

Backgrounder

- 2009 was a record-breaking year for Ontario with 218 deceased organ donors and 1,299 tissue donors. This upward trend in organ and tissue donations has continued in 2010.
- A total of 691 lives were saved through organ transplants in 2009, a 17 per cent increase over 2008
- The number of deaths of people on the organ transplant wait list decreased by nearly 24 per cent in 2009
- In 2009, tissue donors provided bone grafts, heart valves and skin for life enhancing transplants, including 1,616 eyes for transplants to restore vision
- One organ and tissue donor can save up to eight lives and enhance as many as 75 others
- Today approximately 1,600 people in Ontario are waiting for a life-saving transplant
- 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 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. You can also call 416-363-4001 or toll free 1-800-263-2833.

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.