



*In July 2010 Shelly MacLean, a double lung recipient, and a group of friends and supporters, entered an awareness float in their local community parade in Inverness Cape Breton. During the parade, they distributed information and MSI brochures about organ and tissue donation. Shelly is living proof of the precious gift of donation and what it means to the transplant recipient.*

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# Human Organ and Tissue Donation Act passes third reading

The Human Organ and Tissue Donation Act passed third reading in December 2010. Next steps include developing an implementation plan and setting an effective date for the legislation. There are changes in the Act, replacing the Human Tissue Gift Act (1991). One of the changes is required referral for all potential organ donors. Potential organ donors (patients that meet the GIVE Criteria) will be referred to the Critical Care Organ Donation Program for screening. The GIVE criteria are Glasgow Coma Scale less than or equal to 5T, Irreversible brain injury, Ventilated, and End of life. Required referral for

tissue donation will also be pursued. If a patient meets donor criteria, the MSI Health Card organ donation status will be checked to determine if the patient consented to donate. If donor status is not indicated, the substitute decision maker will be approached for consent. The public will be provided with more information when consenting to donate to ensure they are informed about donation. Education sessions will be held for health care professionals to learn more about the Act and their role. Check with your local District Resource Nurse. The Act (Bill 122) can be found at:

<http://hslegislature.ca/legc/~office.htm> ■

## Donor Awareness Week Planning Team – AVDHA



Front left to right- Marg McClean, Lauren McClean, Shirley Landry, Shelley Orr  
Back (left-right) - Bev Smith and Jane Smith

An Organ and Tissue Awareness Dinner will be held at Waterville and District Fire hall on Wednesday, April 20, 2011 from 5:30-8pm. Come and enjoy a light dinner and learn, share, enjoy, and celebrate! Guest speakers include Dr. Adam Clarke, Cardiologist (Physician Champion), Shelley Orr, Organ and Tissue Donation Resource Nurse, a double lung organ recipient, and a tissue donor family discussing their experience. Bring your friends and family and learn how to give the **Gift of Life**. ■

## Increase in Tissue Donors

The Emergency Department in Cape Breton District Health Authority has seen significant improvement in the number of tissue donors between 2007 and 2010. They went from 2 to 21 referrals for tissue donation and from 2 to 9 actual tissue donors. Strong leadership and interest in the topic have contributed to their success according to Janet Evans, District Resource Nurse. ■



## District Resource Nurses

Janet Evans has been the District Organ and Tissue Donation Resource Nurse for Cape Breton District Health Authority since 2007. Janet's interest in the subject of donation began in 1998 when her mom donated a kidney to her aunt and saved her life. Janet then became an advocate for donation in her intensive care/emergency work environment. Working with families who decided to give the gift of donation was an empowering professional experience for Janet. Her passion for the topic is something Janet brings to her role as a resource nurse. She

works daily with community members and teams within the district to consistently raise the bar to improve the donation process. She recently led a team to establish a required referral policy with the goal of 100% referral and screening of all potential organ and tissue donors. This policy mandates offering the option of donation to all eligible patients and families. The overall goal of this practice is to make offering donation a standard of care, thereby promoting quality end of life care. Janet enjoys her role and in the process is an excellent role model. ■

## INNOVATIVE IDEAS

### Mobile Coffee Cart Education

A new initiative in CBDHA has been receiving great reviews. Every Friday a mobile coffee cart has been visiting various departments bringing coffee, tea and snacks to the staff. Staff can

enjoy their break with a ten-minute education session and updates on the Legacy of Life Program. The purpose is providing short important unit-specific updates on donation to all members in each department. One emergency staff member stated, "This is great. We find it really difficult to leave the department and attend in-services so having it here is nice." ■

## Donor Awareness Week 2011

**April 17-24, 2011** is Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. As in the past a number of events and activities will be held across the province to recognize the week, and to bring awareness to the need for more organ and tissue donors. The Communication Working Group has collaborated with a number of interested companies as discussed in the following article. ■

## Meaningful Donation Experiences:

Offering a Legacy of Life – Between March 2009 and October 2010 22 MDE Workshops were held across the provinces, with 189 participants. An evaluation was conducted in December 2010 to determine whether MDE Workshops were meeting the objectives set out. Overall, the first 18 months of program implementation identified the workshop as a successful approach to teaching the knowledge and skills needed to know about organ and tissue donation process and to approach families using a dual advocacy approach. Suggested improvements included being flexible on the ways to facilitate discussion, making the sessions more interactive, adapting the program for physicians and applying for CME credit, as well as ideas for increasing the number of pre and post tests submitted. ■

## Companies take up the Challenge

*by Angela Blencoe, Nova Scotia Power*

Our company has a history of giving back to the community. It's also an important part of who I am, and how I approach my job. As Executive Assistant to the President & CEO at Nova Scotia Power, I have the privilege to see and be involved in many good works we support across the province.

