

## Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

**Freephone:** 0800 183 0204

**From a mobile or abroad:** 0115 924 9924 ext. 65412 or 62301

**E-mail:** [pals@nuh.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@nuh.nhs.uk)

**Letter:** NUH NHS Trust, c/o PALS, Freepost NEA 14614, Nottingham NG7 1BR

[www.nuh.nhs.uk](http://www.nuh.nhs.uk)

# Information on body donation

Information for families of a deceased donor

## The National Repository Centre

*Serving skills training  
in medicine and surgery*

This document can be provided in different languages and formats. For more information please contact:

The National Repository Centre  
Post Graduate Centre  
City Hospital  
Hucknall Road  
Nottingham NG5 1PB  
Telephone 0115 993 4988 or 0115 9627683

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

Thank you for considering donation of your relative/friend's body for medical education, training and research after death: your generous action is greatly appreciated. Your gift will contribute to the education of the next generation of healthcare professionals and suitably qualified individuals as determined by the National Repository Centre and may also help with the development of life saving techniques or the creation of new surgical devices.

Important information to help you with your decision is included in this booklet. Please ensure that you understand the information given before signing the consent forms. The person obtaining consent should be able to answer any specific questions that you have.

### **Why are bodies needed for the Repository?**

Many surgical and medical techniques are very intricate and require a huge amount of skill. In order to develop these skills, healthcare professionals need to practise on tissues that are as close as possible, in texture and structure, to those of a living person. Sometimes, clinicians have an idea for a new technique or piece of equipment that would have better results for the patients in their care. It would be inappropriate to try out new methods on living patients, so using selected parts of a deceased person is often the only way that new developments can be tested.

By donating your relative/friend's body, you would therefore be allowing a healthcare professional to safely develop their skills and new ways of working, which will improve care and quality of life for other people in the future.

### **Where can I get more information about body donation?**

If you require additional information about the body donation process or would like to speak to someone about your decision please contact The National Repository Centre on 0115 993 4988.

## How long is it likely to be until the funeral can go ahead?

There is no limit on the length of time a donated body can be used by the repository and could be anything from two months up to two years or longer. However it is unlikely that we would keep a donor for longer than three years.

## Will my relative/friend's identity be revealed during medical education or training?

No it will not. All body parts will be given a unique identifying number, which can only be linked back to your relative/friend by the repository staff. If photographs or other images are taken these will also be given a number and will not be identifiable in any way.

## I want to go ahead. What do I need to do now?

- If you do not yet have a medical certificate of cause of death (MCCD), you need to collect this either from the GP or hospital. If the coroner is involved, please inform the person who is taking consent.
- You need to register the death in the normal way. The hospital staff may be able to help you make an appointment.
- The registrar will give you a green form, which authorises the funeral go ahead. This needs to be given to the person taking consent, or a member of hospital bereavement or repository staff.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form, which transfers custodianship of the deceased to the repository.
- Inform the person taking consent whether you would like to attend the funeral, have the cremated remains returned to you or make other arrangements. There is a form for you to sign for this purpose.

## What will happen if I consent?

The deceased will be transferred to The National Repository Centre, where they will be stored in a frozen state and body parts will be removed, as required. When a request is made, parts of the body, or possibly the whole body will be made available to suitably qualified individuals as determined by the National Repository Centre, or training institutions.

All activity at the repository is conducted under licence from the Human Tissue Authority, and all procedures are carried out by trained professionals, under strict guidance. Each person is given a unique identifying number. It is a legal requirement that every part of the body is also given a unique number which can be traced back to the donor by the repository staff. Specimens are wrapped, packaged and placed in a freezer and stored for a number of different uses.

It is impossible to say what would be used in advance, but the kind of things that could happen are:

- The shoulder and arm could be removed for surgeons to practise shoulder surgery techniques
- Orthopaedic surgeons may use the knee to practise knee replacement surgery
- Your whole body could be used for Paramedic Training (list of procedures available on request)
- Plastic surgeons could use any part of the body to develop and practise reconstruction techniques for patients who have been badly burnt
- Head and neck surgeons could use the head to develop new techniques for less invasive surgery for throat cancer.

The practice normally takes place in a Clinical Skills Study Centre. In addition to allowing use of material to develop skills of doctors and surgeons, we may also want to be able to supply material to be used in ethically approved research. Advances in

medicine are often based on research which is designed to develop a new understanding about disease and its treatment.

When providing material for research we would ensure that this would only go to studies that have been approved by an appropriate research ethics committee, and/or to establishments that are licensed under the Human Tissue Act 2004.

### **What will happen to the deceased after they are no longer useful for education and medical development?**

Every part of the body that is either used in Nottingham or sent to another institution will have a unique identifying number, so that the repository knows who it belongs to.

When the body can no longer be put to good use, the parts can be reunited and a cremation can be arranged by the repository or through private funeral arrangements.

### **If I sign the consent is it guaranteed that my relative/friend will be accepted?**

We hope that by the time you sign consent the repository will know enough about your relative/friend to advise you of the likelihood of acceptance. However, each potential donor will be assessed by a doctor at the repository and we do reserve the right to refuse acceptance without giving you a reason. This is to protect your relative's confidentiality.

For the protection and safety of our recovery staff and medical community we are not able to accept donors with:

- HIV, hepatitis B and C or active tuberculosis
- Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD).

However, a refusal does not necessarily mean that the deceased had any of these diseases.

If the donation is not accepted following the above assessment, you will be responsible for the funeral arrangements and the cost of this will have to be met from the deceased's estate or by yourself.

### **If I sign and my relative is accepted, what will happen?**

We will arrange for our funeral director to collect and transport the body to the City Hospital. This will be done as soon as possible. The repository will arrange and pay for a final cremation.

If there is a pre-paid funeral plan in place you may want to check with the funeral director that any monies will be refunded to you if the repository is able to accept the donation.

### **Will a funeral be arranged?**

Once the deceased can no longer be put to good use, the repository will arrange a basic cremation and committal service.

This would consist of the following:

- Provision of a basic coffin and conveyance to the crematorium
- A short service at the crematorium, presided over by an appropriate individual
- Cremation fees
- Any fees for scattering of the cremated remains at the local crematorium.

If other arrangements are requested, the repository will carry these out as far as possible, but any extra costs incurred will have to be met from the estate or by yourself.

If you wish, you can arrange a private burial or cremation, but **all** expenses involved in such arrangements will be your responsibility.