Joe Brierley

Doctoral researcher

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About

Title of thesis: **Organ donation from children: An ethical and legal exploration**

Supervisors: **Dr Sheelagh McGuinness (/staff/profiles/law/mcguinness-sheelagh.aspx)** and **Dr Angus Dawson (/staff/profiles/haps/PrimaryCareClinicalSciences/dawson-angus.aspx)**

Qualifications

- MBChB
- FRCPCH
- FFICM
- MA

Biography

- Children's ICU consultant. Trained Leeds, London, Australia. MA ethics.
- Co-chair Great Ormond St Hospital CEC,
- Chair LREC and RCPCH ethics and law advisory committee.
- Lead on end of life care and ethics for the ICUs at GOSH
- 4 children, never sleep

Doctoral research

PhD title Organ donation from children: An ethical and legal exploration
Supervisors Dr Sheelagh McGuinness (/staff/profiles/law/mcguinness-sheelagh.aspx) and **Professor Angus Dawson (/staff/profiles/haps/PrimaryCareClinicalSciences/dawson-angus.aspx)**
Course Law PhD / PhD by Distance Learning / MPhil / MJur (/postgraduate/courses/research/law/law.aspx)

Research

The development of medical therapies and technologies means that children who would once have died when they suffer organ system failure now often survive. However, a proportion do not return to normal health, but have persisting chronic organ dysfunction. Other children remain in severe organ failure, but the technologies maintaining them have developed to a state where children with irreversible vital organ failure can be kept alive. Both groups can benefit from organ transplantation - which can, therefore, be described as either life-saving or life-transforming.

Paradoxically, improvements in medical care detailed above - in combination with measures such as seatbelts and motor-vehicle speed restrictions– has lead to a decrease in deaths from severe traumatic brain injury - the commonest situation in which child-size organs are procured for transplantation.

UK organ donation initiatives have ignored children to date (OK so generic improvements might help somewhat) Donation rates remain low – many ICUs do not facilitate child-donation, parents often refuse and in small infants UK guidelines uniquely prevent donation unlike elsewhere.

This dissertation aims to explore ethical and legal issues in child organ donation and to develop a set of practical recommendations, akin to the Organ Donor Task Force.

Other activities

- President-elect European Society of Paediatric and Neonatal intensive Care Medicine,
- Grant GOSHCC £100,000 – ethical exploration of long-term ICU patients
- Expert witness in non-accidental head/other injury cases
- Clinical Lead Organ Donation GOSH
- Organ Donation Lead RCPCH/PICS
- Member UK Donation Ethics Committee

- Member Nuffield council bioethics working group on research and children

Publications

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