Last year, my boss Rob Bennett, issued a challenge (and opportunity!) to me: find a project that would make a difference in our province, and develop a plan to get it done. He said I would have his full support in making sure the plan got "done".

After reflection and discussion with colleagues and friends, I decided organ donation was a cause that is important to all of us, and that would benefit from some "time and attention"! Although I have not been faced with an end of life decision about donation, several friends have had their families touched by the generosity of organ donors.

We also have an inspiring story of one of our field supervisors who lost his wife suddenly and tragically but made the decision to have her organs donated; he and his daughter have become strong advocates for organ donation in Nova Scotia.

I thought the best way to move this project forward would be to involve other executive assistants I deal with every day as we work together to make our boss's lives work efficiently. I told them about the challenge I had accepted from Rob and about the cause I had chosen.

I was preparing to issue a challenge to each of them to join me in promoting organ donation. In every instance, the "challenge" was not necessary because they all volunteered to get involved. I'm very fortunate to have their support and engagement!

Watch for the results of our collaboration starting in April 2011, in each of the organizations we represent.

Our "team" includes:

**Angela Blencowe**, Nova Scotia Power  
**Karen Putnam**, Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation

**Christabell Pinchin**, Nova Scotia Community College

**Sherri Toppie**, Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline

**Beth Caldwell**, Minas Basin Pulp & Power

**Judy Furlong**, CCL Group,  
**Karol Ann Morrison**, Atlantic Lottery Corporation

**Kathy Rennick**, Office of Premier Darrell Dexter

**Stewart McKelvey** ■



By Todd Campbell, Canadian Blood Services

The Living Donor Paired Exchange (LDPE) Registry, developed by Canadian Blood Services to match incompatible donor/recipient pairs with other pairs for transplant, went Canada-wide in the fall when Quebec joined the Registry. In addition to going Canada-wide, the Registry celebrated other important milestones before the end of the year, including:

- the first LDPE surgeries performed in the province of Nova Scotia;
- the first patients in Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador receiving transplants;
- matches and transplants for highly sensitized (difficult-to-match) patients; and
- first instance where kidneys were shipped as part of a living donor exchange from one Canadian centre to another (Halifax and Toronto), demonstrating that transporting the kidney rather than the donor is feasible in some circumstances.

Since launching in January 2009, 185 donor-recipient pairs have been entered into the Registry, as well as 20 non-directed donors. As a result, 69 transplants have been completed successfully, and more are currently under medical review.

Non-directed donors – a person who is not paired with a recipient, but wishes to donate a kidney to anyone in need – continue to make a significant impact on total transplants. As of March 10, 2011, 52 of the 69 transplants completed to date have been through domino exchanges which always begins with a non-directed donor.

In 2011, Canadian Blood Services will continue to conduct match cycles approximately once each quarter: March, May, August and November. For more information on the LDPE Registry, visit Canadian Blood Services' website [www.blood.ca/organsandtissues](http://www.blood.ca/organsandtissues). ■



## By Heart Recipient Robert Manual

The call came in the morning for my heart. I was surprisingly calm... not excited or anxious but calm. I never had any doubt about the success of the transplant. Life was going to be better one way or another for both me and my wife. At the hospital, there was excitement and jubilation among the staff during the workup prior to surgery.

When I woke up my first thought...my skin doesn't feel tired. My wife said my feet were warm for the first time in years. Now years later, the way I see myself is a person who has choices, who doesn't have a heart problem, who is not disabled and can give back to my family and the community in a productive way. To my donor and family: Thank you! I will do my best to take care of this incredible gift you have given me. To potential donors: Donation is a very personal choice. Once the decision is made,

tell your family so they can be comfortable with your choice. What this has meant to me is that I can continue to be a productive, contributing member of my community. Through my work (I retired from 32 years in the federal government 2 years after the transplant), worked in politics for 7 years and now I am enjoying sales work nearer home) I truly believe I was able to help my community and my province in many ways by helping others.

On a personal level I have been able to see my two grandchildren grow, start school, spend time with them and last year at age 60 I learned to ski with them. Through my work I have been to Texas, Florida, Paris, England, Wales, Austria and Norway. My wife and I have enjoyed adding the last 9+ years to our anniversary count. ■

## Why do the numbers matter?

By Danielle Byrne RN MN

Over the last three years, charts audits have been conducted with the purpose of identifying Nova Scotia's potential for organ and tissue donation. For every missed referral, there is potential for missing an opportunity for donation.

