



MEDIA RELEASE

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**Help us increase the number of lives saved
through organ and tissue donations**

Niagara Health System (NHS) has increased efforts to save more lives through organ and tissue donation, and we encourage Niagara residents to do their part by registering their consent to donate organs and tissues.

Last year, there were three organ donors at the NHS, resulting in 16 organs being transplanted (livers, kidneys, lungs, hearts, pancreas). There were 53 tissue donations, most of these were eye donors (48 eye donors and 5 multiple tissue donors). 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 can be used to repair or rebuild diseased bone, helping to restore mobility.

“The Niagara Health System has a critical role in ensuring that every potential opportunity for donation be identified in an effort to save more lives,” says Heather Paterson, Director of Critical Care at the NHS. “Our healthcare team reports deaths and imminent deaths of potential donors to Trillium Gift of Life Network so their loved ones can be approached to consider donating organs and tissue. We are extremely proud to be part of the donation and transplant process, helping to save lives in a time of loss.”

One donor’s generosity can have a tremendous impact on improving the health of others, saving up to eight lives through organ donation and enhancing the lives of up to 75 others through tissue donation (including skin, bone and heart valves).

To increase the number of donations in Niagara, members of the public are encouraged to register their consent to donate organs and tissues: at www.BeADonor.ca, at any ServiceOntario centre or by mail, download a copy of the consent form at www.giftoflife.on.ca

By registering your consent, information about your decision can be shared with your family, so they can be made aware of your wishes. Trillium Gift of Life Network notes that most families consent to organ donation when their loved ones’ are registered. In the absence of donor registration, on average, just over half of families consent to organ donation.

“Registering your wishes to be an organ and tissue donor truly saves lives,” says Mrs. Paterson. “To date, less than 25 per cent of eligible Niagara residents have registered their consent to donate. The number of people registered across the province is similar to what we are experiencing in Niagara, and we are asking everyone to please help us help others by registering your consent.”

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