



## NEWSLETTER – Summer 2018



### ADDENBROOKE'S TRANSPLANT ANNIVERSARY

Ground-breaking work to boost the number of liver transplants received a helping hand – 50 years to the day after Europe's first successful procedure at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. There to hear the news was the transplant pioneer himself, Professor Sir Roy Calne, who led the first transplant on 2 May, 1968,



*L-R: ACT interim CEO, Shelly Thake; Professor Sir Roy Calne; Professor of Transplantation, Chris Watson; Consultant Transplant Surgeon, Mr Andrew Butler*

and dedicated his life to turning seemingly impossible surgery into regular practice at the Trust. At the start of a day-long celebration to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust launched a £250,000 appeal to run a state-of-the-art liver perfusion machine. The machine will help newly-donated livers survive for longer and, crucially, enable doctors to test how well they

function, boosting the chances of transplants being successful. It also means that livers that might otherwise be dismissed as unsuitable, including those from older donors, could be deemed healthy enough to save a life.

Addenbrooke's has become the first hospital in the UK to make routine use of this transplant technology that keeps a liver "alive" outside the body for 24 hours. The machine perfusion keeps the organ at body temperature before a transplant is

performed, allowing doctors to check how well the liver is functioning before surgery, and boosting the chances that the procedure will be a success. The technology will allow for an additional 54 transplants to be carried out over two years.

The machine has been in development for more than 20 years. Some equipment used by the normothermic machine must be replaced for every patient, with each set of consumables costing around £4,500. Livers are usually stored in ice and a preservation solution in an "average picnic box", where they can be kept for 12 to 14 hours before transplant. Those less suitable for transplant do not tolerate the cold and may deteriorate. "Once we take it out, we tidy it up to transplant it," Prof Watson said. "Normally we would put it straight in the patient and we would hope that whatever happened in the ice storage period of time hadn't upset it too much." The new machine can "mimic the transplant", supplying the organ with oxygenated blood, medication and nutrients and performing tests to check how it will function. It will be particularly useful for testing livers which may have been deemed too risky and unsuitable for transplant, and will enable more patients to undergo the procedure. Prof. Watson said: "Some livers are potentially usable. We just haven't got the confidence to know it's going to work first time. And it's got to work first time or the recipient dies. One in eight patients waiting for a liver dies without one. If we can reduce that, it will make a huge difference."

Andrew Butler, a consultant transplant surgeon at the hospital who helped develop the machine, said: "There's a moral obligation to try to use as many organs as we can because if we don't use an organ then the implication of that is somebody dies on the waiting list." The liver perfusion machine will allow potentially an additional 54 transplants to be carried out over two years. Sir Roy said: "The medical world has made some extraordinary advances since that first transplant 50 years ago and I am proud to come back to Addenbrooke's and learn that the Trust is still pioneering new techniques to help patients."

Sir Roy, who still lives in the Cambridge area, unveiled a new hospital museum display dedicated to the history of transplant and which emphasises the all-important part that donors play in the process. Guests, including current and former clinicians and patients, learned about an audio project, backed by Sharing Heritage Lottery Funding, which will capture the memories of those touched by transplant in Cambridge. Ultimately it will feature in the British Museum.

In the afternoon CUH staff past and present, and other specially invited guests, met for a tea party hosted by Trust Chairman, Dr Mike More, to celebrate the achievements of the past 50 years – consolidating the position of Addenbrooke's Hospital as a world leader in the field of transplant.

## THE BRITISH TRANSPLANT GAMES 2018

This year 45 people will represent Addenbrooke's Hospital at the British Transplant Games in Birmingham over the first weekend in August. There will be 10 liver recipients competing in a wide range of sports. These include golf, swimming, cycling and running, and competing in a wide range of racquet sports. For the less athletic - and those of more mature years! - there is snooker, lawn bowls, ten pin bowling and darts. We shall also field a volleyball team and participate in the Donor Walk which pays tribute to all our donor families. Overall, we expect 60 hospitals to be represented and over one thousand recipients involved in a wide range of activities. Addenbrookes have been fortunate to win the Rose Bowl for the most successful team twice in the last few years - let's hope this year will be as successful. But above all the aim of the Games is to celebrate the Gift of Life, encourage people to register as donors and raise the profile of organ donation in the UK.

## GOLDEN WEDDING!



With not only weddings but also 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries having been much in the news of late, we are delighted to offer our warmest congratulations to Derek and Marion Farmer who celebrate their Golden Wedding on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Marion says: "For many years Derek struggled with PBC (Primary Biliary Cholangitis) and this led him to being medically retired from Royal Mail where he had worked for 25 years. Nearly four years ago, following blood tests and a

scan, Derek was told he had cirrhosis and primary liver cancer, a long-term consequence of living with PBC. We were given three options of treatment one of which was a liver transplant. This came as a great shock to us but, following assessment at Addenbrookes, Derek was put on the liver transplant register. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 he went down to theatre for the transplant and woke on New Year's Day 2016 with a 'new' liver. We will be forever indebted to the donor for this gift of life. Our son, daughter-in-law, daughter, son-in-law and grandson will be forever grateful to the Transplant Team at Addenbrookes for the extra years of life which have been given to Derek. Their skill, professionalism and care have been second to none. We are also very grateful for the support of friends and our church family.

"On our invitations to our celebration we have asked that people do not buy presents but, hopefully, we will be receiving donations to ALTA".

## A RECIPE FOR SAFER EATING



Did you ever feel a little dismayed at the list of foods that were “off limits” after your transplant? Food-lover Pippa Kent, who received a double lung transplant at Royal Papworth Hospital in 2017, was devastated at the restrictions imposed by immuno-suppressant drugs – no rare meat or mould-ripened cheese, no runny eggs, no blue cheese etc. – and so she decided to compile a cookery book herself. Currently in preparation, the book will be called “Now What Can I Eat?” and proceeds from the book will be donated to the Royal Papworth and Royal Brompton hospitals. Dozens of restaurateurs and chefs have pledged recipes and it is being crowdfunded via [kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com). As well as transplant patients, the dietary rules affect thousands of people who are immuno-suppressed, including cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, because of their heightened risk of food poisoning. Pippa says: “Being immuno-suppressed affects many people; the book is a way of making life a little easier for anyone who is struggling”.

## RISKS OF NASH HIGHER THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT

New data revealed at the recent International Liver Congress in Paris indicates that the prevalence of non-alcohol related steatohepatitis (NASH) among UK adults could be as high as 12%. NASH is a progressive form of non-alcohol related fatty liver disease (NAFLD) which is now considered to be one of the major causes of cirrhosis of the liver. The data came from an analysis of nearly 3,000 scans from the UK Biobank research project, the world’s largest database of health information. This showed one in eight of those over 40 years old had inflamed, fatty livers. Members who remember a presentation by Perspectum Diagnostics two years ago may be interested to know that the researchers used the innovative digital scanning technology *LiverMultiScan* to analyse data. Dr Rajarshi Banerjee, CEO of Perspectum Diagnostics commented, “Currently most people with NASH are diagnosed with a liver biopsy when the disease has already progressed and they have symptoms. We now have the technology to find these people much earlier using a less invasive test which gives doctors and patients the power to take action and a better chance of reversing their liver damage. This is better for the patient and for the NHS.”

## DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Celebration Day this year will be held on Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> October, and it will again take place at the Hallmark Hotel in Bar Hill with, we hope, a less “adventurous” menu than last year! Invitations will be going out at the end of July and the closing date for ticket applications will be 28<sup>th</sup> September.

