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## Edah Haredit promotes 'anti-donor' card

Aug. 6, 2008

JPost.com Staff , THE JERUSALEM POST

A new 'anti-donor' initiative in the Haredi community seeks to prevent organ donation and counter donor cards, Army Radio reported Wednesday.

The plan, which reportedly has support from key rabbis in the Haredi community, was to distribute "life cards" that would be carried on one's person, similar to an organ donor card, but which state that "there is no permission to take from me - either in life or in death - an organ or any part of my body for any use whatsoever."

Edah Haredit spokesman Shmuel Fefenheim said that the card was being promoted, and would also be made available to the general public. "All of Israel is devoted to Torah, and everyone wants to live and also die as a Jew is meant to live and die," he added.

The initiative comes in the wake of a new law allowing organ donation in the case of a brain dead patient, which the Edah Haredit has called "a system for stealing organs." The community called for people to sign up for the "life card," and in the case of brain death, not to agree to donate any organs, but rather to pray for a miracle, Army Radio reported.

The recent legislation declared that lower-brain death and the halt of breathing could be determined only by a pair of doctors who have received authorization from a steering committee appointed by the ministry director-general.

When an approved doctor sets the moment of death - after which the patient can be disconnected from life support devices and organs may be removed for transplant - he must inform the family of the patient's lower-brain-death status. The family is entitled to receive all documentation and to consult with a clergyman before deciding whether to give organs. If accepting lower-brain death is regarded as forbidden by the patient according to information provided by the family, the ventilator will not be disconnected until the patient's heart stops beating.

The law also made the act of dealing in organ sales illegal, whether in Israel or abroad, after a number of cases emerged involving Israelis working as middlemen in organ sales abroad.

*Judy Siegel contributed to this report.*

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