

# Media Release

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For Immediate Release  
January 31, 2013

## **ONTARIO SEES RECORD NUMBER OF ORGAN DONORS, LIFESAVING TRANSPLANTS IN 2012**

### ***MORE LIVES COULD BE SAVED THROUGH INCREASED DONOR REGISTRATION RATES***

A record-breaking 1,053 lifesaving organ transplants were performed in Ontario in 2012, an increase of 11 per cent over the previous year and the third year in a row the province has reported growth in the number of transplants performed. Over 250 deceased organ donors and their families gave the gift of life in 2012, an increase of 15 per cent over the previous year.

Despite the increase in donors, lives are still being lost because only 22 per cent of Ontarians have registered their consent to organ and tissue donation.

In 2012, 95 people on the transplant wait list died. 196 families, in the absence of registered consent, declined to donate their loved ones' organs. Had their family member been registered, an estimated 370 additional lifesaving transplants could have been performed.

New information available today on the Gift of 8 Movement at [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca) shows that since April 1, 2012, 185,430 people have registered consent to organ and tissue donation. Rates available by community show that the GTA continues to lag behind the rest of the province, with Concord, Woodbridge, Vaughan and Scarborough reporting registration rates under 10 per cent. Northern Ontario communities continue to lead donor registration rates in Ontario. Two suburbs of Sudbury, Hanmer and Garson, now report 50 per cent of their population as registered organ and tissue donors.

One donor can save up to eight lives and enhance the lives of up to 75 others through the gift of tissue. Visit [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca) to register or to check your registration status. It is important to note that a signed donor card does not mean you are registered.

#### **Quotes:**

“With the help of Ontario’s world class transplant programs, hospitals and our government partners, Trillium Gift of Life Network is working hard to build a culture of donation in this province. These numbers reflect the work that is being done, but also the work left to do. It has never been easier to be a hero. Please take two minutes to register your consent to organ and tissue donation at [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca). Lives depend on it.”

**Ronnie Gavsie, President and CEO of Trillium Gift of Life Network**

“What greater legacy is there to leave than the gift of life? We are making progress, but more lives could be saved. My hope is that Ontario families use today’s news as an opportunity to take some time to discuss their wishes with loved ones and make sure they have registered their consent online at [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca).”

**Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care**

**Quick Facts:**

- In 2012, 1468 tissue donors enhanced the lives of thousands of patients, including corneas to restore sight, heart valves, bone and skin. .
- In 2012, 253 deceased Ontario donors contributed to 385 kidney transplants, 189 liver transplants, 104 lung transplants, 74 heart transplants, 23 kidney pancreas transplants, 20 pancreas transplants and one small bowel transplant.
- Since the launch of the Gift of 8 Movement in April 2012, users have created over 630 personal and organizational web profiles on [www.BeADonor.ca](http://www.BeADonor.ca) to inspire their neighbours, friends and co-workers to register consent for organ and tissue donation.
- Ontario's organ and tissue donor registration rate at December 31, 2012 is 22%.

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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.*