



**TRANSPLANT
QUÉBEC**

Organ donation,
together for life
for **50** years

PRESS RELEASE

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2020 ORGAN DONATION REPORT FOR QUEBEC: A 20% drop in activities recorded

Montreal, February 24, 2021 – The pandemic has caused an almost 20% drop in organ donation and transplantation activities in Quebec, according to figures published today in Québec Transplant's 2020 annual report. The data indicates a decrease of 18 to 20% in activities, including referrals (18%), actual donors (20%) and transplant recipients (20%). This slowdown can be attributed mainly to the impact of the pandemic's first wave from mid-March to mid-May, when referrals dropped significantly. Fortunately, these circumstances did not affect the number of people waiting for a transplant, nor did they impact the number of deaths, which decreased by 14% in 2020. "The results from last year are certainly mixed. They reflect the impact of the pandemic at various levels, but donation activities never stopped," said Sylvain Lavigne, Interim Director of Clinical Services at Transplant Québec.

"It's true that the first wave led to a significant decrease in the number of potential donors being referred to Transplant Québec. Let's not forget that April was when the donor and referral rates were at their lowest. The onset of the second wave did not have the same impact, however," added Mr. Lavigne. Transplant Québec observed a return to normal averages in terms of its activities during the last few months of 2020. More specifically, referrals exceeded the average for the last five years in September, October and December, at the peak of the pandemic's second wave.

Regarding referrals, the Estrie region stood out as the best-performing region on a per-capita basis, with a rate 17.3 referrals per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, the Capitale-Nationale and Montreal, all of which ranked third (*ex aequo*). Referrals to Transplant Québec come from any health professional who identifies a potential donor based on standard procedures in organ donation or organ donation in a medical aid in dying context.

Of the 675 referrals made to Transplant Québec in 2020, some 28% were retained. Out of all the referrals refused, those stemming from a refusal on the part of the family dropped for the second consecutive year. Still, some 20% of families refused organ donation even though the donors gave prior written consent to organ and tissue donation.

As of December 31, 2020:

- 675 referrals for organ donation were made to Transplant Québec.
- 802 people were registered for the single waiting list managed by Transplant Québec.
- 390 people received a transplant in Quebec thanks to the generosity of deceased donors and their families.
- 143 deceased donors in Quebec made it possible to transplant 487 organs.
- The number of people waiting for a lung transplant (42) reached its lowest level in 15 years, coinciding with the number of lung transplantations (69), which was close to last year's record.
- 48% of donors were between the ages of 50 and 70, and the oldest, to date, was 92 years old.

To view the full report:

https://www.transplantquebec.ca/sites/default/files/bilan_2020_public_1.pdf

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: Transplant Québec

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