
SUPPORTING ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION IN ONTARIO

April 20, 2009

Ontario will provide additional money to help educate students about organ and tissue donation. Ontario also confirmed the launch of a \$500,000 fund to assist patients with living expenses who are required to relocate while waiting for organ transplantation.

These initiatives are the latest in several steps taken by the province as part of its Organ Donation Strategy launched in 2007:

- New funding of \$185,000 for the expansion of the One Life...Many Gifts curriculum resource to educate senior secondary school students about the vital importance of organ and tissue donation. The program, jointly funded by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, will now be available in 326 secondary schools across Ontario. This program was developed and launched in 2008 by Trillium Gift of Life Network in partnership with the Kidney Foundation of Canada, and London Health Sciences Centre.
- Beginning May 1st, Ontario is launching a new program that will provide some financial help to patients waiting for heart, lung and heart-lung transplantation who must relocate near a transplant hospital in order to have access to life-saving transplants. Trillium Gift of Life Network will be administering this program -- called the Transplant Patient Expense Reimbursement Fund.
- Supporting today's launch of the Trillium Gift of Life Network's Youth Outreach website called RecycleMe.org that will increase awareness about organ and tissue donation among youth.
- A new way of recording donation decisions in the province. Now, only a "Yes" decision to organ and tissue donation is collected. Ontarians may now register their consent to donate their organs and tissue when they register or renew their health cards. For more information, visit the Trillium Gift of Life website at www.giftoflife.on.ca
- Culturally-specific brochures about organ and tissue donation for the Muslim and Jewish faiths, as well as brochures in three First Nations languages were made available in February 2009;
- Introduction of legislation that would, if passed, provide unpaid job-protected leave for employees who donate certain organs (a kidney, part of a liver, or a lobe of a lung) to another person.