

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN Telephone: 020 8906 2211



HIA: HIB April 17, 2015

TO BODIES OF ELDERS OF FOREIGN-LANGUAGE CONGREGATIONS AND GROUPS

Re: Meeting Medical Needs in the Foreign-Language Field

Dear Brothers:

Shortly we will be writing to all bodies of elders regarding how best to support those with medical needs. While the reminders in that forthcoming letter apply to all congregations, there are specific needs in foreign-language groups and congregations that we would like to address separately. This letter will provide a point of reference for elders serving in this field.

Advance Decision to Refuse Specified Medical Treatment Document

First and foremost, we wish to emphasize the need for publishers to **complete, and carry,** an *Advance Decision* document **in English.** Only the English document has legal validity in this country, even if the equivalent is available in the publisher's own language. Your highlighting this necessity, perhaps during shepherding visits, will go a long way towards ensuring that our brothers and sisters are prepared for any "unexpected events."—Eccl. 9:11.

One feature of this document is the provision for recording an NHS number. This continues to be a useful aid in locating publishers in hospital. At times, the patient name held by the hospital may differ from the name by which a publisher is known by in the congregation; an NHS number eliminates this problem, and should be recorded on the publisher's *Advance Decision* document if at all possible. Please note that this will only apply to publishers in the United Kingdom.

jw.org

We would also like to increase awareness of what is currently available on the jw.org website to help our brothers and sisters, and you as elders as you shepherd and support them. The following material is available in the "Log in" section for congregation elders under *Documents>Forms>Medical*:

- *Instructions for Filling In the Advance Decision Document (dpai)*
- "How Do I View Blood Fractions and Medical Procedures Involving My Own Blood?" (*kmi11/06*)
- "Are You Ready to Face a Faith-Challenging Medical Situation?" (*kmi3/91*)
- "Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies" (*g09/11*)
- "Do Jehovah's Witnesses accept any minor fractions of blood?" ("Questions From Readers," *w04 6/15*)
- "In the light of Bible commands about the proper use of blood, how do Jehovah's Witnesses view medical procedures using one's own blood?" ("Questions From Readers," *w00 10/15*)
- *How Parents Can Protect Their Children From Misuse of Blood (S-55)*

It is important for each elder to **know which of these documents are available in the language of your congregation or group,** and to be familiar with them.

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Also of great assistance is the information in the appendix of *Keep Yourselves in God's Love*, pp. 215-218.

Making and documenting decisions with regard to medical treatment continues to pose a challenge for our brothers and sisters, not least in foreign-language groups and congregations. Your diligence in highlighting the provisions of "the faithful and discreet slave" will ensure that they continue to feel safe in the care of their spirit-appointed shepherds, and by extension, their Father Jehovah.

Please accept our warmest Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,
*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

PS to the secretary:

This letter should be retained in the congregation file along with other material relating to the Hospital Liaison Committee and replaces the letter dated HIA:HSA November 10, 2011.