

## GRAND ROUNDS

# Double transplant patient urges everyone to sign donor cards

Stephen Lyons wouldn't be able to help spread the word about the need for organ donors if it wasn't for his own donor.

Last spring his liver and kidneys were deteriorating at a rapid pace and he was in desperate need of two new organs.

"I was only on the wait list for 11 days and I got a call at 11:45 at night asking if I could get to the Toronto General Hospital for 4:30 a.m.," he recalls.

All of his bloodwork now shows that the transplanted organs have drastically improved his overall health. He's eating a regular diet again and all of his levels are normal. "It's really like nothing ever happened, it's hard to believe I had a very serious, chronic disease."

As he was adjusting to his 'new normal' during the recovery process, he felt an overpowering need to share his story and become an advocate in the region for the organ donation program and Trillium Gift of Life.

"I like to give credit to the donor," Lyons says about this new-found philanthropic side. "I've always been a very positive person, but I had never thought much about how I could give back."

He has sent a letter to the donor's family expressing his heartfelt appreciation for their gift of life. "My goal is now to promote and raise awareness for the need for more heroes like them. There is hope."

It's not an easy topic to talk about, but one deceased donor can enhance up to eight

lives and their tissues could help up to 75 people, he states.

With friends currently on hemodialysis awaiting their life-changing call, Lyons knew it was important to start his effort here in Renfrew.

He has been in and out of RVH since he was a teenager and is "blown away" with the support from staff and administration in his effort to reach out to potential donors.

"I hope that somehow I can help others on their journey to being matched with a

donor and having a successful transplant," he comments.

There are currently 1,615 people in Ontario waiting for an organ transplant and only 29 per cent of Ontarians are registered donors.

In April, Lyons may be spotted at Aikenhead's PharmaChoice Drug Store for Organ Donation Month.

*To learn more, visit [beadonor.ca](http://beadonor.ca)*



**Transplant patient Stephen Lyons visits the RVH Dialysis Centre.**