

# Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation: What's New

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Tracy has 10 years experience in donation and transplantation. She is presently Director of the Organs and Tissues Division of the Canadian Blood Services. She provides executive guidance for workplace initiatives aimed at enhancing the organ and tissue donation and transplantation systems in Canada.

There is a need in Canada to improve the delivery of organ and tissue donation and transplantation (OTDT) and to decrease wait times for transplant. For six years, the Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation (CCDT) has produced a high-quality body of knowledge and provided advice on standards and guidelines, best practises, consensus priorities for Canada, market strategies and educational resources. The CCDT also provides constant advice that a comprehensive coordinated strategy would require a national coordinating organization with the authority and the mandate to be operational. In 2008 CCDT merged with the Canadian Blood Services (CBS), which expanded its mandate and operations beyond blood services and into organ and tissue donation and transplantation. This presentation dealt with the evolution of OTDT in Canada and provided information on the benefits of a national system under the CBS and discussed current and planned activities to improve OTDT in Canada.

## History

The history of CBS is that it was founded in 1998 as the successor

organization to the Canadian Red Cross, as a result of the tainted blood scandal. Phase 1 from 1998 to 2003 was crisis management. Phase 2 from 2002 to 2007 was for strategic management. Phase 3 from 2007 to 2012 was to establish a real time integrated system. CBS has transformed the legacy operations of the Canadian Red Cross into a national integrated service-delivery organization focused on quality and service excellence.

Today the CBS is more than blood collection. It recruits donors, collects, processes, tests and distributes blood components. It collects plasma, purchases and distributes plasma protein products. It has programs for education and clinical consultation. It is linked to 51 other registries worldwide for marrow and stem cell networks and has an emerging umbilical cord blood bank. It has diagnostic laboratories and has established a foundation for future projects. Presently there are; 890,000 whole blood donors, 52,000 plasma donors, 32,000 platelet donors.

### Understanding the Need for organ donation ( see charts).

We import 80-90% of the tissue transplanted in Canada and the safety of these imported products remains a concern. Although the demand for tissue will continue to increase as the population ages we lack the capacity to meet the full donation potential. Some regions are dealing with a major shortage of some tissues while others have excesses and some specialized products are not manufactured in Canada. Our national consolidated data is lacking for assessing complete tissue banking risks and priorities.

Therefore in August 2008, CBS was given a mandate to continue work developing policies for leading practises, guideline developments, performance measurement, accreditation, public engagement and awareness. They were also to develop national registries for living donors paired exchanges, urgent status patients and highly sensitized patients and intent to donate.

## Expectations and Challenges

Complex problems require complex solutions and although the stakeholders want immediate action the problems cannot be solved quickly. Further consultations are required as there are different opinions of priorities as well as a need to balance the requirements of different tissue programs. Appropriate levers are needed for system wide improvement such as enabling legislation, activity based reimbursement, performance targets, accountabilities and required reporting, as well as peer reviews and audits. The continuing financial support of the government is also required to keep the program growing.

## Goals of the Current Mandate

To design a Canadian system that defines clear roles and responsibilities, and clear accountabilities to improve organ donor rates, and patient access and outcomes in all provinces.

To present a practical fundable plan, that is supported by the OTDT community.

To work with hospital teams from across Canada to share and implement best practises to dramatically improve donation rates.

To work with stakeholders to determine core components of allocation and utilization of organs.

To develop indicators and measures of system performance.

To determine best economic policy for improving donation in Canada.

To understand public awareness of intent to donate and public perception.

The CBS will be conducting surveys and interviews to describe the current state of tissue banking, and tissue supply and demand in Canada. They will be reaching out to OR Managers and OR Nurses to provide their insight and knowledge in relation to demand and utilization. They can then begin to design a system to support demand, increase allograft self-sufficiency and ensure Canadian patients have equitable and appropriate access to the allografts the need.