



**TRANSPLANT  
QUÉBEC**

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

# COMMUNIQUÉ

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## **ORGAN DONATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19: Québec reaches an historic low**

**Montreal, July 15, 2020** – At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, Transplant Québec recorded its lowest referral and donor rates in the past five years. In an effort to determine the pandemic's repercussions of its activities, the organization determined that it received 25 referrals from hospitals, while two people donated their organs and five received a transplantation. The resumption of activities in May marked a return to the levels generally observed, however. "The slowdown last April can be attributed mainly to the exceptional circumstances we were facing. In particular, these results reflected the need to ensure the safety of transplant-recipient patients as well as the massive reorganization that took place in hospitals. It isn't the first time the number of donors drops below 10 in a given month in recent years," said Louis Beaulieu, Chief Executive Officer of Transplant Québec.

The organization also observed that the situation has not returned to normal. Compared to the same period in 2019 (March 12 to June 30), a 50% reduction in the number of organ donors has been noted, together with a 60% reduction in transplantations. "Referrals from health establishments definitely decreased, but they never stopped completely. This is encouraging, as it shows that the organ donation culture has become more and more established in hospital organisation. The current situation has led us to redouble our efforts with hospital professionals, in collaboration with the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux," added Mr. Beaulieu.

The number of people waiting for a transplantation transplant remains stable. Fortunately, the data indicates that number of deaths has not increased compared to the same period in 2019. However, it bears recalling that the fate of 800 patients on the waiting list, including 21 children, depends on future organ donors and the possibility of performing transplantation procedures. It is therefore important to ensure that these activities are optimized. Transplant Québec is again appealing to the generosity of families dealing with the sudden loss of a loved one as they actively support the organ donation process. The organization also emphasizes how vital it is that each person makes their intentions known to their loved ones and records them in writing in one of Québec's organ donation registries.

### **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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