



Body Donor Program

Information Sheet

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ PRIOR TO COMPLETING THE DONOR CONSENT FORM

Western Sydney University's Anatomy Laboratories located at Campbelltown Campus are licensed to accept body donations made by members of the public who wish to make this unique contribution to anatomical studies.

The Body Donor Program

Once the School of Medicine receives your completed and **signed** Donor Consent Form, you will be listed as a donor on the confidential 'Register of Living Donors'. The School will send you a letter confirming your registration with the Body Donor Program. As the time of death may occur many years after the Consent Form is submitted, acceptance of a body into the Program can only be confirmed after death.

It is important to note that many factors can prevent acceptance of a body by the University. The University recommends that donors discuss this possibility with their next-of-kin / executor and have alternate arrangements available.

Donors are guaranteed that their remains will be treated with dignity, respect, and anonymity always. Our students will be made aware of the special and unique privilege that has been accorded to them by the generosity of donors and their families. Furthermore, our anatomical teaching laboratories are situated in a restricted area that only medical and health-related students and staff are authorised to enter and utilise.

Who can donate?

Anyone who is willing to donate their body may do so, donors must be 18 years of age or older to complete the consent form to donate their body into the program. Western Sydney University does not accept anyone under 18 years of age. There is no payment for acceptance of a body donation.

Can my family donate my body on my behalf?

In the absence of a duly signed and witnessed consent, the University **cannot accept** donations verbally or from anyone other than the next-of-kin or the person legally responsible.

The next-of-kin can donate the body of a deceased relative provided they sign a consent form in the presence of witnesses and attach a letter stating that donation was the express wish of the deceased.

Next-of-kin of any deceased person means, in the following order of seniority:

- A person who was a spouse of the deceased person
- A son or daughter of the deceased person, where the son or daughter is 18 years or over
- A parent of the deceased person
- A brother or sister of the deceased person, where the brother or sister is 18 years or over

Is it necessary to include my body donation in my will?

Your next of kin or designated responsible party should be informed of the arrangements you have made. You may also choose to inform your family, doctor, and solicitor of your wishes.

If you are admitted into a hospital, move to a retirement community, a nursing home, or any other type of care facility, it is recommended that a copy of your signed donor consent form be placed on your chart or care plan.

You do not need to include the bequest in your will, as your will may not be read in time for delivery of your body to the University. It is more important to have your instructions readily available and have your survivors fully aware of your intentions.

Should you wish to include the donation in your will, a simple statement including the words *“I have expressed the wish for and consented to the anatomical examination of my body at Western Sydney University and the removal of tissue from my body to be used for medical or scientific purposes and I confirm that my wish and that consent has not been withdrawn or revoked by me.”* can be included. Please note that it is not sufficient to just include the above statement in your will. You are still required to supply to the University, a signed donor consent form as described above to finalise the bequest.

If a bequest is made, and the donor has a change of mind, can the donation be rescinded?

Yes, if the request is made in writing by the donor or his/her Power of Attorney and emailed to bodydonorprogram@westernsydney.edu.au.

Conditions of Acceptance and Donor Screening Criteria

Being registered as a Living Body Donor **does not** mean you have been accepted into the program; you and your next-of-kin should be aware of the possibility of rejection at the time of death.

Rejection into the program may happen for several reasons that will only become apparent at the time of death, these reasons will make it impossible for the University to accept your donation.

These circumstances may include the following:

- Excessive distance from Western Sydney University Campbelltown Campus – including travel time and the costs involved in transportation.
- Late notification of death – the University must be able to transfer the body to the Campbelltown campus within 72 hours.
- We may not have the necessary space in our Anatomy Facility to hold the body.

There are also conditions to the body that may be unacceptable for donation:

- Unhealed surgical wounds or other open wounds or large pressure sores that would prevent successful embalming of the body.
- If the deceased is a Coroner’s case.
- If the body is obese or severely emaciated.
- If the deceased has undergone whole organ donation.
- If the deceased suffered from severe vascular disease which clogs the arteries of the body, making it too difficult to properly embalm the body.
- People who have resided in the UK for 6 months or more between the years 1980 and 1996 – this is because there is no current test for variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD)

A Donor with any of the following diseases will be deemed unsuitable for body the donation program:

