

# COVID-19'S ETHICAL CHALLENGES FOR SA ANATOMY TEACHING

The use of digital images and videos of donated cadavers for online teaching has presented a challenge for anatomy educators during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anatomy forms the foundation of the medical and health science curriculum, and the use of donated cadavers to teach anatomy is the norm. However, during the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa, universities have moved to an online digital platform, using video recordings as a primary teaching tool.

This has led to a challenge with regard to how images and videos of cadavers can be exposed on this platform without consent from the donors. Digital images and videos leave a digital footprint that has potential for misuse.

Dr Pillay, a DRILL fellow at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is concerned about this, along with her fellow anatomists. "We have flagged this as a potential problem with the educational changes brought about during the COVID-19 pandemic," says Dr Pillay. "Nationally, there is a lack of guidelines related to the use of images of cadavers for teaching purposes," says Pillay.

Empirical data is being gathered to provide anatomists with ethical guidelines on how to use video material in anatomy



Using digital images and video material in online anatomy training poses an ethical dilemma.

training sessions. These guidelines should be comprehensive, taking into account the diversity of donors as well as their sociocultural values.

"Successful, sustainable body donation programmes require that the standards

of ethical and institutional principles be upheld to build trust within communities. Therefore, protecting the interests of donors and the public is vital while using a digital platform," says Pillay.



## Towards Research Leadership

Dr Pamela Pillay is a senior lecturer in anatomy with research interests in medical/health research ethics and legislation.

 @Pamela\_Pillay

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**SUPERVISOR**  
Prof Kapil S Satyapal and Dr Shenuka Singh and Prof David McQuoid Mason



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