

2010 Report on Organ Donation in Quebec

GOOD NEWS IN SPITE OF A DIFFICULT YEAR

Montreal, February 18, 2011 – Thanks to 119 deceased organ donors, 371 persons benefited from a transplant in 2010. Unfortunately, there were also 46 deaths among people on the waiting list (compared to 58 in 2009), many of which could have been avoided. As of December 31, 2010, 1,241 people were registered on the single waiting list managed by Québec-Transplant.

Québec-Transplant considers this situation unacceptable and it is committed to improving it with stakeholders. "The year 2010 was a difficult one in spite of efforts to achieve a successful donation wherever possible," said Louis Beaulieu, the organization's executive director. "We're analyzing the situation to better identify the causes, which are rooted in multiple factors, and to better understand this decrease in the number of deceased donors compared to the previous year (138 donors in 2009). That said, where a potential donor is referred to Québec-Transplant and the medical and legal criteria are met, efforts by the many caregivers to achieve a successful donation under the coordination of Québec-Transplant attest to successful outcomes. Indeed, the average number of organs procured and transplanted per donor meets or exceeds the objectives set for best practices in North America. On average, some 3.7 organs were transplanted for each Quebec donor after neurological death".

Good news

- A record number of lung transplants were performed, with 34 transplants in 2010 compared to 32 in 2009 (138 donors) and 26 in 2008, a record year with 151 deceased donors.
- The number of organ donors after cardiocirculatory death rose from five in 2009 to seven in 2010. Starting in 2011, more hospitals will implement the deployment protocol for donors after cardiocirculatory death (DCD), which will make it possible to increase the number of donors in the years to come. Prior to 2007, this kind of donation was not possible. Since its inception in 2007, the DCD pilot project has completed its assessment of 17 donations, and the results speak for themselves.

"It's worth mentioning that in addition to the 119 donors, there were 29 others in 2010 who consented to organ donation but weren't able to complete the process for medical or legal reasons. Their generosity and that of their families deserve to be recognized," said Michel Carrier, medical director of Québec-Transplant.

- There were 50 living donations (47 kidney and three hepatic lobes) in 2010, compared to 34 in 2009, according to data made available by hospital transplantation programs in Quebec.

"Raising awareness among the public and health professionals is the key for the entire chain of life. Collectively and individually, we can help to save lives and improve the health of a great many people. That's why each and every consent counts," said Louis Beaulieu.

- In November 2010, the Minister of Health and Social Services announced measures to promote living donation, notably through a reimbursement program for some expenses incurred by persons during the process leading to organ donation. The terms and conditions of the program will be posted on the Québec-Transplant website in the spring of 2011.

- On December 8, 2010, the National Assembly of Quebec unanimously adopted bill 125, the *Act to facilitate organ donation and tissue*. The Act creates a national registry for organ and tissue donation consent, which will allow a greater number of citizens to register their consent.

Québec-Transplant hopes the government will continue its efforts in this regard, provide support and deploy the resources required to achieve the greatest possible number of donations. In fact, as well as save lives, organ donation allows Quebec's health system to save money: For each person who receives a kidney transplant, the government saves no less than \$40,000 per year.

Québec-Transplant reiterates the following:

- 1% of hospital deaths lead to organ donation. Hence the importance of each consent;
- Loved ones are more likely to become involved in the process leading to donation when the wishes of the deceased are known;
- Age does not preclude donation: A 76-year-old donor donated five organs, and the oldest donated a liver at the age of 88;
- It is important to notify loved ones of your intention to donate organs in order to ensure that they respect your wishes;
- Persons intent on finding out how to signal their consent or on obtaining the consent sticker may go to www.sign4life.ca;
- Persons intent on donating their organs may also ask a notary to include their Consent to organ and tissue donation registry: www.cdnq.org.

About Québec-Transplant

Québec-Transplant has a mandate from the Minister of Health and Social Services to save lives and improve the health of persons in need of a transplant by coordinating the organ donation process, ensuring the equitable attribution of organs, supporting best clinical practices through consensus-building and the mobilization of its partners, and promoting organ donation in the society at large. Québec-Transplant therefore works to ensure that the greatest possible number of Quebecers waiting for an organ can benefit from a transplant in as timely a fashion as practicable.

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