

Developing local guidance to support DCD heart retrieval including withdrawal in the anaesthetic room



Blood and Transplant

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Introduction

University Hospital, Monklands is a district general hospital with a small number of potential organ donors. DCD donation is not a regular occurrence and in the past 5 years there have only been 4 progressed DCD donors. As a result, staff have minimal experience in this process. Historically, withdrawal of treatment has taken place in ICU which is adjacent to theatres.

Since the introduction of DCD heart retrieval as an established practice, it has been acknowledged that it is important for ICU and theatre staff to be aware of the processes required to facilitate a smooth DCD heart retrieval.

Methods

An MDT meeting was arranged, with ICU and theatre medical and nursing staff representation. The aim of this meeting was to explain the rationale for treatment withdrawal in close proximity to theatre and to discuss how this process could work. A member of the local cardiothoracic retrieval team was invited to explain the process for DCD heart retrieval and share some of the requirements to ensure a safe and smooth retrieval process.

Results

Staff were very engaged and were very keen to support the needs of the retrieval team. ICU and theatre staff identified areas which they would be responsible for and agreed how this could be achieved. There was further discussion around how the family would be supported in the anaesthetic room during and after withdrawal of support to asystole. Theatre nursing staff were keen to create a peaceful and comforting environment for the family. There were some key considerations around logistics, such as ensuring the doctor designated to confirm death would be available for the entire duration from withdrawal of treatment to asystole.

Conclusion

The key points and agreed practices were written into a draft SOP and shared with the lead staff from both areas, to ensure there was full agreement. This was then finalised and shared with both departments.

This document and its background was shared at a recent Collaborative meeting and generated a lot of interest from other ICU clinicians, who were keen to developing something similar. Some areas have opted for a less formal document and have created a flow chart laying out the main considerations and roles and responsibilities for staff. The guidance document for Monklands is bespoke and is designed to meet the local needs of this hospital. The principles may be transferrable to other hospitals.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE NHS Lanarkshire Theatres		
Implementation Date	<u>Donation after Circulatory Death Heart (DCD) Retrieval Monklands ICU and Theatres</u>	
SOP Number	Version	Review date
1	1	
Aim:	This SOP is to provide guidance on the instance of organ donation following circulatory death.	
Statement:	DCD, formally known as "non-beating heart donation" refers to the retrieval of organs for the purposes of transplantation from patients whose death has been confirmed using cardio-respiratory criteria.	
Location:	ITU and Theatres, University Hospital Monklands	