

Pembroke Regional Hospital Celebrates Its Commitment To Organ and Tissue Donation As Part Of End-Of-Life Care

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In recognition of National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Month, the Pembroke Regional Hospital is celebrating its commitment to organ and tissue donation as well as the vital role that the hospital's dedicated staff and physicians play in ensuring that the option to donate is part of end-of-life care.

"Our hospital joined the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) in the spring of 2013, demonstrating our commitment to organ and tissue donation and the importance of registering as a donor and making your wishes known to friends and family," said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann.

"As part of Ontario's *Routine Notification* program, we report every patient death to TGLN, allowing their specially trained staff to identify potential donors and approach families for consent. I am very pleased to share that, in the past fiscal year, our hospital's dedication to this program resulted in seven tissue donors, enhancing the lives of many. We are immensely proud of this achievement and the profound impact it has on those in need of organ and tissue transplants."

I am also very proud to announce that, for the sixth time, we have received the *Routine Notification Rate Award*, achieving a 100% routine notification rate throughout 2023/24. With 126 notifications made by our staff to Ontario Health (TGLN), PRH was one of only four hospitals in the province to achieve this award so it's truly an incredible accomplishment.

"Receiving the *Routine Notification Rate Award* once again is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our entire team," said Beth Brownlee, Vice-President of Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Executive. "Our staff's commitment to ensuring that every potential donor is identified and that families are approached with compassion and care is truly commendable."

As part of a special presentation that took part at the hospital on April 17th, 14 frontline staff who have been actively involved in the notification process over the past year were recognized as "Hidden Heroes" and many staff throughout our organization wore green in support of organ and tissue donation.

A special testimonial illustrating the value of organ and tissue donation was also shared, as written by hospital Physiatrist Dr. Debbie Timpson whose husband, Rob, was the recipient of his cousin's kidney.

"My husband, Rob, developed immune mediated kidney disease which required dialysis five to six days per week over a period of three years. We were grateful that dialysis was an option that kept him alive, but our lives completely revolved around his dialysis schedule."

While Dr. Timpson wasn't a match for donation, Rob's cousin, Ian Haugh was and, as a living donor, he gifted Rob his on October 13, 2011.

“After the transplant, Rob felt well, had energy, and was able to do so much living. One cannot put a price on these additional 11 years that Ian gave to him. Rob was, and I am, forever grateful,” Dr. Timpson wrote.

Ian shared that his decision to become a donor was just as rewarding and he said the experience has made him “more present” in his own life, healthier, and thankful to have had the chance to help someone else in this special way. “I encourage those out there to evaluate if giving an organ is palatable and possible, but state to all that the benefits are equally as powerful to the donor as it is to the recipient.”

In Ontario, 90% of residents support organ and tissue donation, yet only 35% are registered donors. With 1,400 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant, what better time than the present to visit www.beadonor.ca to learn more about organ and tissue donation, register as a donor and potentially save a life.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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