

Is there any cost to our family for the testing and organ retrieval surgery?

There are no costs to the family for any of the procedures involved in organ and tissue donation. However, if your family wishes to travel to Halifax or Moncton to be with your loved one when life sustaining measures are withdrawn, you are responsible for these expenses.

The process of finding recipients and organizing the surgery can take some time, so if you decide to travel with your loved one, you should be prepared to be out of province for a few days.

There may be some financial assistance available from the hospital foundation offices (ex. gas cards, confederation bridge pass), so please ask your health care team about this.

Will I be able to contact the recipients of my loved one's organs?

There is an opportunity to exchange letters with the recipients of your loved one's organs and tissues. Please ask your organ donor liaison about this opportunity.

Adapted from Trillium Gift of Life Network



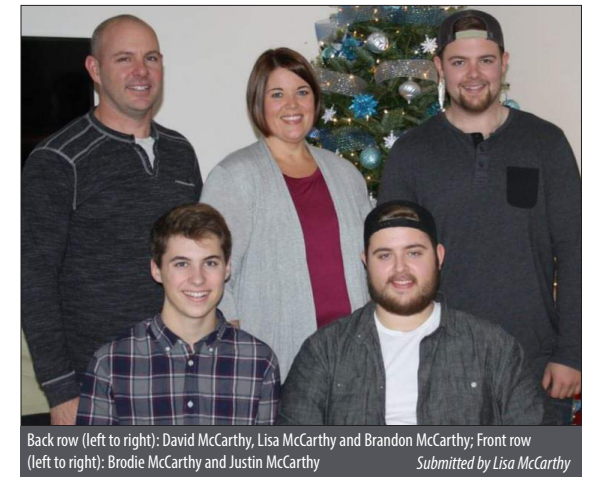
"When our son Brodie was involved in an accident that left him on life support, we were presented with the opportunity for him to become an organ donor. To be able to save others lives is something we know he would have wanted, and in doing so, Brodie was able to help save 5 people. While it was an easy decision for us to make, others may not be so sure...Please make your wishes known about organ donation to your family and friends and don't be afraid to have those conversations.

Be a hero, save a life, become an organ donor! #belikebrodie" Lisa, donor family member

Organ and Tissue Donation at the End-of-Life

The decision to donate your loved one's organs and tissues is one of many decisions you may have to make at the end-of-life.

The PEI Department of Health and Wellness wants to make sure you have the information you need at a time when the confusion, uncertainty and grief you are feeling may make it difficult to understand what you are being told.



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How have we come to this moment? Why are we being offered the opportunity to donate organ and tissue?

When the health care team has determined medical treatment will not prevent your loved one from dying, they will talk to you about withdrawing life sustaining treatments.

All patients are screened for their potential to be organ and tissue donors as part of end-of-life care. If your loved one is a potential organ and tissue donor, this will be discussed with your family after the decision to withdraw life-sustaining treatments.

Our family hasn't discussed organ and tissue donation –how should we proceed?

Health professionals can access the PEI Intent to Donate registry to determine if your loved one had registered their decision to donate and will share this information with you. You will be asked to confirm your loved one's decision. Regardless of what you decide, the level of support you receive from the healthcare team will not change.

What happens after we decide to donate our loved one's organs and tissues?

Your loved one will continue to receive medical support needed to keep their organs and tissues healthy enough for transplant. Arrangements will be made to have your loved one transferred to Halifax, NS or Moncton, NB for their surgery. You will be able to say your goodbyes before your loved one is transferred, or you can travel to be with your loved one when they are taken off life-support. Whether you decide to travel with your loved one or not, an organ donor liaison will keep you informed every step of the way.

How is it decided which organs and tissues my loved one can donate?

Tests will be carried out to determine what organs and tissues can be transplanted. It is possible that the circumstances surrounding their current medical condition or something in their past medical history could have had serious effects on their organs and tissues which would affect their safety for transplant.

How are the recipients chosen?

The sickest people waiting on the list are the first to receive transplants. Other factors that are considered include: blood type, height, weight and length of time waiting for a transplant.

Can we be there when my loved one is taken off all life sustaining treatments?

Everyone involved in your loved one's care will do all they can to ensure that you have the time you need to say goodbye. Health care professionals understand that the time you spend with your loved one before life sustaining treatments are withdrawn is an extremely important part of the journey in coming to terms with the reality of your loss.

I worry that donating my loved one's organs and tissues is just too much—they've already been through so much.

The recovery of organs and tissues will not take place until your loved one is determined to be dead, so they are unable to feel pain. Do not feel pressured to make a decision on your own.

Talk to your family and the health care team openly and honestly about your feelings, and consider what your loved one would have wanted.

Many families of organ donors describe the comfort of organ and tissue donation as a feeling of creating meaning from tragedy.

Will the organ recovery surgery prevent us from having a funeral with an open casket?

No. Funeral options are not impacted by the decision to donate.