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Writing to Transplant Recipients and Their Families

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nova scotia health

www.nshealth.ca

You may choose to write to your loved one's transplant recipient. This is a personal decision. It may take time. Reaching out may help to bring comfort or closure to you and your family.

If you choose to write to your loved one's transplant recipient, it must be anonymous. This means your name will **not** be included on your letter.

Tips for writing to a transplant recipient:

- Tell them about your loved one, like their hobbies or interests.
- Consider that they may have different religious or spiritual beliefs than you.

Do not write:

- **Your loved one's name**
- **Your name**
- **Your family members' names**
- **Your address**
- **Your phone number**
- **The name or location of the hospital where your loved one was a patient**
- **Links to social media profiles**
- **That you would like to meet someday (see back cover)**

Signing your letter

- **Do not sign your name**. You can use:
  - “The donor’s family”
  - “The donor’s spouse”
  - “The donor’s daughter”

Sample letter:

“My wife would have been happy to know that her decision to be a donor would have such a big impact on the lives of others, like you. Knowing that she was able to keep helping others after her death has comforted me and my family as we grieve. Thank you for helping us find meaning in our loss. We think of you often and wish you happiness and health. — A Donor’s Husband”

Mailing your letter

- Put your letter in an envelope. **Do not seal it**.
- On a separate piece of paper, write:
  - Your full name
  - The donation date
  - The donor’s full name
- Put the unsealed envelope and the piece of paper in a second envelope.
- Seal the outer envelope and send it to the Family Support Liaison (see address on back cover).

- The Family Support Liaison will review the letter to make sure it does not have any personal information.
- They will then mail it to the transplant recipient.
- Your letter will take time to reach the transplant recipient because it must be reviewed by the Family Support Liaison first.

Will I hear from the transplant recipient?

- You may or may not hear from the recipient. It can be overwhelming for some recipients and their families to hear from a donor family. It may take time before they are ready or able to respond.

If you would like more information about writing to a transplant recipient, contact the Family Support Liaison (see back cover).

Direct Contact
For donations and transplants that took place in Nova Scotia after January 18, 2021, you and the transplant recipient may be able to contact each other directly. Both you and the recipient must be willing to have contact and must meet certain criteria:

1. It has been 12 months (1 year) since the transplant.
2. You have corresponded with the transplant recipient anonymously at least 2 times.
3. Both you and the transplant recipient must request Direct Contact **on your own**.

All requests are received by:

- The Family Support Liaison
- A Multi-Organ Transplant Program (MOTP) Recipient Transplant Coordinator (RTC)
- The Regional Tissue Bank

To send a letter, or for more information about the Direct Contact process, contact:

Family Support Liaison
Legacy of Life Organ Donation Program
Suite 300, 3rd Floor, Park Lane Terraces
5657 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, NS B3J 3R4
Phone: 902-718-9124
Email:
DonorFamilySupport@nshealth.ca

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: https://811.novascotia.ca

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