

New biospecimen bank enrolls more than 12,000 patients, begins dispersing samples to researchers

May 28 2015, by Mallory Powell

More than 12,000 UK HealthCare patients have consented to join UK's new [Research Registry and Biospecimen Bank](#), or biobank, allowing blood or tissue leftover from their normal health care procedures to be stored for use by researchers. Access to human tissue is critical for learning about human health and disease, developing treatments, and finding cures. The biobank, developed by the UK Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS), serves as resource to catalyze such discoveries.

"We accelerate research by making it easier for scientists to test their ideas with samples from patients. We can help research groups turn their discoveries into therapies that advance [patient care](#), " said Ken Campbell, Ph.D., director of the CCTS biospecimens core.

Currently available specimens include plasma, serum, buffy coat, [adipose tissue](#), myocardium, urine, and toenails. Every sample in the biobank can be linked to de-identified clinical data that are extracted from the patients' medical records. Researchers can [submit a CCTS biobanking request](#) form to request specimens or ask for a new specimen type to be collected. Most scientists can receive specimens without needing to submit their own application for regulatory approval. Additionally, the biobank regulatory framework makes it easy to establish partner banks.

The [biobank](#) is currently enrolling patients who will undergo surgery in Pavilion A or who are receiving care at the Markey Cancer Center. More than 80 percent of patients have opted join the program and most are from Appalachian counties.

Dr. Phil Kern, director of the CCTS, is encouraged that most [patients](#) are agreeing to participate.

"It's an opportunity for people to give back and be a part of research in a way that doesn't cost them anything, by donating tissue that would otherwise be thrown away," he said.

Provided by University of Kentucky

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