



**TRANSPLANT
QUÉBEC**

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

*Organ donation,
together for life.*

Press release

UNDER EMBARGO: February 17, 2015 at 7:00 a.m. (ET)

ORGAN DONATION IN QUÉBEC IN 2014

Decrease in the number of deceased organ donors, and slight increase in the number of people on the waiting list for a transplantation

Montreal, February 17, 2015 – In 2014, Québec recorded a decrease in the number of deceased donors, with 154 donors compared to 165 in 2013, Transplant Québec's best year to date. For the second time in 10 years, Québec ranked second behind Ontario, with a rate of 18.8 deceased donors per million inhabitants. In 2014, 458 people benefitted from a transplant thanks to the generosity of the 154 deceased donors in Québec and their families. There were 1,073 people on the Quebec waiting list as of December 31, 2014, or 26 more than in 2013. Thirty-nine (39) people were reported to have died while waiting during the same period, compared to 38 in 2013. As always, every death is a death too many.

Investing in Organ Donation is a Net Benefit for Society

As was the case in 2013, the outcomes associated with Transplant Québec's organ donation activities in 2014 attest to the consistency of its initiatives and actions over the past five years. Carried out in collaboration with hospitals, these efforts are intended to decrease transplantation wait times. However, the basis for the establishment of a true organ donation culture remains fragile, says Louis Beaulieu, CEO of Transplant Québec. Hospitals **and** Transplant Québec must continue to consolidate the organ donation and transplantation system at a crucial time in the development of organ donation in order to maintain or even surpass the best outcomes. Québec is capable of achieving this provided that it deploys sufficient means. Please refer to the press release titled

[**Organ donation also offers significant economic advantages - More than \\$100,000,000 in savings generated by kidney transplants in Québec**](#)

"With more donors meeting the medical and legal criteria for organ donation, there is a higher probability of finding a compatible donor more quickly and thus reducing hospitalization time and the risk of death. Investing in organ donation is beneficial and cost-effective, and society as a whole benefits," said Louis Beaulieu.

"Recognizing the benefits of organ donation, making it a social priority and ensuring that hospitals **and** Transplant Québec effectively organize services — these are three keys to reach a strong donation and transplantation system, and the performances of Spain, France and the United States have demonstrated this convincingly over the past several years," said René Dussault, president of Transplant Québec's Board of directors.

2014 Highlights

- The **protocol for organ donation after cardiocirculatory death (DCD)** is gaining momentum in Québec, with 19 DCDs in 2014 compared to seven in 2010. These 19 donors made it possible to transplant 50 organs. This protocol, officially effective in Quebec since 2010, makes it possible to honour a person's wishes in cases where donation following neurological determination of death is not possible.

- **Wait times for a kidney have also decreased significantly**, going from an average of 1,175 days in 2013 to 775 days in 2014. This decrease may be attributed to the fact that a considerable number of people who were on the waiting list for several years finally received a transplant following the implementation of the new algorithm for kidney's allocation in 2012. Thus, people who had been waiting for more than 10 years were able to receive a transplant. It's important to recall that 75% of people on Transplant Québec's waiting list are in need of a kidney and that almost half of kidney transplant recipients return to the job market.¹
- **Refusal of consent.** Owing to the absence of consent, slightly more than 40% of referrals to Transplant Québec for potential organ donation (a slight increase compared to the 37% recorded in 2013) could not be accepted. In the majority of cases, the families refused to give the go-ahead to donation because they were unaware of their loved one's wishes. In comparison, refusals on the part of families have decreased by almost 50% in Spain in the past 20 years, from 28% in 1992 to 15.5% in 2013. Québec's objective is to reach the 20% mark.
- **Organ donors are a rare breed.** Nothing is a given when it comes to organ donation. If all the conditions were met each time organ donation is possible, there would be a maximum of slightly more than 300 donors per year, according to estimates from the Collège des médecins du Québec². This figure is equivalent to one potential donor per 100 hospital deaths. This percentage figure is recognized internationally.

Sign up your intention to be a potential donor

Registering consent by signing up to a registry makes it easier for family to respect a person's wishes. Only authorized Transplant Québec personnel may access the registry in real time and share those wishes with family at the opportune moment.

To make your intention known: www.signezdon.gouv.qc.ca

[Complementary information sheet](#) (in French only)

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.

Complementary data – organ donation in Quebec at www.transplantquebec.ca/en/press-releases

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¹ *Étude sur l'économie de l'insuffisance rénale*, Yves Rabeau, Ph.D., pour le compte de la Fondation canadienne du rein-division du Québec, novembre 2012.

² *Les donneurs d'organes dans les hôpitaux du Québec en 2009*, Collège des médecins du Québec