

# Keeping your amputated limb

Information for patients



## Introduction

For surgical reasons a clinical decision has been made to amputate your arm or leg (Limb) or part of your arm or leg. Amputation means the surgical removal of a limb or part of a limb due to disease or injury. For the purposes of this leaflet, your amputated arm or leg or part of arm or leg will be referred to as your 'limb'.

You have made a request that you would like to retain your amputated limb so that you can arrange for it to be buried according to your wishes and beliefs.

This leaflet explains the procedure that you or your family will need to follow in order for us to store your limb for a period of 28 days. This will give you time to make the necessary arrangements to either bury your limb or retain for a longer period in a private facility of your choice.

This is a time where you are experiencing ill health and the healthcare professionals caring for you will be able to discuss any concerns you may have.

You will need to identify a person who is your next of kin who we can correspond with regarding the collection of your limb, should you not be able to do so.

## What will happen to my limb?

Following the surgery your limb will be respectfully wrapped and labelled and transferred to the mortuary. The mortuary is where your limb will be stored for up to 28 days. During this time you will be able to arrange the collection and storage or burial of your limb.

It is not possible for the hospital to store your limb longer than 28 days and so it is essential that arrangements are made within this time period. After this time period your limb will be incinerated (which is similar to being cremated, but you will not get to keep the ashes) this is in accordance with trust policy.

**Following your surgery your limb can be stored for up to 28 days.**

You or your family will need to make arrangements for the collection of your limb from the mortuary. It can be collected by yourself or appointed family member but some funeral directors may also offer this service for a charge. You or your next of kin will receive a letter from your consultants secretary following your surgery to remind you of the need to make these arrangements. Should your limb fail to be collected within 14 days you or your next of kin will receive a second letter. This letter will give you a date by which if collection is not completed the limb will be incinerated by. At all times your limb will be handled and stored respectfully.

## **Process and paper work for Limb repatriation.**

### **1) Burial site**

All councils will have different policies but some offer specific burial sites for amputated limbs. Once a site is confirmed for the interment they will require the following, although requirements may differ slightly;

- Signed consent from the patient instructing interment
- Confirmation from surgeon that amputation took place

They may issue an Application for Entombment of Amputated Limbs form which will need to be signed by mortuary staff upon release of limb.

## 2) Mortuary

Once an interment date is confirmed the mortuary can be contacted on **0113 392 3313** to arrange collection of the limb on the day of interment. Upon collection the mortuary will require;

- Signed consent from the patient/next of kin to release the limb
- Photographic ID of person collecting the limb

### *The mortuary will issue;*

Release of Surgical Amputation for Burial Form to be completed by mortuary staff and person collecting limb.

All documents will be photocopied and both parties to be given copies.

The limb will be released packaged and labelled ready to take to burial site.

## Telephone numbers

Ward Telephone Number: .....

Mortuary Telephone Number: .....

## Useful Information

Contact your local city council and enquire if they offer the facility for limb interment.

Bradford City Council support this service.

The application for interment form should be obtained from the council and completed in order to release the limb.