lanka

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Although kidney transplantation had become well established liver transplantation had not been even attempted when we stepped in to the 21st century. A couple of unsuccessful attempts at the Colombo National Hospital had a negative impact on all those who were thinking of transplanting livers. However, the transplant team of the UoC took on the enigmatic transplant procedure on the liver in July 2010. The liver was from a deceased donor. Surgeons Mandika Wijeyaratne, Rezni Cassim and Nalaka Gunawansa supported by the anaesthesia and critical care team led by Anuja Abayadeera performed the first successful liver transplant operation at the Colombo National Hospital on a 48 year old man with terminal chronic liver disease. This success was crucial to the future of liver transplantation in Sri Lanka where there was a formidable group with a negative approach that expected and hoped for failure. This was followed by several other teams namely Ragama, Kandy and Anuradhapura following suite in the following decade. However, reliance on deceased donor for livers have resulted in less than one hundred livers being transplanted since and there is clearly a need to proceed with living donation as it has been with kidneys. I hope to see a liver program similar to that is in place for kidneys in the next five years.