



Contact:

**Ken Donohue,
Manager, Communications
BC Transplant**

**604-877-2240
Or
1-800-663-6189**

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Kelowna Sets New Record for Organ Donation

KELOWNA – Kelowna General Hospital broke a 20 year record for their organization with an increase of almost triple in organ donations, providing new life to 40 people, announced Kelowna-Lake Country MLA Al Horning and Okanagan-Westside MLA Rick Thorpe.

“I’m pleased to see Kelowna residents recognizing the importance of organ donation,” said Horning. “With an increase from three in 2006 to eight last year, the generosity of our community is apparent and growing.”

Kelowna, with a population of approximately 100,000 people, has always been a city that has shown a strong support for organ donation, actively demonstrated by the numbers of Kelowna residents who have registered their decision on the Organ Donor Registry. Currently 24% of Kelowna Residents are registered, while the provincial average is 15%.

Over the past four decades, 121 Kelowna residents have received transplants, and five people are currently waiting.

“The large number of organs recovered last year at Kelowna General requires a great deal of logistical coordination and commitment on the part of the hospital team,” says Penny Clarke Richardson, Director of Organ Donation & Hospital Development at BC Transplant. “It is also important to recognize the team’s dedication to providing donors with the opportunity to give the gift of life, while at the same supporting the donor’s family.”

The news could not have been better for the many patients awaiting a transplant last year, as BC Transplant, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, broke a number of transplant records, including an overall total of 262 transplants in 2007, more than any other previous year.

Contributing to this success was an increase in donations, both living and deceased. The number of deceased donors in BC rose to 38, a number not seen in the province since 2003, and the number of living donors in BC has jumped 35% over the past two years.

Despite the increase in organ transplants, hundreds of British Columbians are still waiting for a live-saving transplant. What are you waiting for? Register your decision about organ donation on BC’s Organ Donor Registry. Based on public opinion surveys, 85% of British Columbians said they support organ donation and intend to register their decision, yet just over 16% have done so. To register visit www.transplant.bc.ca or telephone 1.800.663.6189.

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Over the past four decades, more than 4,000 British Columbians have received a life-saving organ transplant.