

ISMETT welcomes the 7th edition of the Granfondo Bicycle Race of Transplant Recipients

On October 1, the seventh edition of the Granfondo Bicycle Race of Transplant Recipients ended in Messina. The noncompetitive event, organized by the Associazione Amici del Trapianto di Fegato (The Friends of Liver Transplantation Association) of Bergamo, headed by Valentina Lanfranchi, saw the participation of 23 transplant recipients, who covered 620 kilometers in Sicily in only 6 days. The Granfondo Race opened with a conference on organ donation, addressed principally to young students from the Vittorio Emanuele Latin School in Palermo. ISMETT Director Bruno Gridelli, Regional Transplant Center Coordinator Vito Sparacino, and Michelangelo Cossolini from Ospedali Riuniti in Bergamo were among the important physicians who took part in the event.

The choice of Sicily as the site of the event was not arbitrary. "This event aims at raising awareness on donation in Sicily," Sparacino explained, "given that our region has the highest rate of refusal to donate in Italy. We must learn to come together and to foster an understanding of the importance of donation." ISMETT Director Bruno Gridelli now works in Sicily, but 14 years ago he was one of the founders of the Transplant Unit at the Ospedali Riuniti in Bergamo. "ISMETT was more than happy to cooperate and help contribute to the success of the seventh edition of Granfondo," Gridelli said. "And since we work in a transplant center, we know how important it is to explain the value of donation, and of transplantation as a therapy. We wholeheartedly applaud events like this."

When the race was over, Dr. Cossolini offered his thanks. "I would like to thank everyone for the warm welcome extended to us in Palermo, and all over Sicily, on occasion of the 7th Granfondo," he said. "Everything went perfectly thanks to your efficient organization and assistance. The entire group was moved by the starting ceremony and the prologue to that ceremony at the Civico Hospital's Sala Barbera. I must tell you that we all felt at home. Special thanks to ISMETT, who welcomed us, and to the director general and staff of the Civico Hospital, who provided the conference room for the gathering."