Choosing to write to a transplant recipient is a personal decision. Some donor families choose to send a card or letter to transplant recipients and their families to share information about themselves and their loved one. For some donor families, writing to a transplant recipient helps them in their grieving process.

It is up to you whether or not you choose to write to a transplant recipient. Your last name will not be included on any letters that you send. No one will know who you are or where you live.
If you would like to write to a transplant recipient, here is some information to guide you:

Tell them about your loved one

- Use your loved one’s first name only or simply say “our loved one”.
- Tell about your loved one’s area of work (not job title).
- Tell about your loved one’s hobbies or interests.
- Please use care in expressing any religious sentiments.
- Do not include the name of the town or city where you live.

Signing your card or letter

- Sign your first name only, or simply sign “The donor family”.
- Do not give your address or phone number.
- Do not give the name or location of the hospital where your loved one was a patient.
Mailing your card or letter

- Place your card or letter in an envelope. Don’t seal the envelope.
- Write your full name and the date of the donation on a separate sheet of paper.
- Place the unsealed envelope and the sheet of paper in a second envelope.
- Seal the outer envelope and send it to the donor coordinator at the address on the back of this pamphlet. The donor coordinator will review the card or letter to ensure confidentiality. Your card or letter will then be mailed to the transplant recipient.

Please be aware that your note will take time to reach the transplant recipient because it must be reviewed by the donor coordinator before it is forwarded.
Will I hear from the transplant recipient?
You may or may not hear from the recipient. Many transplant recipients have said that they are overwhelmed with emotion and have trouble expressing their gratitude in words. Others may take several months or even years before they feel comfortable writing to their donor family.

If you need further information about writing to a transplant recipient, please contact your donor coordinator.

What are your questions?
Please ask.
We are here to help you.
Send cards or letters to:
Critical Care Organ Donation Program
Room 4091, Abbie J. Lane Building
5909 Veterans’ Memorial Lane
Halifax, NS B3H 2E2
Phone: 902-473-5523

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!
Nova Scotia Health Authority www.nshealth.ca

Prepared by: Critical Care Organ Donation Program, NSHA ©
Adapted with permission from:
LifeSource, Minneapolis, Minnesota and M.O.R.E. Program of Ontario.
Designed by: NSHA Library Services

The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only. The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

WX85-1213 Updated May 2017
The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.