

# Media Release



For Immediate Release  
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## **NATIONAL ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AWARENESS WEEK**

*A record number of lives saved in 2009, but more donor registrations are urgently needed*

Toronto, ON – Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) is kicking off National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week urging Ontarians to inform themselves about organ and tissue donation and to register their consent to donate. Last year, nearly 700 lives were saved because of a record number of organ donors.

“2009 was a record-breaking year and this upward trend in organ and tissue donation has continued in 2010,” says Frank Markel, President and CEO of TGLN. “Ontario’s success is the culmination of many years of solid progress through sound planning, hard work, and the generous support of the provincial government.”

In the two short years since the Organ Donation Strategy was announced by Premier Dalton McGuinty, TGLN has implemented many of the strategy’s recommendations, including improvements to donor registration, launch of multi-faith and youth outreach campaigns, and implementation of clinical best practices to drive donation performance and changes to consent to tissue donation.

Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, will deliver a statement in the legislature this week in recognition of National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week and to show her support for organ and tissue donation.

“We want to do all that we can to maximize donations and increase life-saving organ and tissue transplants,” said Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. “By working hard together, by encouraging people to register their consent to donate, and sharing their wishes with their families, we can all make a huge difference”

While donor registrations in Ontario increased by nine per cent between November 30, 2008 and December 31, 2009, and despite the majority of Ontarians indicating that they support organ and tissue donation, only 17 per cent of Ontarians over the age of 16 with health cards have registered their consent to donate. To save and enhance lives, more Ontarians need to register their consent to donate organs and tissue now.

You can register your consent to donate your organs and tissue by visiting your local ServiceOntario Health Card Services – OHIP office or outreach centre where you renew

your health card. You can also register by downloading and filling out a Gift of Life Consent Form from [www.giftoflife.on.ca](http://www.giftoflife.on.ca) and mailing it to the address on the form.

Even if you've already signed your donor card, please also register your decision so that this information is accessible at the time of your death and talk to your family about your decision.

For more information on National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week or on Trillium Gift of Life Network, please visit [www.giftoflife.on.ca](http://www.giftoflife.on.ca). You can also call 416-363-4001 or toll free 1-800-263-2833.

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*Trillium Gift of Life Network is a not-for-profit agency of the Government of Ontario and is responsible for planning, promoting, coordinating and supporting organ and tissue donation across Ontario and improving the system so that more lives can be saved.*

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