

Standard Operating Procedure: Mortuary and Bereavement

Monitoring care of deceased

Document Summary

This document sets out the procedure to ensure a high standard of care towards all deceased admitted to the mortuary. It also is designed to adhere to guidelines set out by the Human tissue authority

Document Number & Version	
Date Ratified	
Ratified by	
Date Implemented	
Next Review Date	
Accountable Director	
Document Author(s)	
Reviewed	

Important Note:

The Intranet version of this document is the only version that is maintained.

Any printed copies should therefore be viewed as “uncontrolled” and, as such, may not necessarily contain the latest updates and amendments.

After the Review Date has expired, this document may not be up-to-date. Please contact the document owner to check the status after the Review Date shown above.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Issue Status e.g. Draft or Final	Catalogue and Version Number	Document Title	Date	Actioned by: (Job Title)	Page/ Section/ Paragraph	Comments

1 SCOPE

This document is applicable to all deceased admitted to XXX mortuary. It is relevant until the deceased has been released from the care of the mortuary, and into the care of the chosen funeral director.

2 INTRODUCTION

Deceased are admitted into the care of XXX mortuary in a variety of conditions, including differences in cleanliness, decay and trauma. The deceased are formally admitted via the booking in process, this includes an evaluation of their condition on entry.

Furthermore, some deceased remain in the care of the mortuary for more than 14 days; such deceased **MUST** be referred for monitoring. This will ensure that appropriate action can be put in place to counter any unnecessary damage to the deceased whilst in our care.

3 STATEMENT OF INTENT

To provide a high standard of care to the deceased.

4 DEFINITIONS

XXX XXX Trust

APT Anatomical Pathology Technician

HTA Human Tissue Authority

5 DUTIES

The mortuary manager is accountable for the adherence to this document

The APT booking in the deceased is responsible for the evaluation of the deceased

6 PROCEDURE

- The qualified, trained and competent APT booking in the deceased will evaluate the deceased on admission. See appendix 1.
- If the deceased requires monitoring the APT will complete the Monitoring Care Form. See Appendix 2
- The APT booking in will ensure that the admission date is noted on the white mortuary board located in the office, and that the details are also correctly entered onto the mortuary database.

- The APT will perform a weekly check of the mortuary board and/or database and note any deceased in our care that may need to be referred to be monitored within that week.
- The APT will ensure that a physical check is undertaken on all deceased who have been in mortuary care for 14 days plus. This is recorded on the deceased monitoring form. The date of the next check is noted in the office diary and on the mortuary outlook calendar.
- Consideration to freeze the deceased can be instigated at any time if the APT monitoring the deceased assesses that this is an appropriate step to take. This may be necessary to minimise further deterioration.
- All cases should be reviewed when the deceased has been in the care of the mortuary for 21 days. This review should include the expected release date of the deceased. If there are no family or funeral directors to advise in this matter, preparations for freezing the deceased should begin. In coroners' cases this would mean seeking permission for the deceased to be transferred to the freezer from the coroner. In all cases advice from the HTA designated individual must be sought and implications on freezer capacity must be considered.
- In cases where there is no family or difficulties in moving the deceased out of our care, bereavement should be informed

7 TRAINING

All staff designated to assess the condition of the deceased must have received appropriate professional training and be competent to do so.

8 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT

The table below outlines the Trust's monitoring arrangements for this document.

Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Monitoring Method	Individual responsible for the monitoring	Frequency of the monitoring activity	Group/ committee which will receive the findings / monitoring report	Group / committee / individual responsible for ensuring that the actions are completed

9 RELATED TRUST POLICIES / PROCEDURES

PR.152 Care of an adult patient after death policy Mar 2021 v2.0

Human Tissue Act 2004

APPENDIX 1

Evaluation Table

If the deceased has been referred to the coroner, the APT must seek permission via the coroner's office before any action can be undertaken on the deceased. This is not applicable for transfer into a second body bag.

Condition of Deceased		Action	Refer to monitoring
Contaminated with body fluids, dirt etc.	Yes	If permitted clean deceased	No
	No	None	No
Leakage	Yes	If permitted clean deceased Ensure that absorbent padding is placed in body bag If required place in clean body bag,	No
	No	None	No
Skin slippage, marbling , discolouration	Yes	Note on Mortuary booking in document, Complete deceased monitoring form	Yes
	No	None	No
Advanced decomposition, bloating	Yes	Complete deceased monitoring form. Double bag deceased. Seek permission to freeze	Yes
	No	None	No
Insect infestation	Yes	Complete deceased monitoring form. Double bag deceased. Seek permission to freeze	Yes
	No	None	No
Mummification	Yes	Complete Deceased monitoring form	Yes
	No	None	No
Skeletal remains	Yes	None	No
	No	None	No

*The APT may refer deceased for monitoring for other reasons not listed at their own discretion.

APPENDIX 2

Monitoring Condition and Movement of Deceased

Surname of Deceased:		Forename of Deceased:		DoB:		DoD:	
Any other points of identity:				Mort Reg No:		Location of Deceased	
Reason for monitoring:	APT Decision	>14 Days in care	Transfer Offsite	Transfer to Freezer	Request of Coroner	Other	
Initial Examination:	Skin Slippage	Marbling	Bloating	Mummification	Insect Infestation	Other	
Date of Check:							
Actions Taken:	Further Monitoring	Transfer to Freezer	Other Reason		Date Funeral Director Contacted		
Name of APT examining deceased		Date & time of examination:		APT signature:		Scheduled date of next examination	
Condition of the Deceased	Is the condition stable?	Yes	No	Actions Taken:		Date:	Signature:
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3 – Consider Freezing							
Week 4 – HTA recommends freezing							
Week 5							