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Launch of EU Rapid Alert platform for human Tissues and Cells



A secure alert platform launched by the European Commission will improve the safety of patients undergoing transplantation and medical procedures involving human tissues and cells, e.g. bone marrow, cornea, skin, oocytes, sperm, etc.

From today, national health authorities can use the web-based Rapid Alert system for Tissues and Cells (RATC) in case of alerts relating to human tissues or cells transferred across borders. Timely exchange of urgent information between Member States can ensure that cross-border incidents are prevented or contained and immediate measures taken to ensure the safety of patients. The RATC will be used in parallel with existing national vigilance systems which collect and manage alerts on tissues and cells donated and used within a Member State.

A high volume of tissues and cells are donated and transplanted every year in the EU. More than 130 000 units of tissues and cells were donated and over 60 000 transplants performed in 2011 alone. Many of these tissues and cells pass national borders during these processes. Vigilance beyond national borders, as provided by the RATC, is therefore extremely important.

In addition to quality and safety defects of tissues/cells, the RATC can be used to raise the alarm on illegal and fraudulent activities in this field, as well as on developing epidemiological situations (e.g. disease outbreaks) which may have cross-border implications.

For more information please visit: http://ec.europa.eu/health/blood_tissues_organisms/tissues/index_en.htm

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