

Jehovah's Witnesses Cleveland Circuit 1

Flat 1, Kingdom Hall, Newington Road, Middlesbrough TS4 3EP

April 4, 2016

Re: Simplified Advance Decision Document

Dear Brothers

The April 1, 2016 letter To All Congregations opens with this sentence: 'Our *Advance Decision to Refuse Specified Medical Treatment* document serves as a protection against forced blood transfusions in the case of a medical emergency.' The Governing Body is hereby refocusing our attention on the main issue, preventing a forced blood transfusion in a medical emergency.

You will notice that the letter to be read to the congregation does not mention blood derivatives (fractions) or other procedures, such as cell salvage, so it is not necessary for elders to ask publishers to express these preferences on the Simplified ADD. However, if asked, the elders may assist publishers by referring them to the November 2006, *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, mentioned in paragraph 2 of the PS to Bodies of Elders.

It is interesting to note that Guidelines for Supporting Those with Medical Needs (S-139) asks that particular attention should be given to elderly ones and that family members keep older copies of the ADD. However, it is still wise for the congregation secretary to also retain copies in his file.

If no family members are available, then the elders should give appropriate assistance to those in nursing homes and other care facilities to complete the new ADD. However, if the elderly one is suffering from dementia or some other form of cognitive impairment, then others should not force such ones to complete a simplified ADD; it is better to retain older copies of the form.

It has been observed that ADDs in some congregation files held by the secretary are poorly maintained, not in alphabetical order and include out-dated copies (apart from those needed to be retained for the elderly.) Remember that ADDs are for emergency situations. Therefore, if the elders are contacted to provide the congregation's copy of an ADD, what type of filing system would best allow you to locate it urgently and scan a readable copy to a medical professional? Witness patients are transfused because an ADD cannot be located!

Therefore, brothers, I appeal to you to make sure that a copy of the new ADD for every publisher is kept in alphabetical order, perhaps using an A-Z filing system to expedite it's location and so that it can be kept neat, clean and legible for scanning and emailing for up to 4 years, after which a new copy should be completed. It is also essential that when the secretary is away from his congregation, this file should be given to another elder to care for until his return.

I very much appreciate your careful attention to these details so that a new file of ADDs may be retained 'in an orderly manner.' – 1 Cor. 14:40 ftn.

Sending you my warm Christian love and best wishes,

Your brother

Ian Harwood

Circuit Overseer
Cleveland 1