



September 13, 2016

**Via Email**

Mr. Greg Lawrence, Chairman  
Standing Committee on Human Services  
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan  
140-2045 Legislative Drive  
Regina SK S4S 0B3

Re: Public Hearings on Organ and Tissue Donation in Saskatchewan

Dear Mr. Lawrence:

Founded in 2009, the Canadian Transplant Society has been working tirelessly to raise organ donor awareness across Canada and to increase the number of registered donors. While we are encouraged by the rise in donor registrations, there are still 4,000 Canadians on the wait list for organs and thousands more on the list for tissue transplants.

Interestingly, nearly 90 percent of Canadians support organ and tissue donation but less than 20 percent plan to become organ donors. Canada has one of the lowest registration rates in the developed world, and Saskatchewan falls below the average for registered donors. We commend the Legislature for their desire to improve their program and appreciate the opportunity to submit a recommendation.

We are available to consult and assist you in any way we can to achieve our common goal to provide life-saving transplants to Canadians. Our recommendation is attached. Please do not hesitate to contact me at +1 416 992 8875 or at [info@cantransplant.ca](mailto:info@cantransplant.ca) with any questions.

Sincerely,

James W. Breckenridge  
President and CEO  
Canadian Transplant Society  
Registered 807050620RR0001

Attachment

Copy: Mr. Rob Park, Committee Clerk (via email)



## Recommendation to Improve Organ and Tissue Donation Program in Saskatchewan

Presented to  
Standing Committee on Human Services  
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

### The Current State of Affairs

- More than 90 percent of Canadians agree with organ and tissue donation.
- Less than 20 percent of Canadians have actually pledged to become donors.
- In Saskatchewan, fewer than 2 percent of residents have indicated that they wish to be organ donors.
- Saskatchewan does not have a formal registry.

### Raising Awareness

- Raising awareness is the single most important **first step** in improving an organ and tissue donation program.
- Many people either do not know how to become an organ donor or have fears and misconceptions about the organ donation process.
- Families who have suffered a tragedy may not know about or understand the donor process.
- Education, support and resources must be available to groups including the public (potential donors, donor families), physicians, medical personnel, clergy, schools, and the media.



## Recommendation

### **Create an Online Registry**

Designing an online registry will: (1) offer a convenient and easy method to register as an organ donor (sign up any time from any place); and (2) provide a way for hospitals to confirm that a patient on life support is a registered donor. The patient may not have a driver's licence, or may not have it with him/her in the event of an accident.

The registry website should include:

- Easy registration instructions and simple navigation
- FAQ section to answer and address typical concerns and misconceptions
- Email link to contact with questions
- Hot line phone number 24/7

Please visit the Canadian Transplant Society website at [www.cantransplant.ca](http://www.cantransplant.ca) as an example.

### **Public Service Announcements (PSAs)**

The Canadian Transplant Society has been successful in raising awareness through PSAs. With the support of Rogers Communications, Canadian Transplant Society aired PSAs on over 100 TV channels throughout Canada.

- Broadcast PSAs on television and on the Saskatchewan donor website.
- Presenters may include:
  - Government officials involved in the program
  - Physicians, nurses, other medical personnel
  - Families who have donated organs
  - Organ transplant recipients

Sample PSAs can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPI0DwAHgRw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahxjtC0xbpc>



## **Kiosks**

Many people are interested in organ donation, but it is not top of mind. Kiosks conveniently bring donor information and the opportunity to register **to the public where they are** including at:

- Malls
- Trade shows
- Conventions
- Universities
- Community events
- Corporate events

To get the program started, a portable kiosk can be used that would include signage, story boards and brochures. There would be a laptop or flat screen where program information could be shown. Individuals would be able to register “on the spot” by using the laptop. Funding for a kiosk program can come from local business or charitable foundations.

Kiosk volunteers can answer questions about organ donation. The Canadian Transplant Society has been using kiosks for several years and has been successful in signing up donors during their kiosk visit. **Often, people just need to be asked.**

## **Central Hot Line for Help and Support 24/7**

It is critical to establish a central number that the public and professionals can call day or night when minutes count. The Canadian Transplant Society receives calls from a variety of groups from **both inside and outside of Canada**, including:

- Doctors, nurses
- Hospitals outside of Canada when a Canadian resident on life support is an organ donor and the hospital needs direction
- Potential living donors
- Potential recipients
- Families of donors and recipients
- Clergy
- Teachers
- General public
- Media
- High school, university and college students