Chart audits are time consuming. However, they have provided a wealth of information on where our system can improve. The numbers provide evidence to support where the program needs to focus education to improve referral rates. As well, the data results emphasize the reason to change provincial legislation and therefore healthcare practice. ■

There is a well documented gap between the number of organ and tissue donors and the need for organs and tissues for transplantation. Nationally and provincially efforts have been underway to improve the identification and referral of organ and tissue donors. The following table provides stats for Nova Scotia for the past four years.

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of organ donor referrals	40	44	57	59
Number of actual organ donors	15	16	15	19
Number of tissue donation referrals	158	196	198	309
Number of actual tissue donors	100	100	95	98

Cape Breton District Health Authority doubled the number of actual tissue donors between 2009 and 2010. This is the result of implementing a required referral policy in June 2010. District Resource Nurse Janet Evans stated, "It was a great deal of work to develop and implement this policy, however, it is gratifying to see a substantial increase in donations".



Mark Bonin presented a poster at the March Canadian Society of Transplantation annual meeting in Mont Tremblant, Que. The poster was entitled, *Organ and Tissue Donation: What Health Professionals Need to Know*. The poster discussed the process used to develop and roll out this Legacy of Life resource binder across the province. The poster was well received. ■

## DID You Know?

### Regional Tissue Bank recognized for excellence

Capital Health's Tissue Bank was recently audited by the International Standards Organization (ISO) with exceptional results. Because the Tissue Bank holds a medical device license for heart valves, it must meet ISO standards. Each year, ISO conducts a surveillance audit, with a full audit every three years.

In this year's surveillance audit, the Tissue Bank Team was commended for:

- \* Committed staff and leadership team
- \* Corrective action process
- \* An end-user survey conducted with surgeons in 2009
- \* Collaboration with Sterile Processing and Microbiology to achieve continuous quality improvements
- \* Membership on Tissue and Organ Surveillance Advisory Group, a provincial and national initiative related to tracking adverse events and outcomes
- \* Work to validate every tissue process and ensure effectiveness

Lois West, manager of the Tissue Bank, comments, "The team deserves great credit for this achievement. Special thanks to Cindi Johnston, quality team leader, who has been front and centre in all of this work."

This audit is the Tissue Bank's most recent success, having also undergone two successful Health Canada audits in the past year. The Tissue Bank is also accredited by the American Association of Tissue Banks.

On behalf of Capital Health, thanks to the Tissue Bank team for demonstrating excellence in continuous quality improvement. ■

# PARTNER UPDATES

## Multi Organ Transplant Program (MOTP) Highlights

2010 was a celebration year for Transplant in Atlantic Canada. 111 people received the gift of life. 85 kidney transplants, 3 kidney pancreas transplants, 20 liver transplants, 5 heart transplants and 1 pancreas transplant were performed. The MOTP joined the National Paired Exchanged Registry in February of 2010 and in December we completed 3 paired exchange transplants.

The number of Atlantic Canadians registered for the paired exchange program is growing, we are hopeful that in 2011 we will see many more Atlantic Canadians benefit from this process. In the fall of every year MOTP puts on a Transplant Atlantic Conference. There is a public

forum held on the first evening of the conference. We see in excess of 70 public attend to hear program achievements, challenges and future endeavors.

This evening is followed by 2 days of educational sessions for Transplant inter-professional health care providers. Our conference in 2010 saw the biggest registration since the inception of the event. In the spring of each year we participate with our community partner the Nova Scotia Liver Foundation to present an education day for the public on Liver disease. Topics include: liver medications, types of liver diseases, exercise, foods for the liver, and we even have an open microphone session with a hepatologist. Anyone may attend and we ask that you bring a friend.

MOTP is active in two fields of research, basic science and clinical. Our group has published articles in reputable national and international medical journals. Many

of our inter-professional team members present at conferences on national and foreign stages.

2010 saw our team grow as we welcomed Mandy Tinning, Nurse Practitioner for the Liver Transplant service. Mandy will work hard to improve the care we deliver to liver patients both pre and post transplant. For more information about our program or contact information we have a public website: [www.motphalifax.ca](http://www.motphalifax.ca) ■

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

#### Transplant Atlantic Public Forum

October 12, 2011  
(tentative date)

## ORGAN AND TISSUE CONTACTS



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#### **Capital Health**

Call and ask for the Organ Donor Coordinator or the Tissue Bank Specialist on call  
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