

# Introduction

THE ISSUES SURROUNDING ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION ARE NOT UNIQUE TO the science education system in Manitoba, but they do constitute a notably humanistic orientation to the biology curriculum. Engaging the learner in this area will require sensitivity and sound judgment on the part of teachers, and will strongly reflect local experiences and cause embedded personal convictions to surface. Nevertheless, biology teachers have already spent many years incorporating aspects of organ donation into their regular instruction. Some do so precisely because of the prospect that they—or their students—will be directly touched in some manner by the people and processes involved. There can be a variety of reasons for contextually addressing biology curriculum strands through such a complementary and relevant lens as this one. It is the hope of those who have been involved in the development of *Life Is a Gift: A Manitoba Grade 11 Biology Resource for Organ Donation and Transplantation* that fruitful and lasting connections are made between the curriculum and the remarkable human achievements that come about through continued health care research and practices.

This resource follows the Manitoba Grade 11 Biology curriculum in a sequence that provides teachers with the opportunity to insert organ donation/transplantation aspects into key sections of their overall course. Each of the six units of the biology course—Wellness and Homeostasis, Digestion and Nutrition, Transportation and Respiration, Excretion and Waste Management, Protection and Control, and Wellness and Homeostatic Changes—are represented by student learning activities that are field tested and correlated to both the skills and content learning outcomes. In addition, teachers are provided connections that support alternative and differentiated instructional practices as recommended by the *Senior Years Science Teachers' Handbook: A Resource for Teachers* published by Manitoba Education. We hope that you and your students have ample opportunity to explore the fascinating technological advancements and complex ethical issues that make organ donation and transplantation an ideal context in which to examine human biological systems.

