

Keele University
Institute for Science and Technology in Medicine

Standard Operating Procedure

SOP Number: HTA-38

Version: 1.0

Title: Disposal of human tissues

Purpose: To provide a standardised approach to the disposal of human samples from HTA-licensed buildings of Keele University

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SOP History:

VERSION	AMENDMENT	CURRENT VERSION

1. Introduction:

As part of the requirements of the Institute for Science and Technology in Medicine (ISTM) holding a Human Tissue license (#12349), we are required to utilise a quality management system to ensure that all research projects use appropriate procedures for the disposal of human tissues.

The Human Tissue Authority's (HTA's) code of practice on disposal emphasises the need for the treatment of all human tissue as a valuable resource which must be treated with respect and with the donor's wishes in mind. This standard operating procedure will examine the process of disposing of tissue to help ensure that disposal of tissue is performed safely and sensitively.

2. Procedure:

2.1 Attitudes to different disposal routes vary between individuals of different cultures and religions and researchers must be sensitive to this. The proposed mechanisms of disposal and the reasons for this should be clearly communicated to the donors prior to consent for use of the tissue being obtained. When deciding on the disposal route the wishes of the donor should be a central consideration, and alternative methods for disposal should be accommodated as far as is safe and practical. Donor wishes should be recorded on the consent form.

2.2 If tissue is from a deceased donor, the wishes of the relatives should be considered when disposing of the human tissue samples.

2.3 If relevant material is imported from non-commercial sources outside of the university, then the method of disposal should be chosen as specified on the material transfer agreement.

2.4 Disposal of tissue should be minimised as far as is practical. However, tissue may need to be disposed of due to:

- The ethical approval or consent for a given sample stating that it must be disposed of at the end of the research project

- Sample is damaged, contaminated or fails quality assurance tests
- The donor withdraws consent for the use of the sample in research
- Being a health and safety risk to research staff
- Material is surplus to requirement

2.5 The reason for disposal should be recorded in the “disposal” box on the HTA-8 or HTA-9 logging spreadsheets along with the date of disposal, method of disposal and the staff member responsible for disposing of this tissue.

2.6 If disposal was due to damaged caused to the tissue due to an adverse event (e.g. freezer malfunction), then the research team must complete and submit an adverse event reporting form to the human tissue officer such that corrective and preventative actions can be put in place to prevent this occurring again in the future.

2.7 Any information which can be used to identify the donor of the tissue sample should be removed prior to disposal.

2.8 For disposal of ***bodily fluid samples or small tissue samples***, sample bottles and any remaining sample from the patient (including red cells, urine, etc.) must be first decontaminated in 1% Virkon Solution overnight. Decontaminated Samples can then be disposed of in Clinical waste bins (yellow, labelled bi liners) for incineration.

2.9 For disposal of large organ section, the tissues should be securely packed in a yellow disposable bag, and then taken back to the hospital ward where the tissue was taken from. It will then be disposed of following the well-established procedure carried out by the ward (incineration). The details of the disposal must be documented in the HTA data base.

2.10 Relevant material should be bagged separately from other clinical waste, but does not need to be separately incinerated.

2.11 Disposable gloves, plastic aprons, blood sample bottles, disposable plastics (e.g. tubes, pipette tips, culture flasks, etc) should be decontaminated and yellow-bagged and treated as clinical waste.

3. References:

HTA code of practice on disposal

<https://www.hta.gov.uk/guidance-professionals/codes-practice/code-practice-5-disposal>