



2012 Donation Awareness Event, Acadia University, March 28. Jane Smith, mother of donor Brandon Smith, Crystal Taylor Beals, double lung recipient, Denice Klavano, mother of donor Brad Howell and Shelley Orr, Annapolis Valley District Resource Nurse.

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Donation Programs Excel

The collaboration between the donation and transplant programs including the Critical Care Organ Donation Program, Regional Tissue Bank, Multi-Organ Transplant Program and Legacy of Life, along with stakeholders and partners has resulted in great improvement in organ and tissue donations in Nova Scotia. With 25 organ donors and 158 tissue donors Nova Scotia had the highest rates of organ and tissue donation in Canada. The programs have been recognized and awarded the 2012 Gold Quality Award at Capital Health. This award recognizes

excellence and innovation in health care. The award highlighted the team processes and approaches that have been used since 2006 to improve organ and tissue donation in Nova Scotia including an advisory council, working groups, district nurse positions, professional education programs, chart auditing processes, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The submission has also been forwarded to the national 3M Health Care Quality Team Awards. Congratulations to everyone for your dedication and commitment. ■

GASHA Policy

On November 18, 2011, Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority implemented a required referral policy for tissue donation for all patients 80 years of age and younger. Ongoing staff education continues in the district to keep the staff informed of the new policy. In previous years there have been four to five referrals for tissue donation; in 2011 there were 32 referrals resulting in seven actual tissue donors. This is the largest number of referrals and donors the district has seen to date. This is a positive trend ensuring that donors have their final wishes respected.

CST Meetings

In February Nova Scotia was well represented at the Canadian Society of Transplantation meetings held in Quebec City where three oral abstracts were presented.

Janet Evans presented on the *Development, Implementation and Evaluation of the Required Referral Policy in Cape Breton*. Corinne Corning presented on the *Chart Audit Process and Results*. Dr. Stephen Beed presented on *System Re-Design Improves Donation*.

With the highest donation rates in the country in 2011, Nova Scotia has much to share about the work we are doing to improve the organ and tissue donation process. ■



Sue Boiduk

District Resource Nurses

Sue Boiduk has been the District Resource Nurse for Cumberland Health Authority for five years. In 1986, Sue was one of a group of six graduates from the Halifax Infirmity School who travelled to Alberta to explore the West. Since then, she has taken every opportunity to study and work in places like Saudi Arabia, United States, and Scotland.

Sue has been closely involved with a dedicated group of local volunteers who have all been touched by organ and tissue

donation. The group works tirelessly in raising awareness by setting up community booths, holding panel discussions on local radio, and speaking to other local charitable organizations.

“It is such an honour and humbling experience to work with this group and be part of their real-life experience. These volunteers want the world to know of the positive effect that organ and tissue donation has given them – a new hope,” said Sue. ■

INNOVATIVE IDEAS



Nova Scotia Legislature lit green for Donor Awareness Week.

Porch Light Campaign

During *National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week* (April 22-28) *Life: Pass it On* encourages people to use green light bulbs for porch lights as a sign of support for donation. ■



Kevin and Barb MacMullin, Donor Family, Corinne Corning, Legacy of Life Program Manager, Tom Shea, OR Nurse, and Sean MacDonald, Organ Recipient.

3rd Annual Cape Breton District Health Authority Clinical Day

Over 100 healthcare professionals attended the *Third Annual Organ and Tissue Donation Clinical Day* hosted by Cape Breton District Health Authority on November 10, 2011. "This event was a chance for healthcare providers to learn more about organ and tissue donation," said Janet Evans, Donation Resource Nurse. "We had a variety of speakers on clinical and personal aspects of donation," she added. The day began with the emotional experience of donor

family Kevin and Barb MacMullin. In January 2010, Barb's sister, Zelma Kibyuk died. Zelma's family showed strength and courage by allowing Zelma to enrich the lives of many through organ donation. Sean MacDonald, a double-transplant recipient from Prince Edward Island, also shared his story. In 2009, Sean received a kidney and pancreas transplant at the age of 39. With wit and humor, Sean provided an entertaining look at what his transplant has meant to him. Feedback from participants was very positive.

Core Presentations Finalized

Over the past year the Professional Education Working Group oversaw the

development of core modules for organ and tissue donation focusing on ICU/ED, palliative population and a general presentation on tissue donation.

The purpose of the presentations is to present consistent information across the province, and to ensure that the presentations and education programs we have developed are meeting the needs of those that attend.

An evaluation component has been built into the presentations and these will be rolled out over the coming year by the district resource nurses. If you are interested in attending an education session, contact your local district resource nurse whose contact information is located on page 6 of this newsletter. ■

WORKING GROUP UPDATES

The Communications Working Group is planning for another busy week during Donor Awareness Week 2012. Activities include presentations, displays, launch of *Legacy of Life Social Media Plan* (Facebook and Twitter), supporting the *Porch Light Campaign*, working with companies to promote signing the donor card, editorials, and special events planned by the districts.

