University of Sussex

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Human Tissue Act
SOP – Disposal of Human Tissue

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Authorised By: UoS HTA Coordination Group		

Version	Date	Reason for Change
2.0	28/7/2014	To reflect merger of BSMS and SoLS practices for UoS
3.0	04/08/2017	Updates to reflect change in DI
4.0	17/04/2018	Updates to reflect change in Codes and Standards

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to outlines the procedure and mechanisms to be followed for the disposal of human tissue.

2.0 Introduction

It is expected that Human Tissue and Materials will be stored indefinitely for future research use unless there is only consent for the duration of a project, the integrity of the samples has been irretrievably compromised or a patient has withdrawn

consent for use (see HTA/SOP/11). The sample will then be removed for destruction.

3.0 Procedure
Human remains must always be disposed of with due respect for the donor of the tissue.

If material is obtained from an another establishment disposal should be undertaken in accordance with their disposal policy and/or as detailed in the Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) or Service Level Agreement (SLA), or as described in the consent paperwork.

3.1 Subject wishes
Some subjects may wish to retain tissue samples and this will have been noted on consent paperwork and should have been recorded in the database. Such requests should be considered on a case by case basis and subjects should be given sufficient time to make an informed decision.
If material has been removed after death, tissue and organs should be handled in accordance with any reasonable wishes expressed by relatives or the deceased person, as long as the method of disposal is legal. The time, place and method of disposal must be recorded on the Database Software (currently Itemtracker).

3.2 Withdrawal of consent
When a patient withdraws consent SOP/HTA/11 will be followed

3.3 When samples are unsuitable for use
- The PD will receive a report from the project PI stating the problem with the samples and the associated quality assurance data
- If the decision is taken that samples are of no scientific value then the samples will be destroyed

3.4 Material surplus to use
This includes tissue fragments trimmed from a sample before processing, after embedding before having sections cut.

- Research staff using human tissue samples must ensure that any unused aliquots/ pieces of that material are destroyed and NOT stored in a location outside of the appropriate Human Tissue Bank (see the appropriate PD if in doubt).
- The entry for the particular sample on the tissue database will be annotated to show that the samples have been destroyed, the reason for destruction and the date of destruction.

3.5 Existing holdings of unidentifiable, and identifiable but unclaimed, tissue
This includes all material collected before 2006. It is essential that the reasons for disposal and the method used are carefully documented within the database. There

are particular sensitivities around disposing of organs and tissue that may have been acquired before current practices on obtaining consent

4.0 Method of disposal

The DI/PD or only those delegated or instructed to dispose of material should undertake this task. Personnel delegated this activity should be appropriately trained and qualified.

- Normal practice is to dispose of human material by incineration via routine methods, unless specific wishes have been expressed by the subject.
- Samples should be placed in thick gauge yellow plastic clinical waste bags for temporary storage until subsequent disposal by incineration (or, if appropriate, yellow burn bins).
- In the case of hazardous materials, these may require separation from normal clinical waste and disposed of using appropriate procedures for hazardous materials.
- All HT-samples that are disposed of should be unidentifiable and should be autoclaved prior to being incinerated via the appropriate waste stream.
- Skeletons and bones are likely to be unidentifiable, so disposal should follow local guidance and procedures for unidentifiable tissue.
- All vessels containing or having-contained unwanted human tissue should be placed in an appropriate clinical waste bag for incineration.
- The entry for the particular sample on the tissue database will be annotated to show that the samples have been destroyed, the reason for destruction and the date of destruction

Disposal information must be recorded on the ItemTracker database Software. The fields to fill with information include:

1. Reason for disposal
2. Date of disposal
3. Total amount of tissue to be disposed of
4. Method of disposal
5. Name of person approving disposal or name of Person, site or third party undertaking disposal
6. Contact details/information of the individual who should be contacted concerning disposal (e.g. on behalf of the PI/PD/investigator)