

## A: How to complete the Declaration of Bequest form

Please use notes **A1 – A5** below to help you to complete the form.

**A1** Please complete your details in the first section of the form. When you sign the form, ensure it is witnessed on the same date. The witness should ideally be your Next-Of-Kin (NOK).

**A2** This question refers to completion of the anatomical examination, which can take up to 3 years. Please choose a preference for cremation for disposal in St Andrews or Kirkcaldy, the University will make arrangements and meet all costs. The NOK can choose to collect the ashes from Kirkcaldy crematorium or have them scattered in the Garden of Remembrance at the Crematorium. The cremation is private and unfortunately family and friends are not invited to attend. However, we do arrange an Annual Memorial service, see part E.

**A3** This note refers to Question 1 on the Bequest Form. Occasionally, the University may have to decline your donation. One possible reason for this is if we already hold enough bodies to meet our current requirements. Question 1 asks you to choose whether to allow transfer of your body to another Scottish University. In these circumstances, the transport costs may have to be paid by your family, or from your estate.

**A4** This note refers to Question 2 on the Bequest Form. The Anatomy Act permits us to retain your body for up to three years after your death. It is important that your NOK/executor is aware of this. The University may also wish to retain parts of your body

for a longer period, to be used for further education and training. Question 2 allows you to choose whether to allow parts of your body to be retained beyond the three year period.

**A5** This note refers to Question 3 on the Bequest Form. The University may wish to take photographs or video recordings of parts of your body. These will not be identifiable in any way. Question 3 allows you to choose whether to allow the School of Medicine to do this.

Once you have completed the form please return the top white copy to the School of Medicine in the enclosed envelope, give one pink copy to your NOK, and the second pink copy to the executor of your will.

**We cannot accept your body if your wishes are not in writing.**



## B: Updating your personal details or withdrawing consent

You have the right to change your mind about donating your body at any time. You can also alter the decisions in your bequest if you wish. It is extremely important to let us know if:

- You change your name or address.
- Your NOK changes their name or address.

## C: Reasons why body donation may be declined

Regrettably it is not always possible to accept a bequest. It is important that both you and your NOK/executor understand that we cannot guarantee that a bequest will be accepted. In these circumstances the responsibility for your funeral will rest with your NOK/executor. This does not diminish the importance of your generous offer to donate your body, for which we are very grateful.

At the time of death and after gathering all the necessary information, we shall advise your NOK/executor as quickly as possible whether or not we are able to accept your body. The following reasons may be a cause for refusal (this list is not exhaustive):

- the School of Medicine may already hold sufficient bodies to meet current requirements
- post mortem examination is required (or any other referral to the Procurator Fiscal)
- BMI outwith the normal range (significantly underweight or overweight)
- organ donation, if organs (other than the corneas) have been donated at the time of death
- recent major surgery or any open wounds such as ulcers or bedsores
- disseminated cancer (cancer which has spread to many areas of the body)
- advanced oedema (swelling of the arms, legs or trunk)
- some infectious diseases (e.g. hepatitis, sepsis, septicaemia (infection of the blood), HIV, MRSA, C. difficile)
- peripheral vascular disease (“extensive hardening of the arteries”)
- certain types of chemotherapy

## D: General information for next-of-kin (NOK) or executor after death

The doctor/nurse/carer in attendance at the time of death should be made aware of the donor's wishes. They, or the NOK should then contact the Bequest Coordinator as soon as possible after the death has occurred. The Bequest Coordinator will be available on 01334 463596 during normal office hours (9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday).

At all other times, a recorded message will give the relevant number(s) to call and the appropriate times.

After gathering all the necessary information, we will advise whether or not the University is able to accept the donation (as explained in part C). If the death occurs in hospital the body will be held in the hospital mortuary while this decision is made. If however the death occurs at home or in a nursing home it is advisable to turn off all heating and open the windows to keep the room as cool as possible. If the University is unable to accept the donation the responsibility for arranging a funeral will rest with the NOK/executor.

Once the donation has been accepted, and after the Death Certificate has been completed, the University will make the necessary arrangements (in consultation with the NOK/executor) to transport the body to the School of Medicine. Please note that we can only bear the cost of transporting the body to the School of Medicine, from a location within Fife or Kinross.

The NOK/executor should register the death with the local Registrar (an appointment can be made by contacting the Fife Registrar: 03451 550077). After the death has been

registered, they should then arrange a convenient time to come to the School of Medicine in St Andrews. They should bring the forms received from the Registrar (Form 14 and the Full Extract of the Death Certificate) and will be asked to complete other necessary documents.

## E: Memorial Service

The University of St Andrews organises an annual Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving, for those who have donated their bodies to the School of Medicine. This service is normally held in the University Chapel on a Wednesday afternoon in April or May. It is attended by members of staff and students from the School of Medicine and by senior members of the University. Relatives of those who have donated their body during the previous year will be invited to attend the memorial service. Please note that the Memorial Service is not linked in any way to the cremations or burials, which normally take place at a later date.



For further information please see: Scottish Government and our own website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/BurialsCremation/BodyDonation>

<http://medicine.st-andrews.ac.uk/bequests/>

# BODY DONATION



Thank you for expressing a wish to donate your body to the School of Medicine at the University of St Andrews after your death. It is a most generous decision and we are conscious that it will not have been taken lightly; we are extremely grateful.

Anatomical knowledge is an important cornerstone of medical training. Knowledge of the structure of the body is essential to ensure patients have good medical care, and undergo safe clinical procedures. It is also fundamental in the interpretation of medical images.

Your donation will contribute to the education of the doctors of the future, current doctors undergoing postgraduate training, and other healthcare professionals.

This leaflet provides information on the procedures involved in the body donation process. It is very important that you understand this information before signing the consent form. If you have any questions, please contact us by telephone on 01334 463596 or via e-mail [bodydonation@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:bodydonation@st-andrews.ac.uk)

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University of  
St Andrews

School of  
Medicine