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CANADIENNE DE LA SANTÉ

CATHOLIC HEALTH  
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NEWS RELEASE

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## **CHAC PROMOTES ORGAN DONATION AND ADDRESSES RELATED ETHICAL ISSUES**

Ottawa - The Catholic Health Association of Canada (CHAC) has submitted a brief to the Standing Committee on Health that presents a list of recommendations aimed at increasing public awareness of the merits of organ donation, integrating and coordinating the procurement and distribution of organs and tissue, and better addressing ethical issues related to organ donation and transplantation.

Last week the Committee completed public hearings on the state of organ and tissue donation in Canada and began work on its report to the House of Commons. The Committee's report, which is to make recommendations on the appropriate role for the federal government in the development of national safety, outcome and process standards for organ and tissue donations, is to be tabled by April 30, 1999.

"Organ donation is a praiseworthy example of the kind of self giving for others that is to characterize Christian life," said Gerald Herkel, CHAC Chairperson. "The CHAC is committed to working with its members, and in partnership with other organizations, to increase awareness of the importance of organ donation. We are also committed to engaging Canadians in discussions about the ethical issues raised by organ donation and transplantation," said Mr. Herkel.

- The CHAC's submission is comprised of three parts.
- Part one provides a Christian perspective on organ donation and transplantation.
- In part two a number of recommendations are presented related to the procurement and distribution of organs and tissue.
- Part three of the paper provides an ethical framework for organ transplantation and addresses a number of related ethical issues.

The ethical issues addressed in the paper include:

- informed consent;
- defining the moment of death;
- the sale of organs and tissue;
- criteria for the allocation of organs;

- anencephalic infants as donors, and
- xenotransplantation.

“We believe the Standing Committee can make an important contribution to this issue through its report to the House of Commons, and we will be monitoring the government’s response to its recommendations,” said Mr. Herkel.

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