Where can I go for further advice and support?

At Royal Trinity Hospice, we are aware that tissue and corneal donation can be a difficult issue and you are likely to have many questions you need answered to help you come to a decision.

Please do speak to any of the Clinical Team here at the hospice, or your GP, who will be happy to help you.

Alternatively you can contact:
National Referral Centre for Tissue Donation
www.tissuedonation@nhsbt.nhs.uk
Tel: 0800 432 0559
Tissue donation

What is tissue donation?
Tissue donation is the giving of tissues like skin, heart valves, bone and tendons to those who will benefit. Tissues are taken from the deceased donor and transplanted to patients who need them.

How will donating my tissues help others?
Your donated tissue can improve the lives of many people suffering from illness or injury. These tissues can be used to replace damaged tissues, often greatly increasing the quality of the recipients’ lives.

For example, heart valves can be transplanted to save the lives of patients suffering from diseased or damaged valves.

Can anyone donate tissue?
Yes, most people without cancer can donate tissue but there are some exceptions. Please ask clinical staff for further information.

Corneal donation

What is corneal donation?
Corneal donation is giving the clear outer surface covering the front of the eye. After removal the face will look unchanged, though there may be slight bruising round the eyes.

How does donating my cornea help others?
Donated corneas can help people with damaged corneas to see again or have their sight improved.

Can anyone donate their corneas?
Most people including those with cancer can donate their corneas. There are some exceptions, such as those with blood cancers, blood borne infections or eye disease.

Donating your corneas or tissues

Where does the donation take place?
Corneal donation can take place in the hospice. Otherwise donations happen at the funeral directors. They are carried out with the same care as any medical procedure.

What do I need to do if I want to donate my cornea or some of my tissues?
If you wish to donate please tell the hospice staff or your GP that you would like this to happen. We will ensure your wishes are written on your clinical record.

We also encourage you to talk through your decision with your family and other people close to you, so they are able to support your wishes.

You can of course change your mind at any time.

Will my family or those close to me know who my donation has helped?
Your donation will make a huge difference in the life of someone who is ill and requiring corneal or tissue donation.

The National Referral Centre, which co-ordinates corneal and tissue donation throughout the country, are able to tell your family that your donation has been used and how it has helped a patient.