

Christine McKenzie submission of 20

November 2022

PE1911/FF: Review of Human Tissue (Scotland) Act 2006 as it relates to post-mortems

In support of Petition PE1191 Richard Starks law

I strongly believe there should be an opt out for post-mortems, unless under suspicious circumstances. After learning what exactly happens to a loved one and what exactly is extracted and kept for research unknowingly by the deceased loved ones is an absolute travesty, completely heart breaking. Learning that this procedure goes on in this day and age is inconceivable, especially when scanners are being used to detect brain tumours, bleeds etc. A Professor in London advised they are more than 99% accurate and produce a 3D disk providing an accurate medical record. These scanners are being used for post-mortems in Australia renowned for its medical technology, Singapore, England, namely Bolton, Preston, Manchester, Sheffield, Leicester etc. Where are we in Scotland? We are so far behind in the times almost like Burke & Hare. These horrific post-mortems are being performed on our loved ones, with the removal of the brain, throat & tongue, there is no need for this, a throat can be scanned by a hand scanner the tongue can be check with a torch/camera. Scanners are also used when religious principles are involved, scanners should be used for ALL post-mortems. Surely, we must see as a nation the existing practice/procedure has to change.

The Law/Policies and Procedures have to be changed. If an act like this was committed to another human being the offender would be incarcerated. Where is the dignity and respect for the dead and the compassion for their families? Please stop this barbaric procedure.

I was also horrified to establish Tissue samples are classed as Material and quoted by a Procurator Fiscal as "they belong to no particular person". Tissue Samples are part of a lost loved one.

England, Ireland & Wales have been offering tissue samples to be returned to their next of kin for years, and rightly so! Some people will decline them but that is their **CHOICE**. I am not against research, but I

am against the above procedures that are being completed **without consent**.

Changes for Consideration

1. **ALL** Post-mortems should be performed by scanner (including Procurator Fiscal ones)
2. If samples are needed for investigations this should be performed as keyhole surgery as it would in the living
3. Tissue samples should be offered back to the next of kin when the death certificate is issued.
4. **UNACCEPTABLE** to remove the brain, throat, & tongue this takes a post-mortem to another level – **consent must be given by the next of kin in any post-mortem**.
5. Death Certificate: the word Unascertained should **not** be used, it is meaningless and not a nice word and very distressing for a family, the nearest cause of death should be recorded or “Uncertain” which is softer, and everyone understands it.

We all have to face death of loved ones, but it should be made as easy as possible, not the heartache of these post-mortems being performed on your loved one and then someone claiming parts of **YOUR** loved one.

CHOICE, CONSENT, Human Rights.