



UNDER EMBARGO: February 29, 2012 at 1:00 pm (ET)

Organ Donation in Québec

THANKS TO SUSTAINED EFFORTS OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS, QUÉBEC'S RESULTS IN ORGAN DONATION AFTER A DEATH HAVE REMAINED STABLE, YET THEY DO NOT MEET THE NEEDS OF PERSONS WAITING FOR A TRANSPLANT

Montréal, February 29, 2012 – According to data for 2011 published by Transplant Québec, some 396 persons received transplants, thanks to 137 deceased organ donors in Québec (18 more than 2010). As of December 31, 2011, 1, 264 persons were waiting for a transplant, 23 more than in 2010. Unfortunately, 59 persons died, an increase over 2010, when 46 deaths were reported.

Despite sustained efforts over the last five years, and despite the fact that Québec still registers one of the best deceased donor rates per million inhabitants in the last decade in Canada, more efforts are required to adequately meet the needs of persons waiting for a transplant.

Transplant Québec again appeals to the public sense of social solidarity by stressing the importance of every Québec citizen making his or her will known with respect to organ and tissue donation and informing loved ones of his or her decision.

- **The will and consent of still too many Quebecers remain unknown.**
Sustained efforts to communicate with the public at large (school program, programs targeting cultural communities, national campaign, etc.) would help increase the number of consents being registered and induce more family members to honour the will of the loved one when the time comes for donation.

Transplant Québec wishes to underline the major contribution made by physicians and health professionals in Québec hospitals to the entire donation process, from identifying potential donors, to the transplant itself. The agency counts on the commitment and dedication of professionals to procure a donation every time it is feasible to do so and consent has been given.

- **Identifying potential donors in hospitals is not systematic.**
Identifying potential donors and referring them to Transplant Québec are priority goals. Development within hospitals and the training of professionals must be systematically sustained to increase performance in Québec. Some solutions lie in recognizing the function of donation physician and an increased presence in hospital centres.

To considerably reduce the time-lag in receiving a transplant, Transplant Québec believes that additional measures are needed to breathe oxygen into the already highly solicited donation-transplant system. The executive director of Transplant Québec, Mr. Louis Beaulieu, maintains that measures taken by the government since late 2010 represent a step in the right direction. He underlines those aimed at facilitating the living donation, for example, the *Reimbursement Program for Living Donors*, or the inception of the national register of consent to organ and tissue donation, which should increase the number of consents in the medium term. He hastens to add that if Québec wants to surpass the rate of 20 deceased donors per million inhabitants, as is the case in the United States, France and Spain, new measures are needed.

Based on a realistic assumption, this would likely make it possible to provide transplants for 100 more patients per year and considerably reduce the waiting list for transplant.

Additional data for 2011 available at: www.transplantquebec.ca/QuebecTransplant_en/index_en.htm

About Transplant Québec

Transplant Québec 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. Transplant Québec 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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Source :

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