



They have donated so much more than just their bodies; the nature of their bequest is so profound that we can only aspire to achieve such a selfless persona.
 – 3rd year medical student

Can I be registered as an organ donor as well as a Body Bequest Program donor?

Yes, a donor can be registered with both programs. However, if the donor is deemed suitable for organ donation at the time of their death this excludes them from participating in the Body Bequest Program. If only the corneas are used for organ donation, body donation may still proceed.

What if I change my mind?

You may, at any time and for any reason, revise or revoke your wish to contribute to the Body Bequest Program by contacting the Coordinator and advising them of the change.

How long will the University retain the body?

The donor may specify on the donor form the length of time their body may be retained by the University: three years, five years or indefinitely. The usual time frame for the retention of a donor is two to three years.

Will my body stay in Tasmania?

Generally a donated body will remain within the state of Tasmania. However there may be instances when a body is transferred to an interstate institution. If this occurs, at the end of the process the body will be repatriated to the state and the ashes made available to the family.

Acknowledging our donors

A Ceremony of Appreciation is held every two years by the Faculty of Health. Relatives and friends of all donors are invited to attend this special ceremony, where staff and students express their gratitude for those whose body donation has contributed to their education and training.

As part of the ceremony a Book of Remembrance is available for family and friends to sign or record their thoughts or memories. The book is on permanent display in the Medical Science Precinct foyer.

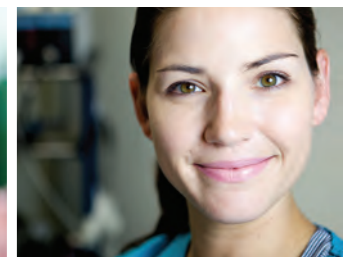
Names of donors are not listed by the University of Tasmania in order to protect their anonymity.

Other ways to support the Body Bequest Program

If you choose not to donate your body, then please consider making a donation to the Body Bequest Program through the University Foundation. Your generous support will also assist this important program.

Email: university.foundation@utas.edu.au
 Phone: +61 3 6226 1757

Body Bequest Program



Enquiries

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CRICOS Provider Code: 00588B

The most valuable part of the Body Bequest Program is that it teaches us not only about medicine but also about life and loss, about humanity and generosity, love and respect. I believe these are the most admirable attributes of our community.

– 2nd year medical student



Helping train the medical professionals of tomorrow

The Body Bequest Program at the University of Tasmania enables people to ‘donate their body to science’ and make a unique contribution to anatomical studies and the advancement of medicine. The program predominantly assists in the teaching of human anatomy for Tasmanian medical and allied health students such as doctors, nurses, paramedics and scientists. In addition, donors may contribute specifically to training surgeons in new surgical techniques and procedures.

Even with today’s technology there is no substitute for the direct, practical teaching of human anatomy. The medical professionals of tomorrow depend on this vital and highly personal gift to enrich their training. The opportunity to examine the human body, its variability and its complexities is a privilege, and our University teachers and students are extremely grateful to everyone who donates their body to this program.

The benefit isn’t just to me but to every single patient I will see and to our community.

– 2nd year medical student

Becoming a donor

The most important aspect in becoming a donor is that you must discuss your wish with your family. If your family is unaware or unhappy regarding the bequest the University will be unable to accept the donation.

Once you have discussed your intentions with your family and you still wish to become a donor, contact us and we will send you the relevant information and forms for you to complete.

The Program uses donated bodies to study the normal structure of the whole human body. Whilst we strive to accept all donations there may be circumstances in which a donor is not suitable. Certain conditions may exclude a person from becoming a donor, such as:

- a coronial enquiry or a post mortem examination
- a recent operation prior to death
- the possible existence of a contagious disease or blood infection
- recent whole organ donation
- physical size and general body condition
- assessed to be medically unsuitable.

Donations may be declined due to the University’s storage limitations.

All donations are considered on a case by case basis at the time of death. Age is not an exclusion but donors must be over 18 years of age to register with the program. Donations cannot be accepted if the donor has been deceased more than four days or if the family does not wish the donation to proceed.

The University reserves the right to decline acceptance of a body, for any reason, after death. Therefore registration with our program does not guarantee acceptance. If the University declines to accept the body, it will not be responsible for the funeral arrangements or associated costs. Consequently, the donor and their family are strongly advised to have alternative arrangements in place in the event that the body is unable to be accepted at the time of death.

When a donation is accepted, the University will make arrangements and meet expenses for the transport and eventual cremation of the body. After cremation the ashes will then be available for the family to collect. The University may retain a donor’s body for up to five years but the usual time frame is two to three years.

The University of Tasmania ensures total confidentiality throughout the entire body donation process. Dignity, respect and anonymity are accorded to the donor during this time.

Their gift allows us to understand the human body in three dimensions and furthermore to recognise what the body actually looks like and the many secrets it holds.

– 2nd year medical student

Frequently Asked Questions

Can my family have a funeral service?

Yes, but this must be completed within four days of the death. Arrangements for services or notices in the paper etc. should be made with a Funeral Director of your choice – the University does not help with these arrangements nor bear any of the associated costs.

What happens at the end of the process?

The donor is respectfully cremated, at the University’s expense, and the ashes are returned to the family or Executor. If the donor or the donor’s family would prefer a burial this is possible but the University does not help with the arrangements nor bear any of the associated costs.