



Standard Operating Procedure for Obtaining Consent for the use of “Waste Teeth” from NHS Patients.

Background

This SOP is concerned with obtaining informed verbal consent from patients for the retention, storage and use of waste tissue for research purposes within Birmingham Dental School and Hospital. It does not cover formal research projects where ethical approval and formal written consent is required. This is to be read in conjunction with Birmingham Community Healthcare Trust “for consent to examination and treatment” – see HTA protocol file.

For the purposes of this SOP, *waste teeth* refers to tissue obtained as part of a procedure that is performed on a patient for clinical reasons, but which is not required for diagnostic purposes, and which would otherwise be discarded alongside other clinical waste.

Protocol for Obtaining Consent to Retain Extracted Teeth

- The consent process must be identical to that followed for routine clinical practice on conscious patients. The patient must therefore be “competent” to provide consent.
- Under no circumstances should coercion be used to obtain tissue; the patient has the right to refuse consent.
- Explain to the patient that the teeth concerned are waste tissues that have no diagnostic value and would normally be carefully discarded.
- Explain that such teeth can be useful for experimentation in various studies, e.g. we frequently need to try out new stains or to extract proteins, but no diagnostic information will be obtained that may result in new discoveries concerning issues that affect that patient’s care or management.
- Explain that the teeth will be anonymous at the point of collection and completely un-identifiable in the laboratory.
- If in poor condition or unsuitable, the teeth may be disposed of immediately within the laboratory.
- The research performed may be any type of unspecified research, but any extracted cells/tissue will not be immortalised to create cell lines.

- The teeth may be stored for many years in a secure environment and if ever discarded, they will be discarded according to correct Trust protocols (by disposal in anatomical waste bins or amalgam waste containers for those teeth containing amalgam).
- If the patient agrees to the storage and use of their waste teeth, record this fact in their clinical notes and date and sign the entry. The term “CRT” may be used (Consent to Retain Teeth).
- If the patient refuses to donate their extracted teeth and does not wish to retain them themselves, then the teeth are placed in a yellow burn bin with routine clinical waste.
- Place the teeth in the designated container in ground floor (Oral Surgery), first floor (R1 and R3), second floor (R2 and R4) and GA facility.
- Extracted teeth will be collected weekly or upon request by a nurse by a designated technician.
- Due to the nature of storage of the material, it will not be possible to withdraw waste extracted teeth once donated.

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Checked by ILC Chapple

Review

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