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SOP: FREEZER FAILURE - LEECH BUILDING

1. PURPOSE, RESPONSIBILITIES & DEFINITIONS

1.1 Purpose

To ensure that, in the event of freezer failure, specimens contained within a freezer that fails are transferred to the back-up freezer as soon as possible to prevent degradation of the specimens.

1.2 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of individual PIs who access tissues in the Uteroplacental Tissue Bank to ensure that their research teams are fully aware of this policy and are able to act appropriately in the event of freezer failure.

1.3 Definitions

“Freezer” refers to the designated HTA sample -80° C freezers within room M3058 on level 3 in the Leech building.

“Back-up freezer” refers to the specified -80°C freezer located in room M3058 on level 3 in the Leech building.

2. COSHH/HEALTH AND SAFETY

- All local COSHH/Health and Safety guidelines should be adhered to.
- Insulating gloves should be worn when handling frozen samples.
- All biological samples should be transported in accordance with local COSHH/Health and Safety guidelines, including using sealed containers, trolleys/carts.
- All containers of samples placed in the back-up freezer must be clearly labeled with the PI's name and contact number

3. EQUIPMENT AND REAGENTS

There is limited local capacity for backup within the Uteroplacental Tissue Bank Group. This is housed in room M3058 on level 3 of the Leech Building. Capacity is at -80°C and - 20°C.

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4. PROCEDURE

If freezer failure is identified in your local laboratory, then proceed as follows:

- During working hours notify the designated contact(s) for the freezer: contact information is attached to the front of each freezer. Outside working hours notify the emergency contacts listed below – also clearly indicated on each freezer.
- Assess spare capacity in local freezers in room M3058.
- Transfer the contents of the failed freezer to the back-up freezers in room M3058
- All containers of samples placed in the back-up freezer must be clearly labeled with the PI's name and contact number.
- Once the failed freezer has been emptied and its contents transferred to the back-up freezer, then make arrangements for the failed freezer to be repaired or replaced. Alternatively, make arrangements to transfer the contents of the failed freezer to another freezer so that the back-up freezer can be emptied again.

If there is insufficient spare freezer capacity locally, contact Ms Annette Lane, Institute of Cellular Medicine or Prof C Morris, Designated Individual for Newcastle Biomedicine Biobank.

In the event of more extensive freezer failure within The Medical School, refer to the Major Incident Plan for the Institute of Cellular Medicine.

5. GROUP/SITE SPECIFIC DETAILS

- If a freezer fails within working hours the designated contact noted on the freezer should be contacted as well as Ms Annette Lane 0161 208 6759
- If a freezer fails outside working hours or over a holiday period, the people to inform are:

Dr Judith N Bulmer	0191 284 3106/mobile 07977987489
Mrs Barbara A Innes	0191 234 0821/mobile 07840748353
Mrs Julie Taggart	0191 292 1151/mobile 07900 910730

Or University Security helpdesk 0191 222 7171

- Records of all freezer breakdowns and action taken should be recorded as an adverse event and reported to the Designated Individual (Prof C Morris) for Newcastle Biomedicine Biobank.