

Dear Colleagues:

We wish to draw your attention to the life-saving gift of organ donation and the process by which you can ensure your organ donation wishes are followed.

Tragedy happens in our lives from time to time. Organ donation decisions need to be made quickly once clinical death has occurred and while the potential donor remains on life support. Organ donation is discussed with the potential donor's family only when there is no chance of recovery/survival.

This is an agonizing and emotional decision required at a difficult time. Preparation and discussion in advance can make this decision easier.

COMPELLING FACTS

1. 1 out of 3 patients will die while awaiting a liver or lung transplant.
2. You are never too old to donate your organs – the doctors will assess the suitability of your organs.
3. You can donate some or all of your organs.
4. 1 organ donor can save 8 lives; tissue donation can enhance the lives of up to 75 people.
5. There is a strong separation between declaration of death and consideration for transplant. Every effort is made to keep you alive and choosing to become a donor does not affect the quality of life saving medical care you receive.
6. The Prairie provinces have the lowest organ donation rate in Canada.
7. The Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute performed 32 adult and pediatric heart transplants in 2013.
8. At the University of Alberta Hospital, 42 lung transplants have been done from January 1, 2014 to October 31, 2014.

TESTIMONIALS

I received a double lung transplant on June 4, 2014. I was in the final stages of lung disease, a combination of sarcoidosis and pulmonary hypertension, when I received the phone call and the miracle of new lungs. I have been a lawyer since 1975 and a judge since 1990 in Nunavut and Alberta. I hope to continue in that profession and re-establish an active life after my recovery. Thank you to my donor and their family.

Beverley Browne

I received a heart transplant on April 10, 2014, after being afflicted with dilated cardiomyopathy for about ten years. By the fall of 2013 I was in end stage heart failure. In the spring of 2014 I was given the sacred gift of a second life from my donor, his family, and the medical professionals at the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute. I have been a lawyer since 1988 and have recently returned to work. I am again enjoying many activities with family and friends.

Kevin Lynch

HOW TO REGISTER FOR ORGAN DONATION

In April of 2014, the Alberta Organ and Tissue Donation Registry began accepting registrations. This process is important as previously many of us had signed up on our Alberta Health Care Cards but those are not always readily accessible at the time of crisis. Now your intentions can be registered online and made available to the appropriate medical professionals once a declaration of death has been made.

Step 1: Talk to your family and friends and confirm your intention to donate some or all of your organs and/or tissues.

Step 2: Register on the Alberta Organ and Tissue Donation Registry at: **myhealth.alberta.ca**

Click on “Proceed” under the “Register Intent/Update Consent” banner.

Complete the Identity Verification and register your intent to donate online.

Then print off the Donation Consent Form, sign it, have a witness sign it, and return it to Alberta Health by mail or fax as follows:

Alberta Health
Attention: Alberta Organ and Tissue Donation Registry
P.O. Box 1360, Station Main
Edmonton, AB T5J 2N3
Fax: 780.641.9679

Alternate Step 2: You may register as an organ donor at any AMA office or Provincial Registry office.

There are many exciting initiatives taking place at the University of Alberta Hospital’s Organ and Tissue Transplant Program. Lives are saved – miracles happen often. Please consider discussing this important issue with your family and following through by registering with the Donation Registry.

Thank you for considering our request in this regard.

Yours truly,

“Beverley Browne”
Beverley Browne

“Kevin Lynch”
Kevin Lynch