

Media Release

For Immediate Release
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GTA LAGS BEHIND THE REST OF ONTARIO IN ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR REGISTRATION

Only 22 per cent of Ontarians are registered, despite increased awareness

Just over 66,000 Ontarians registered their consent for organ and tissue donation in the past three months, edging the provincial rate of registration up slightly to 22 per cent of the eligible population, according to new information available today on the Gift of 8 Movement at www.BeADonor.ca.

Registration rates in the GTA remain the lowest in the province, with Concord, Markham, Thornhill, Woodbridge, Vaughan and Scarborough reporting rates under 10 per cent. Northern Ontario continues to lead, with Garson, a suburb of Sudbury, becoming the first community in the province to achieve a donor registration rate of 50 per cent.

One donor can save up to eight lives and enhance the lives of up to 75 others through the gift of tissue. Right now over 1,500 Ontarians are waiting for an organ transplant and sadly every three days, one of them will die waiting.

As many as one in four Ontarians mistakenly believe they are registered donors because they have signed a paper donor card. Donor cards are simply not effective, as they are not always available when needed. When a person registers their consent at beadonor.ca, their donation decision is made available to their family at the right time, so that they can honour their loved one's generous choice to save lives.

Quote:

"Ontario is moving in the right direction and awareness of the importance of organ and tissue donation is at an all time high. However, there are still many people who mistakenly believe they have registered their consent," says Ronnie Gavsie, President and CEO of Trillium Gift of Life Network. "It only takes two minutes to register or check to make sure you are indeed registered at www.BeADonor.ca. Organ and tissue donor registration is the only secure and guaranteed way to make your decision to save and enhance lives known."

Quick Facts:

- The Northern Ontario communities of North Bay, Timmins, Sturgeon Falls, and Val Caron all reported donor registration rates of over 45 per cent.

- New wait list statistics available on www.giftoflife.on.ca show that as of July 24, 2012, 1,523 people are waiting for an organ, with 22 of these people under the age of 18.
- Since the launch of the Gift of 8 Movement in April 2012, 271 people and 52 organizations have created web profiles on www.BeADonor.ca to inspire their neighbours, friends and co-workers to register their consent for organ and tissue donation.
- Registration saves lives. Families approached to consider organ and tissue donation almost always consent when they are given evidence of their loved ones' registration. Those who decline donation usually state it is because they are not sure what their loved one would have wanted.
- You can also register consent through your smartphone at beadonor.ca.

The Gift of 8 Movement:

Launched in April 2012, the Gift of 8 Movement aims to make Ontarians aware of donor registration rates in their communities and help increase registered donors by launching their own Gift of 8 campaign to inspire their neighbours, co-workers, friends and family to register consent. Registration rates are updated quarterly, by community. To find registration rates for your local community, visit www.beadonor.ca/yourcommunity.

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

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