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Patient's second kidney op performed by first surgeon's son

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A Royal Free patient has had a kidney transplant 34 years after the surgeon's father performed the same operation on her at the hospital.

At the age of 10, Yvette Phillips was one of the youngest patients in the country to have a transplant when Royal Free surgeon Mr Oswald – 'Ossie' - Fernando performed the procedure on Silver Jubilee Day in 1977.

Her kidney lasted 34 years until she needed another transplant which was carried out by Mr Fernando's son, Bimbi Fernando, at the Royal Free in January.

Yvette's husband Alan was willing to donate one of his healthy kidneys but as he was not a compatible donor for Yvette, she took part in an innovative 'three-way' transplant.



The 'three-way' kidney swap involved three couples whose partners were not compatible donors for their loved ones. Alan donated his kidney to someone he never met whose partner in turn donated their healthy kidney to someone else whose partner donated their kidney to Yvette. The solution – which involved three simultaneous transplants in three hospitals – has only been possible since a change in the law in 2006.

Housewife Yvette, 45 and from Iver, Buckinghamshire, first suffered renal failure as a child and was left exhausted by having dialysis five days a week. In 1977, her mum got a call to say the Royal Free had a suitable kidney for her.

After the transplant, she suffered a mini stroke and had to stay at the Royal Free for six months but since then, she has not looked back.

She spoke about her experiences as part of Transplant Week, 4 to 10 July. She said: "The transplant made a huge difference. As a child, I needed dialysis, had a very restricted diet and felt constantly exhausted. The new kidney gave me a new lease of life - I was a normal teenager,

going to parties and having fun.”

Yvette married Alan and gave birth to a daughter in 2001 at the Royal Free. “I thought I couldn’t have children as being on dialysis can affect fertility so I was amazed and delighted when I discovered I was pregnant,” she said.



Over the years, Yvette developed a strong bond with Ossie Fernando and then his son Bimbi.

She said: “Ossie kept in touch to see how I was doing. When I was pregnant, he advised the maternity team on my health. He was always on the end of the phone if I had any health worries and I can’t thank him enough.”

When Yvette’s kidney started to fail last year, she was again referred to the Royal Free.

She said: “I was delighted to have Ossie’s son, Bimbi, as my surgeon. The transplant went very well and my new kidney is doing even better than my old kidney! I was on blood pressure tablets when my kidney started failing last year and now I don’t need them.”

Three-way kidney transplants are becoming more common although many people are still not aware of them. It is believed that about 40 have been performed in this country.

Ossie Fernando, who started as a consultant transplant surgeon at the Royal Free in 1968, said: “Yvette’s story is a very positive one about transplantation. After her first transplant, she went on to have a family and a very fulfilling life. That kidney lasted an impressive 34 years and when it failed, Yvette was able to have another transplant. She was one of my youngest patients and it’s been a pleasure to help her.”

Mr Bimbi Fernando said: “It was relatively unusual in 1977 for someone so young to have a renal transplant and now Yvette has had a three-way transplant. They are becoming more common – it is the second one we have performed at the Royal Free.

“There is a special bond between Yvette and my family and we’re so pleased we have been able to help. Yvette’s story shows how having a kidney transplant enables you to lead a normal life and even if your kidney fails, you can have another transplant.”

Yvette added: “If it weren’t for Ossie, I wouldn’t be here today. I named my daughter after him – Kayleigh’s middle name is Fern after Fernando.”

Both Ossie and Bimbi are so passionate about what they do. I now feel great and have lots of energy to spend with my family. I am so grateful to Alan for donating his kidney and to the other donors involved in my last transplant – it really does make a difference.”

Read more about Yvette's story in the [Daily Express](#) and [Evening Standard](#).

Watch Yvette's story on [BBC News](#)

Notes to editors

1. For more information contact Soraya Madell on 020 7830 2963 or soraya.madell@nhs.net

2. More than 7,500 people in the UK are waiting for a transplant. Waiting times for transplants are high because we do not have nearly enough donors. To sign up to the Organ Donor Register, visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk or call 0300 123 23 23. Transplant Week runs from 4 to 10 July. For more information, visit www.transplantweek.co.uk

3. The Royal Free is Dr Foster's 'large trust of the year' for 2010. Our services have been rated "excellent" for the third year running, most recently by the Care Quality Commission. The trust attracts patients from across the country and beyond to its specialist services in liver, kidney and bone marrow transplantation, haemophilia, surgery for hepatopancreatobiliary (HPB) conditions, clinical neurosciences, renal, HIV, infectious diseases, plastic surgery, immunology, vascular surgery, cardiology, amyloidosis and scleroderma and are a member of the academic health science partnership UCL Partners. For further information, visit www.royalfree.nhs.uk
