

If I am a donor to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program, what is the proper procedure at the time of my death?

Your family or designated representative should contact a local funeral home and inform the director that you are enrolled in the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program. The Deeded Body Program will make the necessary transportation arrangements from the funeral home to the UND SMHS.

Must my body be embalmed before it is sent to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program?

Yes, but the funeral home designated by you or your family should contact the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program before doing so if the funeral home is unfamiliar with the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program embalming requirements.

How long will my body be used for study?

A two- to three- year interval occurs between the arrival of the body at the UND SMHS and its final disposition. In unusual cases, the time required may be longer.

What if my death occurs away from home?

All donors are provided with a Whole-Body Donor card indicating that a bequest has been made to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program. This card should be carried with you at all times. You should note on the card the name of the person to be notified upon your death.

What if my death occurs at a great distance from the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program?

In the event that your death should occur at a substantial distance from the UND SMHS, the cost of transportation will be assumed by your estate or your survivors. If this is not possible, the next of kin should notify us that the donation will not take place.

What if I should move to another state?

If the distance from the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program is excessive and arrangements to our program prove too difficult, your original bequeathal should be rescinded.

Must I be a resident of North Dakota to bequeath my body to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program?

No. Bequests are accepted from anyone regardless of their distance from the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program, provided that the cost of transportation will be assumed by the estate or survivors, and that our Certificate for Bequeathing Body form has been completed by you.

How are the donors treated at the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program?

The donors entrusted to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program are under constant supervision of instructional faculty and receive the same high degree of dignity that they would in a funeral home. These generous contributions to the welfare of humanity are recognized, respected and honored.

May a customary or traditional funeral service be held prior to transfer of my body to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program?

Yes. It is the privilege of the family to decide whether there is to be a traditional funeral service with a casket and a body present or if a memorial service is to be held after your body has been sent to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program. However, in the event that a traditional funeral is held, it is important that the local funeral director be informed of your bequeathal to UND SMHS Deeded Body Program before your body is delivered to the funeral home.

What happens when the anatomical study of my body is concluded?

Your remains will be cremated. Once cremation is complete, the “preference on final disposition of cremains” will be followed in accordance to the choice that was designated by you on the Certificate for Bequeathing Body form.

The UND SMHS reserves the right to refuse any donation.

If I require additional information, where may I obtain it?

Deeded Body Program
University of North Dakota
School of Medicine & Health Sciences
Biomedical Sciences Dept., Suite W315
1301 N Columbia Rd, Stop 9037
Grand Forks, North Dakota 58202-9037
Telephone 701.777.2101 | Fax 701.777.2477
med.UND.edu/deeded-body

DEPARTMENT OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES DEEDED BODY PROGRAM

Create a heritage of better health
and a longer, happier life for this
generation and generations to come.

Please read carefully before completing forms.



Why are human bodies donated to the University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences (UND SMHS) Deeded Body Program?

The bodies are crucial to health care education. Anatomy is a fundamental science, learned best through detailed study of the human body.

Without this type of study, doctors and health-care workers would not have hands-on training in human structure, and development of surgical and interventional techniques would be nearly impossible. Giving one's body after death for the betterment of humanity is a noble and commendable act that provides a valuable gift.

Is this a normal and acceptable procedure?

Yes. Bequests and donations are made by socially responsible people from all segments of the population. Students are very mindful of the generosity and significant value of these important bequests. Everyone who benefits from health care does so at least partially as a result of previous body donations.

Is there an urgent need for body bequests and donations?

The need at the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program increases as we train more doctors, nurses and other health care practitioners. A lack of anatomical donors could cause a cutback or suspension of teaching programs, which would affect the overall health and welfare of the population.

Is bequeathing or deeding my body difficult or complicated?

No. It is a very simple and easy procedure. The UND SMHS Deeded Body Program provides a Certificate for Bequeathing Body form that requires only a few pieces of information, the donor's signature and the signature of two witnesses.

What is the purpose of the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act?

The North Dakota Uniform Anatomical Gift Act relieves the next of kin of the burden of making a decisions about a loved one's body while grieving. It protects both the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program and survivors, while simplifying the donation procedure at the time of death.

Must I be of legal age to sign a bequeathal form?

Yes. Bequeathal forms from people who are not of legal age must be co-signed by a parent or legal guardian.

May I alter, cancel or revoke my bequeathal if I change my mind?

Yes. Simply notify the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program in writing of your decision.

Can my next of kin donate my body after my death?

No. The UND SMHS Deeded Body Program requires that the Certificate for Bequeathing Body form be signed by the individual choosing to donate their body before their death.

Will the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program pay me or my family for my body?

No. By law, the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program is not allowed to purchase a human body.

Can my medical power of attorney sign my Certificate for Bequeathing Body form?

Yes. In instances where an individual has a medical power of attorney and has made a prior written or witnessed verbal statement that they wish to donate their body to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program, their medical power of attorney may sign the Certificate for Bequeathing Body form on behalf of the donor before their death.

Will this bequest create any expense for my estate or survivors?

The UND SMHS Deeded Body Program reimburses a portion of the cost of a local funeral director's professional services and transportation charges. The UND SMHS Deeded Body Program pays for the cost of your cremation, return of your remains or interment in the UND SMHS burial plot.

Will deeding my body to the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program jeopardize any insurance, social security or pension benefits to which survivors may be entitled?

No. Payments of this type are based on proof of death, not on the final disposition of your body.

Are the bodies of elderly people accepted?

Yes. Age in itself is not a deciding factor for the UND SMHS Deeded Body Program.

Will my body be accepted if I have had surgeries?

Yes. Past surgical procedures do not affect donor eligibility.

If I make prior arrangements to donate transplantable organs upon my death, or if an autopsy is performed, will my body still be suitable for study?

No. Removal of organs for transplant and/or an autopsy would render your body unsuitable for educational studies in the Deeded Body Program. In such cases, your body would not be accepted.

Will my body be accepted for study if I am infected with any communicable disease?

No. The UND SMHS Deeded Body Program won't accept bodies with confirmed HIV, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C.

Is there a weight limit?

Yes. The weight limit is approximately 275 pounds.

