

OUR VISION: OUTSTANDING CARE - NO EXCEPTIONS!

OUR MISSION: DELIVER AN OUTSTANDING PATIENT CARE EXPERIENCE BY A PASSIONATE COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Media Release

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For Immediate Release

HOSPITAL RECOGNIZED WITH PROVINCIAL AWARDS FOR EFFORTS ON ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

WINDSOR, ON. _ Windsor Regional Hospital has been recognized for its efforts to save lives through organ and tissue donation, while one longtime advocate is receiving much deserved recognition for her individual efforts to raise awareness about the Gift of Life.

During a special awards broadcast held Wed., Dec 2 hosted by Trillium Gift of Life Network and attended by WRH representatives and officials from peer hospitals in our region, WRH was honoured to receive a Provincial Conversion Rate Award for meeting or exceeding the provincial target conversion rate of 63 per cent. The conversion rate is the percentage of potential organ donors (patients who die in a hospital setting and are deemed medically suitable for donation) who went on to become actual donors. WRH achieved a 73 per cent conversion rate for the 2019-20 fiscal year, exceeding the provincial target.

In addition, WRH is one of just nine Ontario hospitals honoured this year with an Award of Excellence for meeting or exceeding the provincial target for its conversion rate target for four or more consecutive years, demonstrating an outstanding commitment to the implementation of donation leading practices.

“This is an important recognition and a tribute to all of the many employees and professional staff at Windsor Regional Hospital who work to make sure we are able to save as many lives as we can through organ and tissue donation,” said Dr. Natalie Malus, Medical Director, Intensive Care Unit, who accepted the award on WRH’s behalf. “Retrieving organs and tissue for potential transplant is a complex process that requires a lot of teamwork and efficient processes. Congratulations to our hospital team for the excellent work in achieving successful conversion rates that save and improve so many lives.”

Dr. Malus added that despite all of the challenges for the staff throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, so far the team has successfully coordinated 14 organ donations and 87 tissue donations which save and enhance the lives of so many individuals.

The awards are “truly a tribute to all of the staff who participate in the continuum of care during the patient’s journey and also to the amazing donor families who in the face of tragedy are able to give the most amazing gift of all—the Gift of Life,” Dr. Malus said.

“WRH has made an outstanding contribution to organ and tissue donation in Ontario and this award is a reflection of that important work,” says Ronnie Gavsie, President and CEO, Trillium Gift of Life Network.

“The collaboration and partnership we have with our hospitals is critical to saving lives. Every Ontarian can play a part by registering to donate at BeADonor.ca. Now is the time to think about what we can do to protect the health of others, and this includes saving more lives through donation.”

Trillium also recognized Karen Conte, RN, with a Donation Champion Award for embracing donation and leading cultural change at the hospital. Karen has long been an advocate for organ and tissue donation, including helping facilitate early notification of potential donor opportunities.

“Throughout the nearly half century of my nursing career, most of that time spent in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit), I’ve been witness to many, many organ donations over the years,” she said while accepting her award during the broadcast. “I’m very honoured to receive this award.”

“Karen is a huge advocate for organ donation,” said Dr. Malus. “She has devoted much of her own time to working with our organ and tissue donation coordinator to improve processes and education of staff around organ and tissue donation. Karen consistently identifies and notifies Trillium Gift of Life of potential organ donors as part of her routine practice. She is known by Trillium as ‘the nurse with the perfect referral call’. Karen’s enthusiasm and dedication have created a lasting impact on our program and contributed to its success.”

Today, more than 1,600 people in Ontario are on the waitlist for a lifesaving organ transplant, and every three days someone will die waiting. Over 90 percent of Ontarians support donation, yet only 35 percent have formally registered their consent for organ and tissue donation.

While some people believe that their age or medical condition prevents them from donating, in actuality, neither age nor health precludes someone from becoming a donor. Every potential donor is assessed at the time of death for medical suitability. Others may believe that doctors won’t work hard to save a life if someone is a registered donor, but in fact, saving a life is always the priority. Donation is only considered after all lifesaving efforts are exhausted, there is no chance of recovery, and the family accepts the diagnosis of death.

One donor can save up to 8 lives through organ donation and enhance the lives of up to 75 more through the gift of tissue. By registering consent to donate, you make your family aware of your decision to save lives. Go to beadonor.ca – all that’s required is your health card number and just two minutes of your time!

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For more information on organ and tissue donation in Ontario, or to learn more about Trillium Gift of Life Network’s Achievement Awards, please contact Karyn Hyjek at khyjek@giftoflife.on.ca or 416-216-5931.