

APPENDIX 6: Organ and Tissue Donation Process

- The first step is to establish the wishes of the deceased. This should have been discussed and documented long before the patient reaches the last days of life.
- Check whether the patient carries an organ donor card/is registered on the organ donor register and record positive and negative responses.
- If the wishes of the patient are not known, the Human Tissue Act 2004 permits consent to be obtained from the person nominated by the deceased to act on their behalf or from a person in a qualifying relationship, such as a partner, relative or friend.
- Where a patient dies in the community or a community hospital, organ donation may be possible. An Individual assessment is required in each case.
- In the case of unexpected death, legal requirements supercede organ/ tissue donation requests.
- After death the notes should be reviewed where wishes of the deceased patient should have been recorded. Another way is to check whether the patient carried an organ donor card or is registered on the organ donor register.
- For information, time frames after death for responding to organ retrieval are 30 to 45 minutes for cardiac donation, 60 minutes for retrieval of liver, kidney, bowel and pancreas, a maximum of 24 hours for corneal and bone donation, a maximum of 48 hours for skin donation and up to 72 hours for heart valve donations.
- Patients with untreated systemic infection, HIV (or high risk for HIV), Hepatitis B or C, Alzheimer's disease, diseases of unknown aetiology, motor neurone disease and/or Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease cannot be considered for organ or tissue donation. These patients may well have chosen to donate their body for medical research so this must be checked against patient records.
- EPUT is served by the NHS Blood and Transplant Organ Donation Services Team (ODST) Eastern region. This team can be contacted on 0300 1231106 between 09.00 and 17.00 or through their pager number 07659 117499 which is available 24 hours a day. Referrals for Tissue Donation should be made via the National Referral Centre 0800 4320559.
- For information on body donation contact the University of East Anglia, Anatomy Department: 01603 591229; Cambridge University, Anatomy Department: 01223 333776.