

Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) management after death

Sue Smith

Community Cardiology Manager

Medway PCT

Glenda Lambert

Principal Cardiac Physiologist Medway Maritime
Hospital



Kent Cardiovascular Network

What's been happening?

- The issue of an unclear ICD deactivation pathway was identified when carrying out work on palliative care for heart failure patients
- Cardiologists are fitting an increasing number of devices
- ICD deactivation part of the patient pathway but does not always happen pre mortem

So a group was formed!

- In true NHS style a working group was formed to look at ICD deactivation before death -this has concluded and PCTs are working at putting the advice into place.
- The working group identified that there was no clarity about the pathway for the device after death.

Current practice

- Lack of knowledge
- Guesswork
- Hope for the best
- Unsafe practices – risk of harm.

Medical Devices Agency alert SN2002(35)
**Removal of Implantable Cardioverter
Defibrillators (ICDs)**

- Risk of explosion during incineration
- Risk of electric shock to personnel removing ICD

Advice from MDA

- Find out the make of the device (easier said than done)!! By:

Patient's ICD card /GP notes

National pacemaker database

Visual examination – X ray or incision

(Cremation forms don't help!)

Safety in Kent

- Kent Cardiovascular Network – permission from providers
- Historical ICD database
- Local cardiorespiratory departments

What's in that chest?

- Contact your local cardiorespiratory department
- Define what device has been fitted
- Plan deactivation with hospital mortuary and cardiorespiratory department

Embalming

- Metallic devices near to the heart
- Risk of electric shock
- Deactivation required for staff safety
- Same procedure

Only remove or embalm after
the device has been identified
and deactivated if necessary.

DO NOT TAKE CHANCES

Thank you and
QUESTIONS
