FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Brain Autopsy Transport Instructions

These instructions are written specifically for funeral homes or crematoria. If at all possible, please select a facility in advance so questions can be answered and brain donation facilitated.

The family of _______________________ has given permission for a brain autopsy and tissue donation to be conducted as part of a research program at the Virginia Commonwealth University Parkinson’s & Movement Disorders Center. The vital role of the funeral home/crematoria in the brain autopsy program is to transport the body to and from Virginia Commonwealth University Hospital (VCUH) in downtown Richmond, VA.

IMPORTANT: For medical research, we try to begin the autopsy as soon as possible after death. PLEASE HOLD EMBALMING PROCEDURES UNTIL AFTER BRAIN REMOVAL.

STEPS PRIOR TO DEATH OF DONOR PATIENT

1. Please try to meet with the family and complete the history portion of the death certificate. We have a very narrow window for donation (approximately 15 hours), and obtaining a death certificate is required prior to autopsy, so any steps that can be taken ahead of time will facilitate the donation process.

2. If possible, please coordinate with any nursing or hospice care so that all aspects of the donation process are working together.

STEPS FOR TRANSPORTING A BODY TO VCUH FOR BRAIN AUTOPSY

1. Prior to leaving your facility, be sure that the decedent is appropriately name-tagged.

2. Autopsies are performed Monday to Friday between 8 am and 4 pm (2:30 pm on Fridays) please let staff know that you will be arriving to deliver a body by calling the Pathology Assistant at 804-828-0558 or BTRF Coordinator at 804-828-9664. Bodies may be delivered outside of these hours by calling Security Access at (804) 828-4300 and asking that Security meet you at the Morgue Loading Dock.

3. Bring the body to the VCUH, 1101 E. Marshall Street, Richmond, VA. Use underground loading dock B2.

4. Tell the personnel at the dock that you are delivering a body for an autopsy. A morgue attendant is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4 pm to assist you.
5. Pathology will work with you to coordinate the pick-up of the body after the brain autopsy is complete. Brain removals are conducted Monday through Friday from 8 am to 2 pm. Every effort is made to begin the autopsy as soon as possible, but please be aware that it may take several hours from the time the body is delivered before the brain autopsy is completed.

6. Send an invoice for the transportation charges only to:

   Department of Neurology
   Brain Tissue Resource Facility
   P.O. Box 980599
   Richmond, VA 23298-0599

A check for the transportation charges will be issued by VCU. If your company has not worked with VCU before a W9 form will be needed before the payment can be processed. PLEASE INCLUDE W-9 form to ensure payment if you do not have an account with VCUHS.

Please note: VCUH will NOT provide a death certificate. Please assist us in working with the family to verify that a family physician will be providing a death certificate. We cannot obtain tissue without a signed death certificate.

Please contact the BTRF Director at 804-828-9664 or via email at brain.bank@vcuhealth.org with any questions.

Updated 7/27/2017 SBC