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Media Release

LIVING GREEN RIBBON FORMED IN OTTAWA

Events held in 10 cities to recognize National Organ & Tissue Donation Awareness Week in Ontario

April 21, 2009 – Ottawa, ON – Hundreds of local residents gathered together today to form a Living Green Ribbon. They held up green signs with a large “YES” that symbolizes the growing movement to support organ and tissue donation.

Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) and The Kidney Foundation of Canada have been working in partnership with local volunteer groups to organize these Living Green Ribbon events as part of their National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week (NOTDAW) activities in Ontario.

“The Living Green Ribbon event is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about organ and tissue donation in Ottawa,” said Frank Markel, President and CEO of Trillium Gift of Life Network. “We know that right at this moment there are nearly 1700 people waiting for an organ transplant and many more need tissue transplants in Ontario. This number shows us why we need to get people thinking about organ and tissue donation.”

Living Green Ribbon events are also taking place in nine other cities throughout the province during NOTDAW, which runs from April 19-26 this year.

“The enthusiastic participation in Living Green Ribbon events shows that communities across Ontario have tremendous support for organ and tissue donation,” said Jim O’Brien, Executive Director of The Kidney Foundation of Canada, Ontario Branch. “We will continue to remind people to register their consent to be an organ and tissue donor and to talk to their families about their wishes – it can save someone’s life.”

The Kidney Foundation of Canada began the Living Green Ribbon concept in Ottawa, Ontario in 2002. The event was initiated by Leanne McDougall, Kidney Foundation volunteer and Board Director, who celebrates the 20th anniversary of her heart transplant this year.

"When we began the Living Green Ribbon, our greatest wish was that it could become a provincial event by drawing attention each year to the tremendous need for organ and tissue donation," said McDougall. "Our dream has become a reality and now, with the support of the Trillium Gift of Life Network, Kidney Foundation volunteers across the province are participating in Living Green Ribbon events. Together, we will be able to take a strong message to everyone in Ontario that organ and tissue donation works, saves lives, gives sight, eases suffering and provides a second chance to many who feared that chance would never come."

“Events like this one today celebrate the efforts of volunteers, the generosity of donors and the lives of those who have been given the gift of life,” said Markel.

You can register your consent to donate your organs and tissue by visiting your local Service Ontario 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.

If you've already signed your donor card, please also register your decision and talk to your family about your decision.

For more details on Trillium Gift of Life Network and events that are taking place during NOTDAW, please visit our website at www.giftoflife.on.ca . You can also call 416-363-4001 or toll free 1-800-263-2833

To learn more about The Kidney Foundation of Canada and its organ donation awareness activities, please visit our website at www.kidney.on.ca

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