

## 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 or 0015 962 7683.

## What do I need to do to donate my body?

If you wish to bequeath your body for education, training and research for healthcare professionals you need to:

- Complete and sign both of the consent forms in the presence of a witness (this may be a next-of-kin, executor, friend, GP, solicitor, etc.).
- One copy should be returned to the repository office at the address shown on the top of the form.
- The remaining copy should be retained by you and kept in a safe place (e.g. with your personal papers, your Will, or with your family doctor or solicitor).
- It is recommended that you inform your next-of-kin or executor(s) and doctor of your intention to donate your body. It is important that whoever will be responsible for your affairs when you die knows about the bequest papers and where they can be found.

### Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of your 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)

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

# Bequeathing your body to The National Repository Centre

Information for potential donors

## 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 Campus  
Hucknall Rd  
Nottingham NG5 1PB  
Telephone 0115 993 4988 or 0115 962 7683

Thank you for expressing your wish to bequeath your 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. If you have any queries or would like any further information, then please contact us on the above telephone number.

### **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, health care professionals need to practice 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 body, you would therefore be allowing a health care professional or suitably qualified individual to safely develop their skills and new ways of working, which will improve care and quality of life for other people in the future.

An appropriate person (usually next of kin) will be required to register your death, within five working days. Further information about the legal requirements following a death can be obtained from [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) which has a section on death and bereavement.

In addition to the normal processes above, the person dealing with your affairs will need to:

- Arrange for you to be transferred to a local funeral director for safekeeping. The cost of this initial removal will need to be met by your estate.
- As soon as possible, but within normal office hours (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday) telephone the repository on 0115 993 4988 or 0115 962768. Messages can be left on an answer phone (0115 993 4988) 24 hours a day.
- When the death is registered, a green form is issued by the registrar which allows funeral arrangements to be made. This needs to be given to a member of the repository team or the bereavement team at the hospital.
- Sign the consent form, provided by the repository, which effectively transfers ownership of your body to the repository and allows funeral arrangements to be made. without involving your family in the future.
- Following your death, your representative (usually next of kin) will be asked to complete a form (instructions on funeral arrangements) to indicate their wishes with regard to the funeral, i.e. would they like to attend, do they want the cremated remains returned to them, would they like to make their own arrangements.

If the person dealing with your affairs needs to speak to someone outside of the repository opening hours (e.g. weekends and Bank Holidays), an on-call member of hospital bereavement staff can be contacted via switchboard at Nottingham University Hospitals 0115 924 9924.

## How long will my body be kept for?

There is no limit on the length of time a donated body can be used by the repository. However, if you wish to restrict the time that your whole body or parts of your body are used, you have an opportunity to do so in section two of the consent form.

## What kind of funeral would the repository arrange?

If your bequest is accepted, the repository will be responsible for keeping and preserving your body until such time as your bequest is completed.

The repository will meet the costs of a basic cremation as follows:

- 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 your estate or by your relatives.

If a request is made for a private burial or cremation, **all** expenses involved in such arrangements will be the responsibility of the person who is arranging the funeral.

## What will my next of kin need to do after my death?

In the event of your death the normal processes will need to be followed, i.e. a doctor will need to verify the fact of death and either a medical certificate of death will be issued or the Coroner will be notified, depending on the circumstances.

## What will happen if I donate my body and it is accepted?

Your body will be transferred to The National Repository Centre, where it will be stored in a frozen state and parts removed as required.

When a request is made, parts of your body, or possibly your 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 carried out 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, so that they can be traced back to the donor by repository staff. Specimens are then wrapped, packaged and placed in a freezer and stored for a number of different uses.

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

- Your shoulder and arm could be removed for surgeons to practise shoulder surgery techniques
- Orthopaedic surgeons may use your 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 your body to develop and practise reconstruction techniques for patients who have been badly burnt
- Head and neck surgeons could use your head to develop new techniques for less invasive surgery for throat cancer.

The practise 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 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.

### **Will my identity be disclosed during medical education or training?**

No. It is a legal requirement for the repository to identify each body part with a unique number, but this will only be traceable to you by the repository staff.

It may be useful for the repository to prepare images of parts of your body for education, training or research purposes. You are assured that you will not be identifiable in these images.

### **Do you guarantee to accept my body?**

Acceptance of a donation (bequest) will be based on the potential donor's physical state of health at the time of death. Whilst factors related to age, disease or state of health do not eliminate an individual from being a donor they may affect the type of tissue that can be used. 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).

We make every effort to fulfil our potential donors' intentions and wishes. However, at the time of your death a full assessment of your suitability for donation will be made, and we reserve the

right to refuse without giving your next of kin/executor a reason. This is to protect your confidentiality.

There is no upper age limit for bequeathing a body, however we are unable to accept registrations from people below the age of 18. If your donation is not accepted after the assessment, your family will be responsible for the funeral arrangements.

### **If my bequest is accepted what will happen after my death?**

If your bequest is accepted, we shall arrange for our funeral director to collect your body and bring it to the City Hospital campus. This will be done as soon as possible after your death.

Your body will be kept until it can no longer be used for teaching etc. This can be anything from two months to two years or longer. The repository will arrange and pay for a final cremation if required, or your family can make their own funeral arrangements if they prefer.

If you have a pre-paid funeral plan in place or are considering buying one, you may want to check with the funeral director that any monies will be refunded to your estate if the repository is able to accept your bequest.

### **What will happen to my body after it is no longer useful for education and medical development?**

Every part of your body that is either used in Nottingham or sent to another institutions will have a unique identifying number, so that the repository will know 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.