

Notes of a meeting of the Professional Guidelines and Practices (Anatomy) Committee held on 1st September 2008 in the Dunhill Room, Gordon Museum, King's College London.

Present:

Wendy Birch (WB); Ceri Davies (CD); Steve Franey (SF); Steve Gaze (SG); David Haylings (DH); Mike Mahon (MM); Louise Scheuer (LS); Susan Standing (SS)

SS welcomed the new members to the meeting (WB, DH, SF, MM). Apologies had been received from John Morris and Sam Cobb

In response to a query from DH about maintaining consistency of material posted on individual websites, SS reminded new members that one remit of the Committee was ... *' to prepare Guidelines which would be shared with HTA for comments , which would appear on each Society's website and which would be referred to in the Codes of Practice'*.

The main purpose of the current meeting was to finalise the guidelines which had been discussed at the meeting held on 25th June 2008. These guidelines addressed: 1. Reasonable belief; 2. Defining a "part"; 3. Disposal of parts; 4. Images in the DR; 5. Access to the DR; 6. Best practice for storage and handling of parts. The agreed guidelines would be submitted to the HTA for consideration before our next meeting, which will be with a representative from HTA

The revised Code of Practice on Anatomical Examination, which was published on 1st August, would also be discussed.

A. Agreed Guidelines:

1. Reasonable belief

It is acceptable to start preparing a body in order to prevent further decay, if (a) the DI/DP has seen a faxed copy of the signed and witnessed Bequest consent form or last will clearly indicating the donors wishes , and (b) obtained verbal confirmation of the cause of death from the issuing doctor (this information should include the number of the certificate). Anatomical examination cannot begin until the consent form and Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death are in place and the death has been registered(Green disposal form obtained from Registrar).

Recommendation: Timing is of the essence here. Therefore the HTA should be asked to write to the Registrars' Association asking that Registrars register a death within 24 hours when the deceased has given informed consent for his/her body to be used for education, training and research.

2. Defining a "part"

If consent has been given for a cadaver to be used for anatomical examination with retention of parts, then at the end of 3 years, 2/3 of

the body mass of the individual should be sent for cremation / burial, accompanied by the green disposal form.

In future it may be possible to modify the consent form so that a restriction is not placed on the time that a cadaver or parts can be retained. Currently there is insufficient evidence to inform a decision on this point. **Recommendation:** HTA should be asked to collect appropriate data.

3. Disposal of parts

Retained cadaveric parts not accompanied by a green form are usually incinerated in hospital or commercial incinerators, depending upon local circumstances. A Service Level Agreement between the institution disposing of the parts and the contractor, outlining appropriate procedures, should be in place. Best practice is that the parts should be incinerated in a designated human tissue burn and there should be a Duty of Care visit to the incinerator at least once a year (ideally all deliveries of parts to the incinerator should be attended). The suitability of packaging should be determined by the amount and nature of the parts and the distance they are to be transported, e.g. bagged or bagged inside drums. A list of the contents of each consignment and the part numbers within each bag should be retained by the DI on the individuals record/file and kept for a minimum period of 5 years from the date of disposal .

*(SG to take a straw poll of IAS members for their opinion as to what constitutes suitable packaging. **Action SG at IAS meeting.**)*

Recommendation: HTA to explore with crematoria the proposal that crematoria will cremate the equivalent of one coffin/licence/year and disperse the ashes from this burn on consecrated ground.

5. Images in the DR: (Note added by Ceri in revision - the original HTA guidelines cover everything that we agreed).

All use of images from licensed premises must be agreed and sanctioned by the D.I

Images can be used for medical education, research and clinical audit without consent providing the donors cannot be identified..

Images should not be uploaded onto the internet. Local practice(s) for uploading images onto an intranet must be appropriate and secure
Any person wishing to obtain and use images of cadaveric prosections should complete and sign an appropriate, standardised form(available from the D.I)

It was agreed that members would send an electronic copy of the form currently in use in their DR to SS in order to prepare a standardised form. CD agreed to send SS the original HTA guidance on using images obtained in the DR.

6. Access to the DR

When a dissecting room contains visible specimens (cadaveric body parts), access should be restricted to the following groups of

individuals: registered students with a justifiable reason for requiring access; all healthcare professionals attending courses; others, such as medical artists, can be admitted at the discretion of the DI. Any other category of visitor would normally only be admitted to an “empty” dissecting room, i.e. a room either stripped of cadaveric material, or where such material is covered. When maintenance staff require access, material should be covered. **No visitor should be allowed to enter or remain in a dissecting room unsupervised by the D.I or P.D.**

7. Handling and storage of cadaveric specimens(retained parts)

Specimens must be treated with respect at all times.

While being transported, specimens should be covered and secure; public corridors should be avoided.

Human specimens/parts should be clearly labelled with their unique identifier.

When in store(Tanks/buckets/cold rooms etc) specimens may be grouped together/placed on top of /in contact with each other

When being used for teaching purposes specimens should not be in contact with each other unless it is specifically appropriate

8. Use of Animal material on licensed premises

When used in a class for comparative purposes, human and animal parts must be placed on separate trays on separate tables.

Human and animal parts should be stored separately and clearly labelled as such.

B. Discussion of issues associated with the use of fresh frozen material was deferred to a future meeting.

C. The next meeting of the Committee would be with the HTA in the first two weeks of October. SS would write to Sandy Mather to set up the meeting.