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2019 ORGAN DONATION REPORT: Québec records an unprecedented number of referrals

Montreal, February 27, 2020 – Transplant Québec is publishing today its 2019 data report. It shows that for the first time in Transplant Québec's history, the number of referrals for organ donation is exceeding the number of persons on the waiting list. The number of referrals to Transplant Québec by hospitals has increased yearly, reaching 820 in 2019, an increase of close to 9% compared to the previous year. "In 2019 we received referrals from all regions of Québec, which is very encouraging for the future of organ donation. We also believe that adding specialized physicians in coordinating organ donation and transplantation across the territory will make it possible to notify more donors, but also give more people the transplant they need", said Mr. Louis Beaulieu, Chief Executive Officer of Transplant Québec.

"We are convinced that a significant and lasting improvement in organ donation remains possible, among other things thanks to the program of specialized physicians coordinating organ donation and transplantation. Promising results were observed in health establishments which already benefit from these specialized physicians, especially in terms of referrals, number of deceased organ donors and number of patients registered on Transplant Québec's waiting list", said Minister of Health and Social Services, Danielle McCann. In October 2019, the Minister announced her decision to increase the number of specialized physicians in organ donation coordination from 10 to 32 to ensure that these physicians are present in all Québec health and social services establishments.

In terms of referrals on a per capita basis, the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region distinguished itself as the top-performing region, with a rate of 20.2 donors per 100,000 inhabitants, followed closely by the Estrie and Montréal regions. Referrals are made to Transplant Québec by any health professional at a hospital with at least one emergency unit or an intensive care unit that identifies a potential donor using standard procedures in organ donation or in a medical aid in dying context.

Out of the 820 referrals made to Transplant Québec in 2019, some 29% were accepted, and three of four of these referrals resulted in organ donation. It is normal that referrals are refused. In some cases, organ donation cannot be carried out at the time of death due to a pre-existing or current condition, a neurological or hematological condition, or a different condition. It's worth noting that of all the referrals that are refused, those stemming from a refusal on the part of the family decreased by 3%, from 38% in 2018 to 35% in 2019.

As of December 31, 2019:

- A total of 820 organ donation referrals from all regions of Québec were made to Transplant Québec, an increase of 112% since 2010.
- Some 799 people were registered on the single waiting list managed by Transplant Québec.
- A total of 535 people received a transplant in Québec:
 - 490 thanks to the generosity of deceased donors and their families
 - 45 thanks to living donors
- 70 people received a lung transplant, the ever highest number as of today.
- 179 deceased donors in Québec made it possible to transplant 592 organs.
- 46% of donors were between the ages of 50 and 70, and the oldest was 92 years of age.

For more information:

https://www.transplantquebec.ca/sites/default/files/statistiques_2019_final.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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