<p>Antibiotic resistant infections including: Methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (<i>golden staph</i>) Vancomycin-resistant Enterococci</p>	<p>Intestinal infections including: Amoebiasis (last 12 months) Campylobacter infections Cholera, Food poisoning (at time of death) Giardiasis (during last 12 months) Shigella infections (during last month) Yersinia infections</p>
<p>Arboviruses including: Dengue Fever Malaria, Ross River Virus Yellow Fever</p>	<p>Haemorrhagic illnesses including: Ebola Virus Disease Lassa Fever Marburg Disease Viral haemorrhagic fevers</p>
<p>Bacterial Infections including: Anthrax Brucellosis Diphtheria Leprosy Leptospirosis Plague Q. Fever (during last 12 months) Salmonella infection (during last month) Tetanus Trachoma Ornithosis/psittacosis Typhoid & Paratyphoid Fever Typhus Vibrio Parahaemolyticus</p>	<p>Neurological conditions including: Alzheimer’s disease Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease Dementia (any type developed before age 70) Encephalitis Fatal Familial Insomnia Gerstmann-Straussler-Scheinker syndrome Meningococcal infections Motor Neuron Disease Multiple Sclerosis Poliomyelitis Rabies</p>
<p>Contagious respiratory diseases including: Pertussis (whooping cough) Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Legionnaire’s Disease</p>	<p>Transmissible diseases including: Hepatitis – Viral type A, B, or C infection OR unspecified H.I.V. / A.I.D.S Measles (during last month) Tuberculosis (all forms)</p>
<p>Tapeworm & Hookworm infections including: Ancylostomiasis Hydatid</p>	<p>Infection – sepsis (during last 12 months), or limb amputations</p>

If for any reason the body is **NOT** able to be accepted, the next-of-kin will be notified to arrange alternative funeral arrangements. Determination of the acceptability of a body for donation can only be made at the time of death after screening performed by the Western Sydney University Body Donor Program Coordinator.

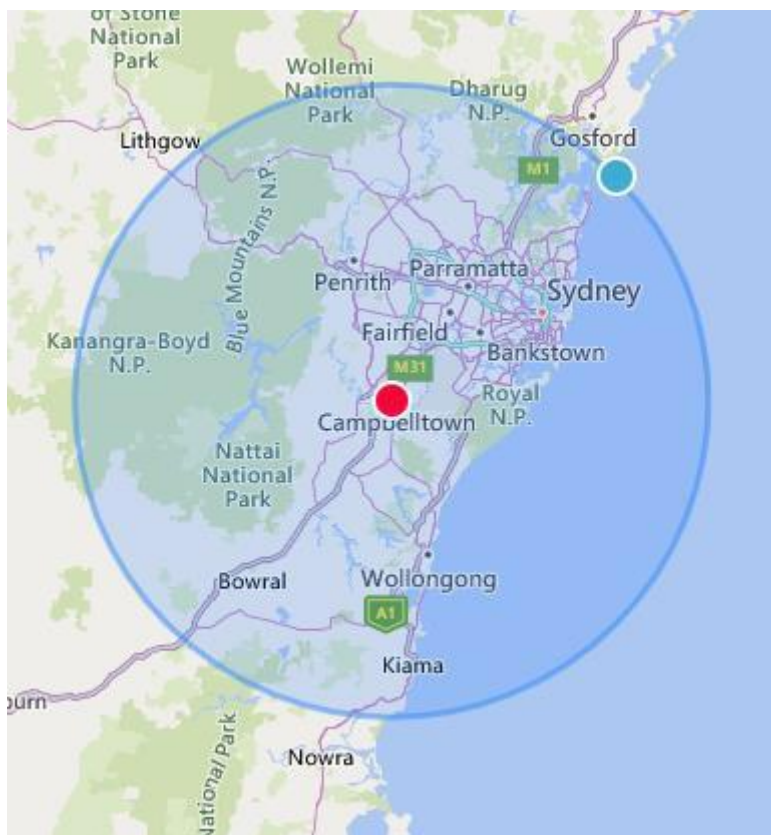
IMPORTANT

The University will not be held liable for any costs incurred through the refusal of a donation. It is incumbent upon the next-of-kin or the attending medical personnel to obtain acceptance of the body prior to its transport.

To avoid undue grief and disappointment to members of your family, they should be made aware of these conditions.

Our Body Donation Area

Western Sydney University will only accept body donations within an 80km radius of Campbelltown Campus, **if you live within the catchment area but then die outside of the catchment area, your body donation will not proceed.**



Is it possible for an ambulance service, or even my family, to deliver my body to the University?

No. Western Sydney University will only accept body's into our facility from our preferred licensed mortuary service at the explicit request of the University. NSW State Law requires all donors to be transported in a professional and ethical manner in vehicles equipped with proper mortuary transportation systems.

