



November 23, 2009

Dr. Peter Nickerson
Executive Medical Director
Organs and Tissues Division
Canadian Blood Services
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Peter

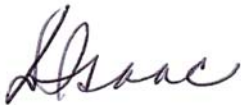
I am writing on behalf of the Canadian Cardiac Transplant Network (CCTN), to both support your efforts to enhance our system of organ donation and transplantation on a nation-wide basis, and to outline what we feel are essential components of such a system.

Even prior to the formal development and adoption of such a national system, it is imperative that we have a national waiting list for patients awaiting organ transplantation, both for pediatric and adults patients. This national list must be computerized and “real-time”, in that it must be updated immediately when changes to patient status and either new listing or de-listing occurs. The national real-time list is particularly important for cardiac transplantation, as we have a national status and organ sharing agreement which makes it essential that we have access to accurate and up to the minute data to allow the most appropriate allocation of donor hearts. The current system has delayed updating of information, leading to missed or inaccurate / outdated data, delays in allocation, and confusion in some cases as to the most appropriate recipient for the available donor organ. In addition, it has compromised the collegiality between transplant programs and colleagues, all of whom are advocating for their individual patients.

We feel strongly that there should be national oversight of Canadian organ procurement organizations. In whatever form this takes, there must be shared policies, open communication, and transparency across all provinces and territories. The CCTN has,

over the last decade, developed and implemented policies around priority listing status, organ allocation, and organ sharing across the country. It has been difficult to communicate these policies effectively within the current system of separate organ procurement organizations, leading to misinformation, confusion, and frustration on the part of the CCTN and the OPO's. In order to facilitate the most appropriate utilization of donor organs across Canada, and optimize equity and transparency within the system, the new national system of organ procurement organization(s) must have the authority to enforce policies and compliance with practice standards, which would include imposing penalties and sanctions if required.

If we are to optimize organ donation and transplantation across Canada we must work together. The CCTN would like to commend the Canadian Blood Services for taking the initiative to work with organ donation and transplantation agencies and programs to develop a national system that we can all be proud of.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'D Isaac'.

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