

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

“A new approach to assessing donor kidneys offers increased hope to those waiting for kidney transplant”

Freeman Hospital April 2016

A 61 year old patient has received a life transforming transplant thanks to a new way of assessing donor kidneys at the Institute of Transplantation, Freeman Hospital.

The new technique involves taking donor kidneys with a high chance of not working well after transplant and assessing whether they can make urine normally when given blood, oxygen and nutrients on a specialist perfusion machine outside the body.

Mr Colin Wilson, Transplant Surgeon at Freeman Hospital said "This is a very exciting development for our patients waiting for kidney transplant. Everything went smoothly with the kidney perfusion and our patient was discharged ten days after their transplant with no complications. The kidney is working well and they have not needed any dialysis since the operation."

This new technique which warms the kidney to body temperature to assess how well its working before a decision on transplantation is made was pioneered by Professor Mike Nicholson from the University of Cambridge who is working closely with the team at the Institute of Transplantation to increase the supply of donor kidneys for transplantation. This advance was made possible by funding from Kidney Research UK, Northern Counties Kidney Research Fund and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

Professor Mike Nicholson, Transplant Surgeon at Addenbrooke's Hospital Cambridge said, "Kidneys are normally transported from the donor to the patient waiting for transplant at a temperature of only 4 degrees C in a box with ice where they wait until the surgery is performed. The new technique allows the kidney to be warmed to body temperature and tested before a decision about using it for transplant is made. This means that donor kidneys that might previously have been turned down can now be used. Outside our work in

Cambridge and now in Newcastle, no other centres in the world currently offer this treatment."

The transplant teams at Freeman Hospital and Addenbrooke's Hospital and researchers at Newcastle and Cambridge Universities are working together to improve the availability of all types of organs for transplant with funding from the NIHR to establish a Blood and Transplant Research Unit in Organ Donation and Transplantation.

"We are delighted that the first Newcastle patient has been able to benefit from this ground breaking approach to kidney transplant,' said Elaine Davies, Director of Research Operations at Kidney Research UK. "This could not have happened without the investment that Kidney Research UK has made in Professor Nicholson's work over the last decade. We are continuing this support through a substantial award to fund a randomised clinical trial and are delighted that the Freeman Hospital's participation in this is now up and running."

Notes for editors

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is funded by the Department of Health to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. The NIHR is the research arm of the NHS. Since its establishment in April 2006, the NIHR has transformed research in the NHS. It has increased the volume of applied health research for the benefit of patients and the public, driven faster translation of basic science discoveries into tangible benefits for patients and the economy, and developed and supported the people who conduct and contribute to applied health research. The NIHR plays a key role in the Government's strategy for economic growth, attracting investment by the life-sciences industries through its world-class infrastructure for health research. Together, the NIHR people, programmes, centres of excellence and systems represent the most integrated health research system in the world. For further information, visit the NIHR website (www.nihr.ac.uk).

The patient has been asked directly and would be willing to take part in publicity/ media interviews.