

The journal of the REGISTERED NURSES' ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO (RNAO)

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Registered Nurse Journal, ISSN 1484-0863, is a benefit to members of the RNAO. Paid subscriptions are welcome. Full subscription prices for one year (six issues), including taxes: Canada \$36 (HST); Outside Canada: \$42. Printed with vegetable-based inks on recycled paper (50 per cent recycled and 20 per cent post-consumer fibre) on acid-free paper.

Registered Nurse Journal is published six times a year by RNAO. The views or opinions expressed in the editorials, articles or advertisements are those of the authors/advertisers and do not necessarily represent the policies of RNAO or the Editorial Advisory Committee. RNAO assumes no responsibility or liability for damages arising from any error or omission or from the use of any information or advice contained in the *Registered Nurse Journal* including editorials, studies, reports, letters and advertisements. All articles and photos accepted for publication become the property of the *Registered Nurse Journal*. Indexed in Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature.

CANADIAN POSTMASTER

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RNAO, 158 Pearl Street, Toronto ON, M5H 1L3.
Publications Mail Agreement No. 40006768.

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EDITOR'S NOTE KIMBERLEY KEARSEY

With death comes life

ANNE SHERWOOD, ONE OF TWO nurses featured in our story about organ donation (pg. 24), was my age when her life changed forever. She was a mom who “never in a million years” thought she would need an organ transplant. That sense of immortality isn’t surprising. Many people fortunate enough to live relatively healthy lives—Sherwood included—don’t plan for the moment they’ll be on death’s door. But anyone who knows a transplant recipient, or has a family member on the waiting list, has done some thinking about death, and is well aware of Ontario’s organ donation registry and the impact it can have on so many vulnerable lives.

With the June launch of its online registry, Trillium Gift of Life Network, Ontario’s central organ and tissue donation agency, was thrilled that 4,000 people registered in the first week. That far exceeded the goal of 1,500 and speaks volumes about the value of easy access when it comes to registering consent. Trillium’s goal is to help more people recognize the impact a single donor can have. I certainly didn’t realize it until I started my research for this feature. And I didn’t know how suddenly one could depend on

it until I met Anne Sherwood.

Enlightened, I decided to register. But it wasn’t as easy as you might think. For my first attempt (before the online registry), I printed the appropriate forms from the website with plans to mail them shortly thereafter. I pulled the papers off the printer, placed them on my desk, and promptly forgot they were there. It seems this is not uncommon, and perhaps one of the reasons only 18 per cent of eligible donors bothered to register before the new system was put in place.

My second attempt was online. Open the website and click away. Easy. Or maybe not. As I went through the steps, I began to reconsider. Do I really want to do this? Do I really want to commit? Why am I holding back? For me, it’s accepting the notion that we all die one day, and the visual that when I do, my organs may end up in someone else’s body. It all seems so final.

Fortunately, my uncertainty was short-lived. I gave my head a shake and remembered that I’m not going to need organs and tissue when it’s my time to go. I am now officially on the list, and it took me less than a minute. Now it’s your turn. I challenge you to face your mortality and visit www.beadonor.ca. **RN**

Correction: A small news item in the *Nursing in the News* section of our May-June issue stated that breast reconstructive surgery is not covered by OHIP. Breast reconstructive surgery is, in fact, covered by OHIP for individuals diagnosed with cancer. A surgical oncologist can provide a referral. We apologize for the error.