



Patient FAQs - Medical Assistance in Dying and Donation

Who is Trillium Gift of Life Network?

Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) is the Ontario agency responsible for organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Is organ and/or tissue donation still an option if I opt for medical assistance in dying?

Saving lives through organ and tissue donation is possible for those who choose to receive medical assistance in dying. Your suitability to be a donor will be determined based on your medical status, diagnosis and past medical history.

Who do I let know that I am interested in organ and/or tissue donation?

It is important that you make your decision to donate known to your family and your healthcare professional as part of your medical assistance in dying process so that TGLN can be contacted on your behalf. Once you have expressed your interest in donation, TGLN will work with you and your healthcare professional to support your wishes and determine how they can be met.

If I have consented to organ and/or tissue donation, can I still change my mind about medical assistance in dying?

Regardless of the circumstances, you may withdraw from the medical assistance in dying process, donation process or both at any point. Your decision to donate is completely independent of your decision to receive medical assistance in dying, and in no way obligates you to proceed with either.

How will organ and/or tissue donation impact my plan for medically-assisted death?

Depending on your medical eligibility, you may need to adjust your plan to accommodate donation. Your medical treatment will not be impacted by your decision to donate organs and/or tissues after death, but there are some things to consider as you discuss your plans with your healthcare professional.

The location of your medically-assisted death need not change for tissue donation to occur. However, if you have provided consent and are eligible for tissue donation, you will be transferred to an appropriate tissue recovery location after death in order to facilitate tissue recovery. For organ donation to occur, your medically-assisted death must take place in a hospital, however your family and friends are still able to be present in this setting. In order to proceed with organ donation the medications used for medical assistance in dying must be given by an intravenous (IV). You are not eligible for organ donation if you choose to self-administer oral medications. In order to help determine medical eligibility for donation some additional testing will be required. This may include the placement of intravenous (IV)

lines, routine blood work and/or diagnostic tests such as x-rays. You will also require admission to a hospital 1-2 days prior to your medically-assisted death.

Will my decision to donate and participate in medical assistance in dying be confidential?

Your primary healthcare professional, the staff at TGLN and the transplant programs will be aware of the donation and the circumstances of your illness and death. The Office of the Chief Coroner is also notified when donation occurs in the presence of medical assistance in dying. Donation is confidential and TGLN will not disclose your choice without your consent.

When will donation occur?

Organ and tissue donation will only occur after you have died with medical assistance.

Will I have additional suffering?

No. Your medical care around death and the medications provided for medical assistance in dying will not change in any way if you have consented to organ and/or tissue donation.

Can my family participate in the discussion about donation?

You may include your family and friends when discussing donation with an expert in donation from TGLN.

Can I choose to donate if I do not want to be admitted to hospital?

If medically eligible you may donate tissues such as eyes, bones, skin and heart valves without changing the location of your medically-assisted death.