

8/12/11

Miss Heath

AMENDMENT OF HUMAN TISSUE ACT

Thank you for letting me have a copy of your submission to Lord Trefgarne on the question of a possible amendment of the Human Tissue Act (HTA). As you know, this matter arose with Lord Trefgarne as a result of a meeting Mr Harley and I had with him about pathology services which included discussion of the pituitary collection problem.

Though I must say immediately that I agree with the conclusion you have drawn that any amendment might be counter-productive to the kidney donor programme (and we made this point to Lord Trefgarne) the submission rather misses the point on pituitaries, and possibly also certain other material used for teaching, research or for therapeutic purposes. There is to my mind no likelihood that an amendment to the HTA would be counter-productive to these latter requirements - indeed quite the reverse. But one of the main issues is the considerable concern of pathologists represented to us individually and through the RCPATH and the Association of Clinical Pathologists about their vulnerability under existing legislation. There is thus a large section of the medical profession most directly concerned (probably supported by many paediatricians) who would favour an amendment of the HTA so far as it relates to pituitaries. Furthermore, coroners have urged us to amend the Act since they too are in some difficulty with the very large number of post mortems carried out under their jurisdiction. I think these points ought in fairness to have been put to Lord Trefgarne since, although on balance I agree we must do nothing to upset kidney donation especially so soon after the brain death controversy, he did have in mind consulting medical colleagues in the House of Lords with the idea of possibly stimulating a private members bill simply to test the temperature of the water.

You will see from the above that it is a pity we did not have a chance of discussing these Med SEB interests in the submission before it was sent off.

4 November 1982

cc Dr Walford
Mr Horsnell
Dr Sweeney

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10th 8/11
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Mr. Parker

Mr. Horsnell
Thanks. A word, please.

To see. I referred to this in a note back to you on the copy of Miss Heath's submission you circulated. It may not have worked back to you yet.

GRO-C