



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Recent successful public solicitations of organs bring together stakeholders in effort to develop Canadian guidelines

Québec City, (QC) October 14, 2016 – The Canadian Society of Transplantation (CST) is leading an effort, in partnership with the Canadian National Transplant Research Program (CNTRP) and the Canadian Blood Services, to provide guidance related to public solicitation for organ donations.

With a shortage of organ donors in Canada, some transplant candidates may decide to seek a living donor through public solicitation. In 2015, two high profile cases of media appeals for living donors highlighted this growing trend. With new tools now available, especially social media platforms, public solicitation for living donors has garnered significant media attention and some controversy. As organ transplantation is a multi-jurisdictional issue in Canada with different rules governing living donors, deceased donors, and waiting lists, questions have been raised about the ethics of public solicitation by those in need of an organ transplant. CST has brought together national organizations to provide guidance on public solicitation for organ donation in Canada.

While there is no national policy on organ solicitation, federal and provincial laws state that organ donation should be gratuitous and organs should not be bought or sold or dealt in exchange for valuable consideration. Living organ donation should also be done in compliance with Health Canada Standards, which specify that transplant centers that perform living organ donation are responsible for donor screening and testing, suitability assessment, and physical exam. Given this absence of guidelines on public solicitation of living organ donors, a committee composed of transplant physicians, ethicists, legal scholars and two patients, under the leadership of the CST, has published a position paper today in the journal *Transplantation*. Link to the document: <http://www.cst-transplant.ca/resources-for-health-professionals.html>

In this position paper, we acknowledge that public solicitation of organs raises numerous ethical issues such as fairness and equity, donor's and recipient's autonomy, anonymity, etc. That being said, the committee concluded that it could be acceptable for transplant centers to consider solicited living organ donors provided it is done in compliance with Canadian law and there is no monetary exchange. In this position statement, we also provide guidance for transplant centers related to the informed consent process and evaluation of donors that do come forward via a public solicitation.

About the CST

Leadership in Canadian Transplantation

The Canadian Society of Transplantation is the professional organization for physicians, surgeons, scientists and allied health professionals working in the field of transplantation. We currently have more than 400 members from across the country in all transplant fields, in clinical practice and scientific research.

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