Building on a national approach, Canadian Blood Services will launch the Do!Nation Project, a mass media event and competition highlighting donor awareness and stories, which we will re-tweet in NS.

All donation programs continue to prepare for the Proclamation of new legislation later in 2012. Provincial policy development, professional education and communications

strategies will ensure a smooth transition to the new legislation.

The Legacy of Life website will be enhanced with more information for Donor Families under a new Donor Family tab. Information on grief resources, living donation, understanding neurological death, and the Donor Family Working Group Recommendations will be posted. ■

Since assuming its OTDT mandate in 2008, Canadian Blood Services has taken a holistic approach, recognizing that international experience shows performance improvements happen when multiple initiatives, collaboration and national leadership converge.

Looking over the past year the organization has expended significant effort working with governments as they analyze the strategic plan submitted on behalf of stakeholders last April.

The organization, and the community, is patiently awaiting a response from governments, expected later this spring. Canadian Blood Services has also continued to deliver on patient registries; the Living Donor Paired Exchange (LDPE) registry has been credited with facilitating more than 120 kidney transplants to date; the launch of the National Organ Waitlist is expected later this spring; and the development of the Highly Sensitized Patient Registry will launch later this year. The organization remains focused on leading practices, awareness and education, continuing discussions on the potential of donor physicians to improve donation rates and the opportunities to optimize tissue donation in acute and non-acute care settings.

In February, the organization held an *Eye and Tissue Banking Workshop* with sessions on standardizing tissue criteria, leading practices for cornea recoveries and bioburden control. It also held a Forum on Allocation in Combined Transplantation at the end of March. Finally, Canadian Blood Services has continued to support jurisdiction in a number of capacities and is pleased to provide customizable public service announcements for *National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week* in April. The organization looks forward to ongoing collaboration with the OTDT community and in taking next steps related to the strategic plan. ■



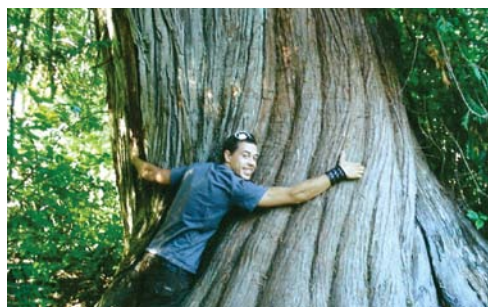
Janet Evans, District Resource Nurse and Linda Beland, Vincent's mother.

Donor Family – Vincent Béland-Morissette

In April 2011, Linda Beland from Quebec found herself wanting to continue her involvement in Organ and Tissue Donation during National Awareness Week. Therefore, despite being in another province learning English and teaching French at a local high school, she contacted the district resource nurse at Cape Breton DHA and volunteered.

Linda spoke at several events including a local high school to over 100 Grade 12 students and told the story of her son Vincent. Vincent was mountain climbing in Vancouver and fell, struck his head and ended up with an irreversible brain injury. Thanks to the great courage and kindness of his family, five of Vincent's organs and tissues were donated. His heart, kidneys, pancreas and liver were used to help other families and give others the chance of the life that Vincent never got to fulfill. It is due to this selflessness that five lives have been changed for the better. Vincent's family

received a letter of gratitude for his heart and his liver. His mother, Linda, has told her three daughters to ensure their own donor cards are signed, as she would not be able to go through such a difficult decision again. However, out of this tragic experience, Linda has been inspired to change her own life for the better. She has decided to learn English. Despite being dyslexic like her son, it is a challenge that she is eager to face head on. Vincent believed that if you did not feel comfortable in your life, you should do whatever you can to change things. He embarked on a journey across Canada to find his way in life and now his mother is starting her own journey. As Vincent's spirit will help guide his mother on her journey, thanks to Linda's courage to share this story, it will help all of us to find our way and appreciate what life has given us - having Linda in Cape Breton connected donation programs across Canada, including Vancouver, Quebec and Nova Scotia. ■



Families' involvement in decision-making

By Danielle Byrne RN MN

The 2009 chart audit results demonstrated a 16% decline rate where the families did not wish to consent to the opportunity for **organ donation**. The points below highlight the family's challenges when faced with the decision to donate as described in the literature:

- Ambiguity in relation to understanding brain death¹
- Approach of the health care professional²
- Knowledge of the potential donor's wishes²
- Limited exposure to the concept of organ donation³
- Conflict within the family group³

Health care professionals involved in the donation process acknowledge this is a difficult decision for families to make for a variety of reasons. Further analysis of the 2009 Nova Scotia data indicated that families were not declining the opportunity to donate against the donation wishes indicated on the MSI health card.

