

Rapid Recovery for Knees at Orthopaedic hospital!

New Rehabilitation Enables Mile Walk after just 17 days

Mr Barry Oldham of Clun, south Shropshire is delighted with his knee replacement which was performed under an enhanced recovery programme at the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust. The hospital pioneered rapid rehabilitation hip replacement surgery in 2008 and now patients are benefiting from this technique being used for other joint replacements, which means patients are up and about much more quickly.

Since retiring to the country at the age of 60 from his role as a deputy head teacher in 2003, Mr Oldham has struggled with pain in both knees, particularly at night when trying to sleep. He suffered after carrying weights and missed being able to carry his grandchildren. He says he chose to come to the Orthopaedic hospital based on its excellent reputation and has not looked back since. Once the decision was taken to have his right knee replaced, Mr Oldham was invited for a pre-operative assessment. He says, "This was the most educational five hours I have spent in hospital. All the procedures, checks and options for anaesthetic were clearly explained to me and I left feeling quite secure in the knowledge of what would happen during the operation. I was totally prepared mentally."



Barry Oldham says, "My surgeon, Mr Smith, had advised that I make arrangements to stay in hospital for three to five days after my operation, but I was able to leave after just 48 hours and, as it happens, would have been fine after just 24! This was due to the combination of the anaesthetic and pain relief used, which meant I was able to get up from bed and do my exercises pain free, within hours of the operation. Having passed the checks of being able to get in and out of a car and up the stairs, I was ready for home much sooner than anticipated. After 12 days, I no longer needed my crutches and after 17, I was able to walk a mile. Just 21 days after the knee replacement operation, I was able to get on my exercise bike, climb up a ladder soon after and adopt a totally normal lifestyle. My local physiotherapist was amazed at my lack of pain and extremely rapid recovery."

The next challenge will be to perform the same process on Barry's left knee. Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Mr Tony Smith, is confident that Mr Oldham will do equally well next time, which will be in the early summer, commenting, "For many patients, we are now performing hip and knee replacements routinely in this way. It is safe and comfortable for patients and they are pleased to be able to get back to normal activities more quickly. The enhanced recovery programme represents a huge step forward for our patients having joint replacement surgery. There are a number of benefits in terms of being up and about more quickly and potentially a decrease in the risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Mr Oldham has taken full advantage of the enhanced recovery programme at the Orthopaedic and hopefully soon all our patients will be feeling the benefits of this new approach to joint replacement surgery."