

# Media Release

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For Immediate Release  
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## RECORD NUMBER OF TISSUE DONORS IN ONTARIO IN 2013

*Organ and tissue donor registration saves and enhances lives*

Last year in Ontario, more deceased donors than ever before gave the gift of tissue. New numbers released by Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) show that in 2013, there were more than 1,800 tissue donors, up from 1,702 in 2012.

“Often when people think of donation they think of the lives saved through organ donation, which is an amazing gift,” says Ronnie Gavsie, TGLN President and CEO. “What many people may not realize is that one donor can also enhance the lives of up to 75 people through the gift of tissue. The potential to become a tissue donor is far greater than an organ donor and the impact is profound for the recipients.”

Donated skin was an essential part of Ralph Walker’s treatment following a propane explosion in 2006 that left him with burns to 90 per cent of his body.

“The use of donated tissue was instrumental not only in my recovery, but also my survival,” he says. “Without it I would not be here today.”

Tissue donation can enhance lives in a multitude of ways: a cornea transplant can restore sight; a heart valve replacement can help a child with a congenital heart condition be able to play and thrive; and bone grafts repair or rebuild diseased bone, helping to restore mobility.

Though the number of tissue donors has been increasing for the past few years, there are still not enough donors to meet demand so hospitals must import tissue from outside of Ontario to meet the needs of patients.

When people in Ontario register their decision to donate at [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca), they are given the opportunity to register consent for both organ and tissue donation.

New data available today at [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca) shows that as of December 31, 2013, 2.84 million or 24 per cent of Ontarians have registered their consent to save lives through organ and tissue donation, an increase of 58,922 registrations since September 30, 2013.

### **Quick Facts:**

- One tissue donor can enhance the lives of up to 75 people.
- Tissue that can be donated for transplant in Ontario: corneas, bone, skin, and heart valves.
- TGLN works with hospitals and five tissue banks in Ontario to facilitate tissue donation: the Eye Bank of Canada, The Hospital for Sick Children's Tissue Laboratory, the Ontario Professional Firefighters Skin Bank, Mount Sinai Allograft Technologies, and Lake Superior Centre for Regenerative Medicine.
- One organ donor can save up to eight lives.
- Most families consent to donating their loved ones' organs and tissue if evidence of their registration is provided.
- Communities with the most improved organ and tissue donor registration rates, from September 30 to December 31, 2013: Penetanguishene (4%), Essex (4%), Midland (4%), Parry Sound South Shore (4%), and Arnprior (4%).
- It is very simple to register consent for organ and tissue donation in Ontario: at [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca), at any ServiceOntario centre or by mail, download a copy of the consent form at [www.giftoflife.on.ca](http://www.giftoflife.on.ca)

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*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.*