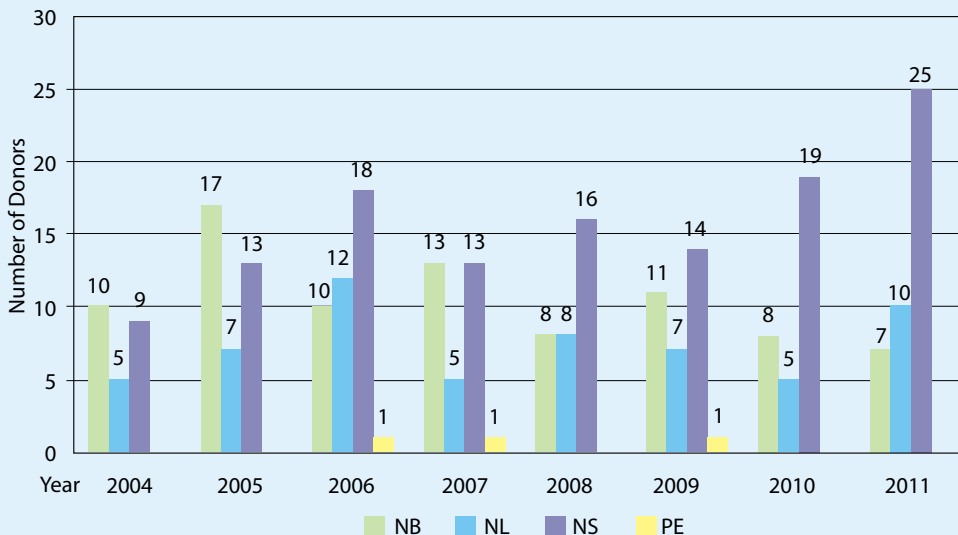
¹ Manuel, A., Solberg, S., & MacDonald, S. (2010). *Organ donation experienced of family members*. *Nephrology Nursing Journal*, 37(3), 229 – 236.

² Anker, A. E., & Feeley, T. H. (2010). *Why families decline donation: the perspective of organ procurement coordinators*. *Progress in Transplant*, 20(3), 239 – 246.

³ Rodrigue, J. R., Cornell, D. L. & Howard, R. J. (2009). *Relationship of exposure to organ donation information to attitudes, beliefs, and donation decisions of next of kin*. *Progress in Transplant*, 19(2), 173 - 179.

There is a well documented gap between the number of organ and tissue donors and the need for organs and tissues for transplantation. National and provincial efforts have been underway to improve the identification and referral of organ and tissue donors.

**Atlantic Canada Organ Donors
2004-2011**



Kudos to many of the **district health authorities** that have seen a dramatic increase in referrals in 2011.

Several districts have collaborated to put together a document that highlights **Religious Views on Organ and Tissue Donation**. This will be a good quick reference for those who are presenting to the public or health professionals representing a variety of faith interests. Kudos to Cathy Timmons and Janet Evans for their contributions. ■

DID You Know?

More than 130 people in Nova Scotia are awaiting an organ transplant. Living organ donation, mainly kidney donation, is becoming more common with about 41% of organ transplants now a result of living donation.

The Regional Tissue Bank, based at Capital Health, has a newsletter, *The Allograft*, that they will provide to stakeholders on a regular basis to inform and educate on the activities at RTB.

The Canadian Transplant Games will be held in Calgary on July 16-22, 2012. The games provide an opportunity for those who have received a transplant to show the world the active, healthy lifestyle possible after an organ transplant. This is Canada's largest donor awareness event. It gives transplant recipients the opportunity to acknowledge the donor families for their precious gift of life – their chance for a second chance. ■

It's time to love your liver!

Canadian Liver Foundation
by Shayla Steeves

The body's largest internal organ – the liver – is seldom recognized for the vital role it plays in overall health. While it performs over 500 functions to power and protect us in day-to-day life, the liver is often seen as merely a filter for alcohol or drugs. Consequently, there continues to be a stigma surrounding liver disease and misconceptions and misdiagnoses are common. The reality is that 1 in 10 Canadians, including men, women, and children, will be affected by a liver

or biliary tract disease at some point in their lives. Liver diseases come in all shapes and sizes and can be the result of everything from poor nutrition, viruses and toxins to genetics and unknown factors.

Liver disease can strike with little to no warning. Flu-like symptoms, itchy skin, and fatigue may be some of the early signs or you may have no symptoms at all. Identifying your risk factors and asking your doctor for a liver test during your annual physical can help safeguard your liver health.

You can also visit www.liver.ca and take our *What's Your Risk?* Quiz to learn more.

The Canadian Liver Foundation (CLF) supports liver research and education to reduce the incidence and impact of all liver diseases. You can help by making a donation, volunteering, participating in or sponsoring a CLF event, hosting an event to benefit the CLF, becoming a CLF member or speaking out as an advocate for liver health. To find out about the CLF's activities in your area, visit www.liver.ca

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