Cardiac Thoracic and Respiratory Services

PROCEDURE FOR THE REMOVAL OF PACEMAKERS/IMPLANTABLE CARDIAC DEFIBRILLATORS
Rationale
Cited the Mac manual Part 2 directive (pages 7-10), it is illegal for explanted devices such as pacemakers and Implantable Cardiac Defibrillators to be transported through internal or external mail. When these devices require transportation to a Cardiac Technical Department for disposal, they must be clearly identified and secured in robust packaging. This protocol sets out that process.

Removal of Pacemakers and Implanted Cardiac Defibrillators
- Pacemakers and Implanted Cardiac Defibrillator should be removed by the Doctor completing the Cremation Form. If unable to do so, this Doctor will arrange for another competent Doctor to complete the procedure
- If an autopsy is being carried out, the device will be removed by the Pathology staff.
- If the patient has an Implanted Cardiac Defibrillator, the nearest Cardiac Technical Department will be contacted to arrange for the device to be deactivated. *Live devices present a risk to anyone coming in contact with them.*

Method of removal.
- An incision is made over the position of the device to expose it. The device can then be removed.
- The pacing wires should be clipped leaving approx 10cm length attached to the box.
- The incision is then re-sutured.

Cleaning.
- When the device has been removed, it should be thoroughly cleaned, removing all human tissue and body fats.

Notifying ECG Department
- Telephone the ECG Department and request a container for the device.
- For patients who are normally followed up at NRRI – 0131-242-1814
- For patients who are normally followed up at WGH – 0131-537 1000 x 31852
- For patients who are normally followed up at St John’s – 01506-523-851
- A pre- addressed container will be sent to the requesting Ward / Dept / Hospital / GP
- The device should be double bagged and placed in the container along with the following details.

Patient’s Name
DOB
CHI
Home Address
Date and Time of Death
Hospital / Ward / Place of Death.
Name of staff member.

Transport to ECG Department
- If the container is damaged on receipt, the area should contact the cardiac Department for a replacement.
- Devices in their clearly marked packaging are placed at the ward/departments specimen pick up point.
- If the container is damaged, it will not be uplifted. Transport staff should alert that they have declined to uplift.
- Where there is no routine service, devices must be hand delivered to reception in the relevant ECG Department.
- Thereafter the device will be hand delivered to the Pathology / Mortuary for decontamination. It should be accompanied by a decontamination certificate, which will be completed by the mortuary staff.
- The decontaminated device will be returned to the ECG dept for uplift by the appropriate company. All ICDs should have a print out verifying its status (i.e. programmed off)

Management in relevant ECG Department
- The device is taken to mortuary for decontamination as per LUHD Policy, or locally decontaminated.
- **NB. Where decontaminated in ECG Dept: Devices are decontaminated in a separate container to those used for decontamination of instruments/probes for use on patients.**
- Relevant Divisional Policies are followed in decontamination.
- On retrieval the device is placed in a sealed container and retained in a designated location for pickup by device manufacturer/supplier.