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## MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

***Live life. Pass it on.***  
**“Give your heart” and show you support organ donation  
through BC Transplant’s new Facebook app**

VANCOUVER – BC Transplant, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, is inviting social media users to show their support as part of its 2011 awareness campaign, *Live life. Pass it on.* By using a new [Facebook application](#), users can customize their profile pictures with the tag line ‘I Gave My Heart’ to show their social network they support organ donation.

“There is no doubt that transplants work, and we will continue to strive for a time when every British Columbian who needs a transplant can have one,” says Minister of Health Michael de Jong. “I changed my Facebook profile picture because it shows instantly that I support BC Transplant and its goal to increase organ donor registration in the province. I encourage everyone to do the same and then go to [www.transplant.bc.ca](http://www.transplant.bc.ca) to register their decision on organ donation.”

The campaign’s emphasis on social media and visual components reflect the inspiration of late double lung transplant recipient, Eva Markvoort, and the powerful, global movement for organ donation that she created online and through her documentary film, *65\_RedRoses*. *Live life. Pass it on.* is an extension of Eva’s passion to increase donor awareness, especially through various social media channels.

There are currently more than 350 British Columbians whose lives are in jeopardy while waiting for a vital organ transplant. Diagnosed with cystic fibrosis when she was just a child, Eva Markvoort had been one of these people, but in 2007, she received the gift of life with a double lung transplant, which gave her two added years of healthy life and enabled her to continue her passionate work through an awareness art project with friend and photographer, Cyrus McEachern.

Featuring local transplant recipients, Eva and Cyrus combined their talents to create a stunning series of photographs that have become the visual focus of BC Transplant’s 2011 campaign.

One of the photographed recipients, double lung recipient, Darvy Culleton says, “The only reason I am alive today is because someone else made the decision to give, and every breath that my transplanted lungs take are a testament to that. I feel grateful for every moment I have and live with a freedom I never knew before my gift of an organ.”

Sadly, Eva passed away just as this amazing and powerful project was getting off the ground. Despite the initial success of her first transplant

procedure in 2008, Eva's body experienced rejection, and she died while waiting for a second double lung transplant in March 2010.

"I was so glad she asked me to take part in the original project," adds Culleton. "Eva helped so many people in their struggle, I couldn't even imagine not participating. The combination of her passion for organ donation and artistic talents has truly left a mark on our society."

"Every year, patients who are waiting for a suitable transplant die on the waitlist because there isn't an organ available in time," says Dr. Greg Grant, Provincial Executive Director, BC Transplant. "BC Transplant is committed to offering hope to more families in B.C. through organ donation and transplantation with province-wide advances in our program model."

**April 17-24 is National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week**, a week where the success of organ donation and transplantation is celebrated across the country, but also when awareness is raised about the critical shortage of organs available for transplant.

It doesn't take long to show support for those waiting for a transplant. BC Transplant has made it simple. There are more than 350 British Columbians currently for a second chance. Stop the wait. Registering for organ donation takes seconds at [www.transplant.bc.ca](http://www.transplant.bc.ca).

BC Transplant, established in 1986, is a comprehensive health care organization responsible for all aspects of organ transplant in British Columbia, including; pre-transplant assessment, organ recovery and donor matching, follow-up care at regional clinics across the province, research and clinical trials, and public education. More than 350 British Columbians are currently waiting for a life saving organ transplant.

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