



Research project summary

Registration for Deceased Organ Donation in Family Physician Offices

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- Awarded \$97,987 from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) in 2017

One organ donor can save up to eight lives. Sadly many Canadians die waiting for an organ transplant because there are not enough organs. Though most Canadians support organ donation less than 25% of the public in most provinces have registered. Our team of researchers, patients and family doctors are working with Trillium Gift of Life Network to improve registration. We spoke with patients who have not yet registered. Some think their organs may not be suitable. Others told us that it is important and want to register but have not gotten to it yet. Some others were not sure if they had registered. Canadians want to register and believe it is important but we need to help clear up misconceptions and make it easier for those who want to register to do so. The family doctor's office is a promising but underused place for organ donation registration. There are lots of reasons why promoting organ donation in the doctor's office may help increase registration: 1-people are already thinking about health issues when they visit; 2-family doctor offices provide trusted health information; 3-office staff look at health cards at each visit and modern Ontario health cards show if they have registered; 4-there is an opportunity to register in the waiting room; 5-can reach many people: 77% of Canadians see their doctor at least once a year. We developed a strategy to help those who want to register to do so in their family doctor's office. We will now test our strategy in six doctor offices to see if it increases organ donor registration. Our innovative design involves each doctor's office starting to use the strategy in a staggered way (stepped-wedge cluster trial). We will use linked healthcare databases to check if patients register. Our 1-year goal: to prove that we can increase organ donor registration in six doctor offices so that we can share and test the strategy more widely. Our ultimate goal: to increase organ donation so that less people die waiting for a transplant.

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