



**TRANSPLANT  
QUÉBEC**

*Ensemble pour  
le don d'organes,  
pour la vie.*

## Press release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Organ Donation in Quebec

#### **2012 RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE SYSTEM'S PERFORMANCE AND GENERATING SAVINGS FOR SOCIETY**

**Montreal, February 14, 2013** – In 2012, some 364 people benefitted from a transplant thanks to the generosity of 120 deceased donors in Quebec and their families, a decrease of 17 deceased donors (or 13%) compared to 2011. There were also 53 live kidney transplants performed, this according to figures obtained by establishments offering transplantation in Quebec. As of December 31, 2012, however, some 1,250 people were registered on the waiting list for a transplantation, including 923 people waiting for a kidney transplant. During the same year, some 69 deaths were reported, 10 more than in 2011.

#### **Transplant Québec singles out two recurrent findings**

Transplant Québec is concerned with the results of the organ donation system in Quebec: In spite of considerable efforts, these results have levelled off during the past 10 years, well shy of the potential estimated by the Collège des médecins du Québec<sup>1</sup>. Transplant Québec has noted two recurrent findings: On the one hand, potential donors in critical care units at health and social services establishments are not systematically identified; on the other, too many Quebecers have not yet signalled their intention concerning organ donation after death, neither officially nor to their loved ones.

#### **Organ donation and transplantation are cost-effective**

Taking its cue from the Institut national d'excellence en santé et services sociaux (INESSS), Transplant Québec reiterates the importance of further supporting the promotion of organ donation in the broadest sense. Indeed, in its December 2012 report titled *Budget Impact Analysis of Increasing Kidney Transplantation in Quebec*, the Institut states that "The use of grafts is limited by the number of available organs and the lower number of living donors, compared with the experience observed elsewhere; this gives rise to the need to further promote organ donation."<sup>2</sup> The study suggests that kidney transplantation can not only restore a person's health, but it is also cost-effective for the health system and for society at large. "Although the different measures designed to optimize the management of deceased-donor kidneys, to promote consent to organ removal upon death and to increase the number of living donors require funds, this investment will be quickly offset by the savings resulting from the additional transplants performed each year."<sup>2</sup>

Based on Transplant Québec's understanding of the INESSS report, increases in the number of donors could lead to substantial savings to the health system in the order of close to \$20 million over 10 years. A separate study published by Professor Yves Rabeau<sup>3</sup> in November 2012 suggests that more than \$50

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<sup>1</sup> *Les donneurs d'organes dans les hôpitaux du Québec*, année 2008, (*Organ donors in Quebec hospitals, year 2008*) Collège des médecins du Québec.

This study (the most recent available) estimates that in 2008, some 342 potential donors were identified in hospitals, providing that all the conditions were met in every case.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from the *Budget Impact Analysis of Increasing Kidney Transplantation in Quebec*, Report issued by the Institut national d'excellence en santé et services sociaux, December 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Taken from the *Étude sur l'économie de l'insuffisance rénale* (Study on the economics of kidney failure), Yves Rabeau, Ph.D., for the Kidney Foundation of Canada – Quebec Division, November 2012.

million could be saved over 10 years, considering that close to half of transplant recipients return to the job market.

Also relying on the experience and recommendations of countries that post the best performance when it comes to organ donation and transplantation – Spain, France and the United States – Transplant Québec is working to disseminate and support the implementation of best practices in hospitals. In this regard, the Standardized Organ Donation Procedure intended to facilitate successful organ donation was deployed in all general and specialized care establishments in 2012. This initiative was the result of collaboration between Transplant Québec and its partners<sup>4</sup>. An organizational services framework will soon be available as well. It will serve to guide establishments concerning their responsibilities, with the objective of improving the process leading up to donation and thus enabling more people to benefit from transplantation. Transplant Québec's ability to deliver support services in all establishments on a regular and more sustained basis is among the keys, providing that the required resources are made available. Another key is the creation of a tandem made up of a physician / organ donation coordinator and a nurse with a mandate to support successful donations in hospitals.

### **Declaring one's intention to become a potential donor**

In order to increase the number of transplantations, organ donation must be successfully performed where and when it is possible. It is important to remind people that a mere 1.3% of people who die in hospital are likely to become organ donors, and that one donor alone can save up to eight lives. Each person should signal his or her intent concerning organ donation in the event of death. There are three ways of indicating consent in Quebec ([www.signezdon.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.signezdon.gouv.qc.ca)):

- Sign the form titled *Consent to Organ and Tissue Donation* issued by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec
- Sign the consent sticker and affix it to the back of your health insurance card
- Register your consent (or refusal) with the *Registre des consentements au don d'organes et de tissus* administered by the Chambre des notaires du Québec

*"There is no greater act of love than giving someone the gift of life and health. To mark Valentine's Day, I wish that all Quebecers would take the time to tell their loved ones about their intentions concerning organ donation and express their decision in the official consent registries,"* said Mr. Louis Beaulieu, Executive Director of Transplant Québec.

### **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 allocation 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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<sup>4</sup> Association des conseils des médecins, dentistes et pharmaciens du Québec (ACMDPQ) and Association québécoise d'établissements de santé et de services sociaux (AQESSS)