

TITLE: INFECTIOUS TISSUE AND PATHOLOGICAL WASTE RELEASE POLICY

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Responsible Person(s): Specialist, Anatomic Pathology

Approving Cmte: Department of Pathology, Infection Control

Category: CENTRACARE LABORATORY SERVICES

Cross References: 1. Infectious and Pathological Waste Management Plan
2. Infectious Tissue and Pathological Waste Release Policy

File: F: 2005 Procedure Manual/Infectious

I. PURPOSE:

The St. Cloud Hospital, as a health care facility, is concerned with the occupational hazards that come with providing services to a vulnerable population. All employees and physicians may, in their daily duties, handle or come in contact with infectious tissue or pathological waste. In addition, employees and physicians are, from time to time, requested to release infectious tissue or pathological waste removed from or discarded naturally by a patient, to the patient.

In accordance with patient safety standards, it is the policy of CentraCare Laboratory Services **not** to release to patients: Infectious tissue, pathological waste and hazardous chemical treated tissue.

Infectious tissue, pathological waste and hazardous chemical treated tissue may only be released to funeral directors.

The patient may view tissue if desired by arrangement with the Pathology Department.

II. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Infectious Tissue: Laboratory waste, blood, regulated body fluids, sharps and other waste that has not been decontaminated.
- B. Pathological Waste: Human tissues and body parts removed by surgery or autopsy intended for disposal.
- C. Hazardous Chemical: Formalin, Formaldehyde used to preserve pathological tissue.

III. PROCEDURES:

- A. Upon request from any patient for the release of infectious and pathological waste, patient care staff shall immediately notify the pathology laboratory.
- B. It is the policy of CentraCare Laboratory Services to **not** release any body parts to requesting individuals. Rare exceptions need to be reviewed. Patient care staff seeks approval from the following departments:
 - 1. Quality/Patient Safety – ext. 55780
 - 2. Infection Control Prevention – ext. 55752
 - 3. Department of Pathology, Medical Director – ext. 57301
- C. If it is determined that the tissue specimen will be released to the patient, a yellow 37% Formaldehyde sticker will be placed on the specimen container. Histology staff will inform the patient care staff of the hazards of formalin/formaldehyde as outlined on the sticker.
- D. Patient care staff shall notify the patient that infectious tissue and tissue preserved in formaldehyde pose significant danger to the public.
- E. The patient will be required to sign a written Tissue Release Acknowledgment, Receipt, and Indemnification Form. The form is signed by the patient with one staff witness present. The staff witness shall then sign on the designated signature line on each copy. A photocopy is made for the patient and the original is sent to Medical Records.
- F. Histology staff will document the event on the case “Notes” tab in PowerPath. The note will include the three persons involved in the release of the tissue and the date of approval.
- G. When updating this policy, please distribute a copy to Marian O’Keefe as she maintains the electronic Laboratory Manual.

IV. REFERENCE:

Minn. Stat. § 145.1621

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/rulemaking/funeral/comments/Merged%20ICFA-Exh%20A.pdf>

COMPILATION OF SELECTED STATE LAWS PERTAINING TO THE FUNERAL AND CEMETERY INDUSTRIES/Improper disposition of human remains