1.0 Introduction

Environics Research Group Limited was retained by Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation to survey the general public on awareness, attitudes and behaviours related to organ and tissue donation, including the issue of donation after cardiac death. Environics surveyed 1,505 Canadian adults by telephone from August 17 to September 7, 2005. The margin of error for samples of this size is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points, 19 times in 20.

2.1 Awareness/Support/Behaviour

- 93% of Canadians have heard about organ and tissue donation.
- 96% of Canadians strongly (71%) or somewhat (25%) approve of organ and tissue donation.
- 54% have signed an organ donor card and 17% have put their name on an organ and tissue registry (35% are aware of an organ and tissue registry in their province).
- The proportions who have decided to donate organs or tissues are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Decided to donate (%)</th>
<th>Decided NOT to donate (%)</th>
<th>Undecided (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organs</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tissues</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Main reason for deciding NOT to donate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have a medical condition, can’t donate</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious/spiritual beliefs</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal preference/beliefs/just don’t want to</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age/I'm too old</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to keep my organs/tissue/body intact</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know enough about it</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Main reason for not having made a decision:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haven’t thought about it/never occurred to me</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know enough about it/unaware of it</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put it off/don’t like to think about it</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a medical condition, can’t donate/health reasons</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

74% of those who have made a decision have discussed it with the person who would act on their behalf in a medical emergency.

2.2 Beliefs/Perceptions

80% of Canadians say there is a great need for more organ donations in this country; 13% say there is some need.

Importance of personal reasons for donating organs/tissues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Important (7-5)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>Not Imp. (3-1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You would be saving the life of a person who needs an organ or tissue transplant</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You would be improving the quality of life of person who needs a transplant.</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your organs and tissues could help many people who need transplants</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More organ donations are needed in this country today</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You believe that donating is the right thing to do</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific research using your organ/tissue donation could lead to treatments and cures</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not need your organs or tissues after death</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your loved ones would feel comforted by your donation</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were able to indicate that you want only specific organs or tissues donated</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People would remember you as a good and caring person for making this donation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Importance of personal reasons for not donating organs/tissues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Important (7-5)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>Not Imp. (3-1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some people who receive organ transplants may not really deserve to receive them, since they have abused their own health</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donating your organs or tissues would make your death a more difficult experience for your loved ones</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death is too disturbing to think about</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because donation might delay or complicate the burial arrangements for your family</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t believe in organ and tissue donation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family members’ religious or spiritual beliefs do not support organ and tissue donation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family members’ cultural beliefs and values do not support organ and tissue donation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your religious or spiritual beliefs do not support organ and tissue donation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your cultural beliefs and values do not support organ and tissue donation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The procedures used to remove organs and tissues are too intrusive on the donor’s body</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Truth or falsity of statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely true</th>
<th>Probably true</th>
<th>Probably not true</th>
<th>Definitely not true</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctors are committed to providing high quality care to dying patients and their families</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyone at any age can become an organ and tissue donor</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich people who need organ and tissue transplants are more likely to receive them in this country's hospitals than are poorer people who need transplants</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors may prematurely declare a person to be dead in order to get potential organ and tissue donations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The organ and tissue donation process could exploit people of colour, First Nations people, or other minority groups</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Public Awareness

• Where Canadian have seen/heard/read about donation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver's licence/application</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and friends</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor's office</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Where Canadians would go for information about donation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet sources</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors/health professionals</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Family/Legal Issues

- 58% of Canadians have discussed organ and tissue donation with close family members.
- 91% are very (64%) or somewhat (27%) confident that their views and intentions with regard to donation will be respected.
- When someone has signed a donor card/registered as a donor but the family does not wish donation to take place:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does happen?</th>
<th>What should happen?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wishes of deceased are followed</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wishes of family are followed</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Likelihood of respondent giving consent for donation of a deceased loved one’s organs/tissues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Not very likely</th>
<th>Not at all likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If deceased signed organ donor card and discussed decision to donate</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If deceased signed donor card but did not discuss decision to donate</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If deceased did not sign donor card but did discuss decision to donate</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If deceased did not sign donor card and did not discuss donation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Withdrawal of Life Support/Brain Death

- A total of 77% say it is acceptable to remove life support when family and doctors agree there is no realistic chance of survival; 13% are neutral and a total of 9% say it is unacceptable.
- Canadians’ understanding of brain death: 29% say it means the patient is dead; 49% say it means the patient is in a coma with no realistic chance of survival; 8% say it means the patient is in a coma with some chance of survival and 10% say it means the patient is in a coma with a good chance of survival with serious brain impairment.
2.6 Donation after Cardiocirculatory Death

- Only 13% of Canadians had heard anything about DCD prior to the survey.
- 79% of Canadians think that the option of organ donation after cardiac death (DCD) should be available to Canadians and 9% say it depends.
- Acceptability of procedures related to DCD:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Acceptable (7-5)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>Not Acc. (3-1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After families have agreed to remove life support they may also agree to organ donation after the patient dies a cardiac death</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After it is agreed to withdraw life support and donate organs after death, the patient is moved to an operating room where life supports are withdrawn</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The surgery to retrieve the organs might occur five minutes after the heart has stopped</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In order for organ donation to occur under these circumstances the family would leave the dying patient within minutes after death</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical procedures might be performed before death to help maintain a patient’s organs</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medications might be used before death to help maintain a patient’s organs even if those medications will not benefit the patient directly and might also have a small chance of causing harm</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Comfort with decisions about donation after cardiac death in Canadian hospitals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Very comfortable</th>
<th>Somewhat comfortable</th>
<th>Not very comfortable</th>
<th>Not at all comfortable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If DCD is offered in hospitals</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If DCD is not offered in hospitals</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Public confidence with issues and practices surrounding DCD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Very confident</th>
<th>Somewhat confident</th>
<th>Not very confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An organ donor could still have a normal funeral service in a normal time frame</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A patient's dignity will be recognized at the time of death when organ or tissue donation follows</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors and health care staff will follow these strict ethical standards or practices</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict standards will be put in place to guide all practices and ensure ethical conduct regarding donation after cardiac death</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors and health care staff will be motivated by the best interests of the dying patient and not the possibility of organ donation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process of providing optimal end of life care will not be affected by the organ and tissue donation process</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>