

# Request title: Fetal Remains Disposal 2014-2015

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Date of Response: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Further to your Freedom of Information request, the Trust has answered your questions in the order they appear in your request.

## Request and reply

I would like to request records of the disposal of all fetal remains from miscarriages, stillbirths and abortions where fetal matter was present.

Specifically:

1.

- a) How many fetuses/fetal remains from miscarriages, stillbirths and abortions were disposed of by the hospital? (Please only include matters where fetal matter was present.

1 April 2014 - 31 December 2014 = 792

1 January 2015 to 30 November 2015 = 1008

- b) Please provide a breakdown of the above numbers by methods of disposal. I have provided some examples of categories but you may have others. I am mainly interested in understanding numbers of fetal remains incinerated in groups or with waste, or buried or cremated in groups. My suggestions are: Incinerated with clinical waste, incinerated in groups, incinerated individually, cremated individually, cremated in groups, buried individually, buried in groups or passed to families for their own arrangements.

1 April 2014 - 31 December 2014

passed to families for their own arrangements = 25

buried in groups = 305

1 January 2015 to 30 November 2015

passed to families for their own arrangements = 28

buried in groups = 446

All termination of pregnancies (abortions) are disposed of as follows:

Sensitive disposal by incineration (incinerated as a group - separately from clinical waste). The facility is a fully licenced and registered plant where 'duty of care' visits are undertaken four times a year by a member of RD&E Trust staff.

However, following on from the recommendations from Sir Bruce Keogh, we are changing our process and are looking to offer a separate group cremation service in one of our local crematoriums for all remains from termination of pregnancies. A business case has now been approved and the new process will start in January 2016: all termination of pregnancies will be sensitively disposed by cremation in one of our local crematoriums. The ashes will then be scattered in the crematorium's garden.

Please note that the number of remains incinerated is not collated separately. The information provided above has been extracted from the Trust's coding system (all inpatient and daycase procedures are coded using national coding definitions); therefore the numbers are approximate. In addition, absolute figures cannot be given due to the gestational age on some data not being available.

- c) For those incinerated individually, incinerated in groups or incinerated as clinical waste,

please provide a list of locations where this was carried out. There may be one, or multiple sites. Please also state if these sites are so-called “waste to energy” incinerators - that is that they generate power from the incineration.

A facility in the South West. The facility is a fully licenced and registered plant where ‘duty of care’ visits are undertaken four times a year by a member of RD&E Trust staff and is not a ‘waste to energy’ incinerator.

For 1 A-B, please break down the information into two time periods: from **1 April 2014 - 31 December 2014** and from **1 January 2015 to 30 November 2015**.

- 2** Please provide me with a copy of any documentation or leaflets currently handed to people who have suffered miscarriages, stillbirths or abortions. I am not looking for general, nationwide NHS advice but hospital-specific information on what the options are for women regarding what will happen with their fetal remains etc.  
Please see the patient information leaflets attached above in relation to both medical and surgical terminations.