

# Trillium Gift of Life Network 2020/21 Highlights

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Trillium  
Gift of Life  
Network

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on our lives throughout 2020/21. Within the health care system, organ and tissue donation and transplantation were recognized as essential and life-saving and thus continued throughout the year, albeit at a reduced level. Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) worked collaboratively with its hospital and healthcare partners to navigate the constantly shifting clinical landscape caused by COVID-19 so that **1,118** lives could be saved through organ transplantation and many more lives enhanced via **1,736** tissue donors.

I was on oxygen assistance for over a year and the last two months were spent in hospital while my family watched from a distance due to COVID-19. My miracle happened and I thank my donor every day for my gift. I can now walk, hold my husband's hand, see my family and once COVID-19 is gone – embrace them!"

Letter from recipient to their donor family,  
January 2021



# Pandemic Response

Trillium Gift of Life Network's leadership facilitated the safe and effective continuation of organ and tissue donation and transplantation throughout the year, despite the pandemic. Specifically, TGLN:

- Developed and implemented a plan to reduce loss of organs, provide a safe path for organ and tissue recovery and transplant and provide a coordinated framework to gradually increase donation and transplant activity as a unified provincial system
- Developed a process to facilitate transportation of living donor kidneys from the donor's local hospital to the transplant hospital, to minimize donor's exposure to COVID-19
- Worked with Ministry of Health so that transplant patients and other high-risk patients received timely access to the COVID-19 vaccine

“I am so proud that our team was able to continue the life-saving work that we do throughout these challenging times.”

**Teye Omlin,**  
Surgical Recovery Coordinator



# Transplant

  
**1,118**  
ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

Improving access to transplantation and supporting optimal patient outcomes continue to be at the heart of Trillium Gift of Life Network's leadership role in transplantation. To accomplish this, TGLN:

- Developed Ontario's Referral and Listing Criteria for Multi-Organ Kidney Transplantation and Ontario's Referral and Listing Criteria for Paediatric Lung Transplantation, which are intended to improve and standardize access to transplantation
- Developed a patient infographic on the organ matching process for patients and their families in order to increase understanding of how donor organs are matched to recipients and how patients are prioritized on the wait list
- Completed a review of the Program for Reimbursing Expenses of Living Organ Donors (PRELOD), resulting in recommendations to broaden eligibility criteria, increase reimbursement rates and simplify the application process. Implementation began April 1, 2021
- Adopted listing criteria for liver transplantation to include the Alcoholic Liver Disease (ALD) protocol as an alternative pathway for ALD patients

“Medicine keeps me alive, and I've had amazing surgeons and nurses, and great family support; but, the only reason why I'm still here is because two different people chose to be donors.”

**Alex Pangman,**  
Two-time double lung recipient



# Organ and Tissue Donation

Trillium Gift of Life Network consistently seeks new opportunities to improve donation performance, ensuring that all opportunities for donation are optimized. The success of organ and tissue donation in Ontario relies on our hospital partners' commitment to implement leading donation practices and integrate donation as part of quality end-of-life care. This past year, despite facing extraordinary challenges, our hospital partners maintained their strong commitment to donation. In 2020/21, TGLN:

- Improved donor care management through development of a new Donor Management Order Set to improve the consistency in testing requested and assessment of potential donors
- Furthered education in donation practices through developing and hosting an education session for critical care fellows and contributing to the development of the donation stream at the annual Critical Care Canada Forum in Fall 2020. Developed primary education for healthcare professionals to enable the rapid recovery of the standardized Non-Perfused Organ Donation (NPOD) program, as well as expansion of *NPOD after Donation After Cardiac Death (DCD) Attempt* and *NPOD Following Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) At-Home*
- Partnered with additional paramedic services across Ontario to increase tissue referral volumes
- Assumed the role of screening for tissue suitability for two additional Ontario tissue banks: Mount Sinai Allograft Technologies and The Hospital for Sick Children

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<b>95%</b>	ROUTINE NOTIFICATION RATE
<b>84%</b>	ELIGIBLE APPROACH RATE
<b>58%</b>	CONVERSION RATE
<b>303</b>	DECEASED ORGAN DONORS
<b>1,736</b>	TISSUE DONORS

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“I have the privilege of working with the most amazing families, but it is during some of their most difficult times in their life. I am very grateful to be there for these families and offer them something positive at a tragic time.”

**Jodi Heffren,**  
Organ and Tissue Donation Coordinator



# Registration

Trillium Gift of Life Network's marketing and outreach programs resulted in **71,833 Ontarians** registering to be a donor in 2020/21. Registrations play a critical role in obtaining consent for donation from families and reflect Ontario's progress in developing a culture where donation is an expected part of end-of-life-care.

- Marketing campaigns, which ran September to October and February to March, raised awareness and increased registration for donation
- Social media initiatives drove traffic to BeADonor.ca resulting in a total of 129,124 unique visitors (an 18% increase versus last fiscal)
- TGLN, in partnership with ServiceOntario, developed integrated organ and tissue donation messaging for email reminders for driver's license, vehicle license plate and health card renewals, as well as for online appointment booking confirmations
- TGLN fully supported hospital, government and community stakeholders and partners, as well as its advocate network, to extend the breadth and depth of outreach

“Akiko spent much of her life helping others and was of course a registered organ donor. Akiko's passing at a young age was a tragedy but we take comfort in knowing that she continues to help other people live better lives exactly as she would have wished.”

**Donor Family**



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# About Us

Ontario Health was established under the *Connecting Care Act, 2019*, with a mandate to better coordinate and connect the health care system to make it more efficient and support the delivery of the best possible patient-centred care. TGLN transferred into Ontario Health on April 1, 2021. In the last quarter of 2020/21, TGLN and Ontario Health worked together to prepare for the transfer, ensuring continuity of patient care was prioritized and clinical staff and related processes were well supported.

**President & CEO: Matthew Anderson**

**Board Chair: Bill Hatanaka**



As always, but particularly during this exceptional year, we gratefully acknowledge our donors and their families whose generosity continues to enable and inspire our work."

**Matthew Anderson,**  
President & CEO,  
Ontario Health

