



**MEDIA RELEASE:**

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**NHS encourages residents to consider becoming organ donors**

Niagara Health System continues to encourage Niagara residents to save the lives of others by registering to become organ and tissue donors. During April, Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Month, NHS has worked hard to increase the level of awareness surrounding this important topic, as well as educate others on the process of registering their consent to donate at Trillium Gift of Life's website, [www.beadonor.ca](http://www.beadonor.ca).

Nearly 1,500 people are on the transplant waiting list in Ontario and many more are waiting for a tissue transplant. While 80 per cent of Ontarians say that giving consent for organ and tissue donation in advance is very important to them; only 27 per cent across the province and 29 per cent in Niagara have actually registered

NHS dialysis patient Krista Connor has been on the organ transplant waiting list for two years, after being diagnosed with a genetic kidney condition. She is an advocate for organ donation, always encouraging people to sign up to become donors. "Every three days, one person in Ontario dies while waiting for an organ transplant," says Krista. "Please consider becoming a donor, it only takes two minutes to [register](#)."

"The NHS is committed to our partnership with Trillium Gift of Life and continues to promote the importance of organ and tissue donation. Last year, the NHS made 1,150 referrals to TGLN," adds Heather Paterson, NHS Director of Clinical Services. "It is very important to register your decision to donate to ensure your wishes are respected. In knowing their loved one has registered their consent, almost all families honour this decision."

In 2014, the NHS had about 16 organ donations and more than 100 tissue donations.

"I want to express my gratitude to the family members who have made the decision to give the gift of life by donating their loved ones' organs and tissues," says Ms. Paterson. "We are very mindful that these donations were the direct result of a family's loss of a loved one."

**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. Improving the system so that more lives can be saved is their main priority, as *one organ donor can save up to eight lives* through organ donation and enhance the lives of up to 75 others through tissue donation.

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