

Lydia Reid submission of 24 April 2022

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

1999 when the first organ scandal was discovered.

We fought hard for a new law to protect bodies of babies and loved ones. We still do.

My son's whole body is missing from his grave, Gary Paton. I worked at the new law until my oldest son was ill with cancer he died and for a while I did not have strength to fight.

It was agreed though by COPFS/NHS that each relative would have the procedure gently explained IF wanted, it would be truthful. It is obvious from the petitioner this does not happen. It was agreed if blocks/slides were to be returned that they would be given the respect. Due to a body being picked up by an undertaker, that choice is not given. Try to put yourself in the shoes of a relative.

Just coming out of the awful phase of grief where everything seems to be happening in a cloud and a person in an office hands you a box with parts of your loved one's body in it. Parts of our children.

When I returned I was truly horrified and terrified at laws made/what was happening.

12 year old children giving authorisation for organ donation and post mortems without parental supervision.

1 member of staff taking authorisation for anything to do with organ donation or post mortem without proof/signature.

The person could be in a coma, proof ?? The Procurator Fiscal taking what they wanted from bodies for research and worse, denying this. Blocks and slides were taken and used for research without family authorisation.

Bodies under the auspices of the Procurator Fiscal used as a teaching tool bodies stripped to use for research without authorisation.

Full and unnecessary full post mortem. Literally everything removed

from the body. Relatives who believe in training agree to that with some positive and informative publicity. It is totally wrong without authorisation. Many relatives will suffer the most awful mental health issues because of the state of the body of their loved one because they were not told what is to happen. Please remember the Procurator Fiscal has our full support in discovering the cause of death when there may well be foul play that is necessary for justice for everyone that dies at the hands of another human being/industrial happening/fault of a person.

Any part of a body wanted for medical research must have authorisation from the next of kin if there is no next of kin/no authorisation. Bodies do not and should not belong to/pathologist/Procurator Fiscal/The Crown Office. They should and do belong to the next of kin. These are parts of the bodies of our loved ones.

So many people are left with terrible nightmares once they know the true extent of the macabre raiding of the bodies of their loved ones. If that is agreed by the relatives as long as there is honesty, how could we object to that? Discovered at a later time, the shock and horror of what has been done to bodies of their loved ones causes such awful mental health issues.

I listen to these stories, I have done for many years. NOTHING has changed.

The pain is quite simply awful and unnecessary. People are affected for life. In some cases I have watched people lose jobs and spiral into awful mental health issues. We have had parents who were truly suicidal. They could not cope with the lies/deception because if you lie even once you lose their trust/respect. Often a post mortem could be done with a scanner. It seems this is so. Why do our departments not have scanners? Blood urine stomach contents/swabs must be also taken to test for obnoxious substances that does not involve opening and destroying a body in many cases.

There may well be some situations when the cause of death cannot be solved with a scanner and a full post mortem may well be needed but not the number currently carried out.

Very often parts of bodies are removed or examined when there is no reason to do so.

In the case of the petitioner's son, a simple camera or flashlight could have examined the throat/tongue without removing it. Was this body

used as a teaching tool for trainee pathologists? Why was the PM was so unreasonably extensive?

This may well provide experience for our future pathologists but where are the rights of the young man on the table or his relatives or the mental health of his relatives? During the organs scandal in 1999 it was discovered that thousands of brains were removed and sent to the Western General in Edinburgh to carry out research into CJD.

We were told this did not happen by the SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT and Audit Scotland. Until we discovered a document that showed the brain of one of the babies whose mother is in our organisation was sent to this department.

We have NEVER been able to retrieve that or any other brain sent there. Is this the reason so many brains are removed during post mortems? Why not do spot checks to find out if brains/organs are put back into the tummy of the deceased?

If a person from "Crown Office" will refuse and prevaricate over a list of blocks and slides, I see no reason why we should believe this at all. We have experienced that.

In the past it was discovered that that leg bones were removed from many children to see if there were effects from Chernobyl never returned Thymus's taken from LIVE and dead children, sold and sent around the world.

These are our loved ones. How would you feel if it were your child your loved one? Look round the committee room/Parliament. I doubt there is 1 person who has not benefited from research. However, that does not mean a doctor/pathologist has the right to annihilate and disrespect the body of our loved ones to achieve their aim.

They do not own or should not own our bodies. As has just been proven in a case against COPFS where they had to pay compensation. These parts are presently being used for research without authorisation.

Where the cause of death has been established, blocks and slides are being kept used for research.

I repeat our bodies do not belong to COPFS or a pathologist consider the number of babies who have tragically died from cot death or SIDS. The number of blocks and slides must exceed any possibility that they

all must or can be used to decide the cause of death. Enough exist for any possible future research.

We need an investigation carried out to discover how many blocks and slides have been used for research after a Procurator Fiscal post-mortem. Figures may well be frightening. Enough is enough. Parents are suffering. Whole families devastated.

This petitioner is living proof of how a lack of explanation affects relatives. Back to a situation where Hospitals/COPFS/pathologists feel the less they say the better.

This is no way to treat our bodies or the bodies of our loved ones. It may be your body one day. I truly hope it never happens, but it may be the body of your child or loved one.

How would you feel? Would you sit back and say ah well it must be done? Please feel free to check the information given in this letter. Links exist.

We were asked by the petitioner who submitted petition PE1911 to write in support of her petition. The only disagreement we have is that we fully support the right of the Procurator Fiscal to do a post mortem to discover the cause of death but would note some may be able to use scanning and never should a body be used as a teaching tool without the authorisation of the relatives.