Procedure after death

What is the procedure upon the death of the donor?

After you pass away, your immediate next-of-kin, executor, guardian, or Power of Attorney will be required to organise a cause of death from a Doctor and should contact the University's Body Donor Program Coordinator, Professor John Morley on 02 4620 3748 or 0420 303 812. During this initial phone call to the University, the Body Donor Program Coordinator will conduct a donor screening assessment. This screening check involves your contact being asked a series of questions to ensure there are no conditions that may preclude your donation from proceeding.

If the Body Donor Program Coordinator determines that the University are unable to accept your donation then next-of-kin will be asked to make alternative funeral arrangements. Please ensure that your next-of-kin are aware of this possibility.

Compulsory Screening

Under the NSW Work Health and Safety laws, Western Sydney University has a duty of care to provide and maintain a safe work environment for the entire University community, including its staff, students, and visitors. Specific to the anatomical examination practices is the need to screen all deceased donors to ensure that the risk of transmissible infectious diseases is kept to a minimum. Infection control is based on the Standard (Universal) Precautions Model which requires that all individuals are regarded as potentially infectious and that control procedures are applied accordingly. All donated bodies will be assessed against a series of screening questions to ensure there are no immediate risks to staff and students.

What if the screening test does not allow acceptance?

If the screening questions identify a reason to preclude your donation from progressing, Western Sydney University will notify your next-of-kin so that alternative funeral arrangements can be made.

Western Sydney University will not be held liable for any costs incurred through the rejection of a donation for any reason.

Official Acceptance into the Program

If the body is deemed suitable and the donation is to proceed, the University will make the appropriate arrangements for the removal and delivery of the body to the University.

The University will be responsible for the registration of the death with State authorities and organise the death certificate to be sent to the next-of-kin / executor listed on the donor form.

Upon arrival at the University the embalming process will be performed at Western Sydney University to preserve the body's tissues so it may be useful for years to come. Your body will then be retained in storage until required for teaching or research purposes.

What if I die on a weekend or holiday?

Western Sydney University may accept donors on weekends; however, it is dependent on staff availability. Western Sydney University **will not** accept body donations on public holidays or extended University holidays.

What expenses are involved upon the death of the donor?

Once a body has been officially accepted into the Body Donor Program by the Body Donor Program Coordinator the University will assume all costs to transport the donor's body.

Western Sydney University Body donation and use

What does the University do?

We teach our students to understand the inner workings of the human body including the brain, heart, limbs, and other organs. Through a process of preservation and dissection we can reach and potentially separate internal organs to further understand their intricate and complex form and function.

This process enables them to not only learn human anatomy but train them to be future surgeons, physicians, general practitioners, medical scientists, sports and exercise scientists and other allied health professionals.

How long will the University keep my body?

Under the Anatomy Act (1977) and the Human Tissue Act (1983), the University is legally allowed to retain your body for teaching and research purposes for four years. The University may apply to the Anatomy Inspector (NSW Health) for an extension of the retention period up to a maximum of an additional four years. Western Sydney University, in most cases, will apply for the extension of the retention period to maximise the use of such an educationally valuable donation.

The University will dispose of your body at a time no longer than eight years from your date of death. Occasionally, anatomical specimens may be kept indefinitely for teaching purposes, provided written consent has been given by the deceased prior to death. **You are encouraged to inform your family as to the length of your donation.**

What is the final disposition of my body following study?

When Western Sydney University has completed its anatomical examination (which may take up to eight years), your body will be cremated individually and treated with the utmost respect and dignity. Western Sydney University will make all arrangements for cremation in accordance with your wishes (except for tissue blocks or slides for microscopic examination that may be permanently retained or if you have consented to the permanent retention of tissue by Western Sydney University). Cost of cremation will be solely borne by Western Sydney University.

Donor's Memorial

A commemorative brass plaque has been placed at the entry to the Anatomy teaching area in recognition of those who have donated their bodies for medical investigation. There is also a commemorative plaque at the Wonderfully Made Memorial at Woronora Memorial Park, Sutherland, for those who wish to have their ashes interred after cremation.

How to register your intention to donate

You can register your intention to donate your body by:

- Reading and understanding this body donor informationsheet
- Discuss your intentions with your next-of-kin, family or executor and ensure they agree and **sign** the consent form.
- Complete the online Donor Consent form and information as required by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages - [available via this link](#)
- Once you have completed the online form, you must download, print, obtain signatures
- Scan and email the **completed and signed** forms to:
bodydonorprogram@westernsydney.edu.au