

Donation of Eyes Procedure

Site Applicability

All VCH & PHC Acute & Residential Care Sites
(excluding: Whistler and north of Whistler; the Sunshine Coast and North Coast)

Practice Level

Basic Skills for the following professions (within their scope of practice):

- RN, LPN, RPN
- Social Worker
- Spiritual Care

Policy Statement

- Referral to the Donor Referral Line 1-877-366-6722 will be placed immediately in the event of the death, or impending death, of any patient in VCH & PHC who is age 75 and under.

Note: Hospice and community care facilities are exempt from the law that they must report every death, however if they are to participate in the eye donation, they would follow the same procedure

Need to Know

- The Human Tissue Gift Act – Consent to Donation Regulation (1999) of British Columbia states that, by law, every death in a hospital or community care facility must be reported to the Donor Referral Line. Hospitals are audited on a regular basis.
- Eyes must be retrieved within 8 hours of death.
- Consent may be obtained from the patient, next of kin, or the executor of the estate by any one of the following: RN, LPN, RPN, Social Worker, Spiritual Care, Physicians, or the Eye Bank Technician. Consent may be obtained either before or after death – see Request for Consent for Eye Donation video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhXGVoeY8LE> .
- Care of the eyes can be performed by an RN, LPN, RPN or physician.
- The patient may be discharged to the morgue. Please keep the patient's chart on the unit for review by the eye bank technician. Please note the enucleation may take place on the unit or in the morgue.
- The patient's eyes are restored by placing a conformer under the eyelids following enucleation so that there is no visible disfigurement.
- Corneal grafting has a success rate of around 90%. Both the cornea and sclera are used in grafting and any remaining tissue may be used for education and research.

Equipment & Supplies

- Provincial Consent Form: [Consent for Donation of Organ and/or Tissues](#)
- Artificial Tears, Balanced Salt Solution, Normal Saline or Optimyxin ophthalmic drops
- Paper tape
- A bag or non-sterile glove filled with crushed ice and water

Procedure

1. Call the **Donor Referral Line at 1-877- 366-6722** immediately in the event of the death, or impending death, of every patient age 75 years of age and younger.
 - Please have the patient's chart available to answer some basic screening questions.
 - Please record the referral number that you are given.
2. If the patient meets the criteria for donation an Eye Bank Coordinator will call asking for more detailed information to confirm donor eligibility. Please have the patient's chart and any recent lab results available.
3. Obtain and document consent from the patient or next of kin using the Provincial Consent form.
 - If there is no one comfortable requesting consent, the Eye Bank Coordinator may obtain verbal consent over the phone. Please notify the Coordinator of this when they call.
4. Provide care to the eyes of the donor or potential donor.
 - Instill 4-5 drops of Artificial Tears, Balanced Salt Solution, Sterile Normal Saline or Optimyxin ophthalmic drops to each eye.
 - Close and tape the eye lids shut using paper tape.
 - Place a bag filled with crushed ice and water over the eyes.

Expected Patient/Client/Resident Outcomes

The patient's family may derive a sense of comfort through the act of donation.

Patient/Client/Resident Education

- Patient Brochure: 'Gift of Sight' available through the Patient Health Education Materials Resource Catalogue at [VCH](#) or [PHC](#)
 - English: (Cat # [GV.315.Ey311](#))
 - Chinese (Cat # [GV.315.Ey311.CN](#))
 - Punjabi (Cat # [GV.315.Ey311.PU](#))
 - Farsi (Cat# [GV.315.Ey311.FA](#))
- or download from: [Eye Bank of B.C. website, Resources](#)
- Eye Bank of B.C. website: <http://www.eyebankofbc.ca/>

Site Specific Practices

If the patient is to be discharged directly to a funeral home, and not the morgue, the enucleation should take place on the unit before discharge.

Documentation

- Consent for Donation of Organ and/or Tissues
- The Donor Referral # should be recorded in the patient's chart.

Related Documents

- D-00-12-30020: [Procedure after Death \(Expected and Unexpected\)](#)
- PHC-NCS5086: [Death \(Adult\): Care of the Patient, procedure for](#)
- Eye Bank of BC website: <http://www.eyebankofbc.ca/>
- Video: Request for Consent - Eye donation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhXGVoeY8LE>

References

Human Tissue Gift Act, Consent to Donation Regulation, R.S.B.C., 1999, Regulation 65/99.

http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/10_65_99

Consolidation of the following CPDs from VCH Vancouver Acute & Coastal with current practice updates:

Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Acute, Patient Care Guideline; June 2007; *PCG E-393 Eyes, Donation of*

Vancouver Coastal Health, Coastal, Patient Care Guideline; November 1999; *PCG E-08 Donation of Eyes*

Developed by

CPD Developer Lead(s): RN, BSN, Donor Development Liaison, Eye Bank of BC

Other members:

Clinical Educator, Eye Bank of BC

Clinical Nurse Specialist, Cardiac Transplant, St. Paul's Hospital

Clinical Nurse Leader, Palliative Care, St. Paul's Hospital

Key Stakeholder reviewers from the following disciplines across VCH & PHC:

Nursing, Social Work & Spiritual Care

Endorsed by

VCH: (*Regional SharePoint 2nd Reading*)

Health Authority Profession Specific Advisory Council Chairs (HAPSAC)

Health Authority & Area Specific Interprofessional Advisory Council Chairs (HA IAC)

Operations Directors

Professional Practice Directors

Clinical Nurse Specialist, Cardiac Transplant, St. Paul's Hospital

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Final Sign-off & Approved for Posting by

Chief Nursing Officer & Executive Lead Professional Practice – VCH

Professional Practice Standards Committee - PHC

Date of Creation/Review/Revision

Original Posted date: July 6, 2012

Revised: February 3, 2014 (*minor change*)

Revised: June 30, 2020 (*minor change*)