

Eye donation for corneal transplant

This factsheet is for guidance only and has been produced with assistance from healthcare professionals

Eye donation – giving someone the gift of sight

From our experience at the Hospice we know that eye/tissue donation can help patients and families feel comforted with knowledge that they have given hope to others, and that some good has come out of their loss. However, we also realise that not everyone feels comfortable with taking such a step.

We hope that this information can help if you are unsure whether this is possible for you or you are unaware of what is involved.

Here are some facts that may help you make up your mind:

- Although people with cancer cannot donate internal organs (like hearts and lungs) after death, they can sometimes donate their corneas (the transparent tissue that covers the front of the eye).
- The donation of a cornea will enable someone's sight to be restored or improved.
- There are many patients, both young and old, who would benefit from cornea donation.

What do I need to do if I wish to donate my corneas?

- Tell your closest family and friends about your decision.
- Talk to a LOROS doctor or senior nurse.
- Tell your GP.
- You can join the Organ Donor Register and inform that you wish to donate your corneas by calling 0300 123 2323 or online at www.nhs.uk/tissue.

Donation Process

- After you have died one of our staff, your next of kin or your GP will need to contact the National Blood and Transplant Donor Service.
- The Specialist Nurse co-ordinator from this service will return the call, contact your next of kin and obtain further information about your medical history.
- They will need to obtain your next of kin's consent before the donation can go ahead.
- The removal of the eyes is carried out with the same care and respect as any other procedures. This may be carried out at the Hospice or Funeral Directors. This does not prevent relatives saying goodbye or affect funeral arrangements.

What other tissues can be donated

People dying from other conditions other than cancer may also be able to donate other tissues:

- Bone
- Heart Valves
- Skin
- Tendons
- Cartilage
- Femoral Arteries

Referrals and consent are the same for the eye donation, but your body will need to be transferred to a local mortuary to enable retrieval. The cost of transportation would be met by NHS Blood and Transplant.

If you would like further information visit nhsbt.nhs.uk/tissue or call 0800 432 0559

LOROS Hospice is dedicated to ensuring equality and diversity is at the core of all our activities.

This leaflet is updated regularly. For the most up to date information please visit loros.co.uk/care

In cases of comments or complaints, please contact:

Chief Executive or Director of Care Services
LOROS, Groby Road, Leicester. LE3 9QE

or, Care Quality Commission, East Midlands Office, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle Upon Tyne.
NE1 4PA

Alternative language copies available:

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the Patient Experience Lead PA on (0116) 231 8435

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Hospice Care for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

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and *your family*