

## Handling, retention, transfer and disposal of placenta following birth

### 1. Policies and Procedures.

- a. The handling and storage of placental tissue after childbirth; **(EIR)**
- b. Circumstances in which a placenta may be retained, disposed of, used for clinical purposes, teaching, research, or transferred to third parties; **(EIR)**

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has no specific policy for the handling of placental tissue after childbirth.

- Placental tissue is treated as human tissue and healthcare waste, and following childbirth, placentas are placed in frozen storage whilst awaiting collection and subsequent disposal.
- Where short-term retention is clinically indicated (for example, pending histopathological examination), placental tissue is:
  - Clearly labelled
  - Securely stored in a designated refrigerator within the labour ward until collected and transferred to the laboratory facility.

Placental tissue may be retained:

- Where there is a clinical indication, such as suspected infection, abnormality, adverse outcome, or other medical concern requiring histopathological examination as part of routine clinical care.

### Disposal

Where placental tissue is not required for clinical or other purposes:

- It is disposed of as healthcare waste.

**Royal Jubilee Maternity Hospital do not retain placentas for teaching, training and research processes.**

### Transfer to third parties

Within the Belfast and Social Care Trust (BHSCT), placental tissue is not transferred to third parties.

## **2. Retention and Disposal Practices.**

### **a. Details of the standard procedure for disposal of placental tissue (e.g. incineration, clinical waste processing, or other methods); (EIR)**

Placental tissue is disposed of in accordance with the Trust's Healthcare Waste Policy and relevant environmental and health and safety legislation.

#### **Anatomical Waste (Red Stream Infectious Waste)**

Pathological waste consists of organs, tissues, body parts or fluids such as blood. Even, if pathological waste may contain healthy body parts, it has to be considered as infectious waste for precautionary reasons.

Anatomical waste is a sub-group of pathological waste and consists of recognizable human body parts, whether they may be infected or not. Following the precautionary principal, anatomical waste is always considered as potential infectious waste.

All red stream waste needs to be consigned as EWC 18 01 03 by the producer before leaving the site.

#### **(a) Yellow Rigid Burn Bin with Red Lid (Anatomical waste)**

- Yellow rigid burn bins with red lids should be used for the disposal identifiable anatomical waste.
- Containers must not be used for sharps.
- Containers must be dated and signed by the person assembling and closing the container
- and a traceable tag must be attached to the handle to ensure that the source can be easily identified.
- Containers should not be overfilled and consideration should be given to the weight of the container in respect of safe moving and handling.
- Yellow rigid burn bins with red lids must be disposed of in large wheeled yellow bins with a purple lid.

#### **b. Typical timeframe for disposal where placental tissue is not retained**

Placental tissue is stored in a freezer in delivery suite the placenta bin is lifted weekly by the transport team who bring it over to the waste yard.

This is then collected the same day by the contractor.