



MEDIA RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
December 10, 2008**

Transplant recipients pop in to say thanks

VANCOUVER – BC Transplant, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, is organizing the third annual *Popcorn Express*, visiting Lower Mainland hospitals, as part of BC Transplant's 'Operation Popcorn'.

On December 11th, transplant recipients will again board the *Express* (generously donated by Pacific Coach Lines) for a special delivery of popcorn to a number of Lower Mainland hospitals. Liver transplant recipient, Susan Harrison, is pleased to be joining the team again this year. "To have the opportunity to be able to say thank you and show the hospital staff what they have given back to us all, is indescribable," says Susan. "They see vibrant, healthy people living full lives thanks to their dedication and hard work."

Kathleen Olekshy, ICU nurse at Royal Columbian, feels she speaks for the unit when she says "When those tins of popcorn come through the doors in the arms of transplant recipients, that's when the work we do with donors and their families comes to a new level of realization. Thank you for 'Operation Popcorn' and for the opportunity to reflect on the challenging but rewarding work we do."

Operation Popcorn began more than 15 years ago, and has attracted increasing numbers of transplant volunteers who are excited to extend their thanks to hospital staff and the memory of the donor who gave them the gift of life. Throughout BC, teams of organ transplant recipients gather to deliver big, decorative tins of popcorn to hospitals and other facilities, to show their gratitude to the many doctors, nurses and lab specialists who perform a difficult, but crucial role in the organ donation process. Without the support of BC's hospitals, organ donation and transplantation would not be possible.

The 'Popcorn Express' will be parked outside City Square Mall, 555 West 12th Avenue, by Safeway (Ash St. entrance) from 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 11th.

If you are interested in either covering this event, or riding on the 'Popcorn Express', and meeting transplant recipients, please contact Lisa Despins at 604.877.2240.

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Currently more than 400 British Columbians are awaiting a life-saving or life-enhancing organ transplant. What are you waiting for? It is important that all British Columbians register their decision on BC's Organ Donor Registry, regardless of their decision. You can do so by logging on to transplant.bc.ca or by calling BC Transplant at 1-800-663-6189.

BC Transplant is an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

Contact:

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This past June, BC became the first province in Canada to offer an online, legal organ donor consent system incorporating digital signature technology. British Columbians can now register their decision on BC's Organ Donor Registry more quickly and efficiently using the customized donor registration form – <https://www.transplant.bc.ca/onlinereg/bcts.asp> – that offers a legal and paperless online alternative to mailing in forms.

BC's Organ Donor Registry (ODR) was introduced 11 years ago, and replaced the system of placing a decal on your Driver's Licence or CareCard. Currently, more than 680,000 British Columbians – or 16 per cent of the population – have registered on the Organ Donor Registry.

About BC Transplant

BC Transplant is an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. Over the past four decades, more than 4,500 British Columbians have received a life-saving organ transplant.

Hundreds of British Columbians are waiting for a life-saving transplant. What are you waiting for? Register at www.transplant.bc.ca or call 1.800.663.6189.