

The Living Donor Programme – History at St George’s

In 2005 the St George’s Kidney Patient Association purchased a state of the art keyhole operative system. This allowed Mr Fronck and his colleagues to start performing keyhole laparoscopic key donations. The programme grew from 10 per year to 22, then an average of 45 cases per years ever since. 505 patients have donated their kidney using this equipment. This year we are hoping to perform 50 donations.

This equipment is still being used but parts are beginning to fail and requiring costly replacements. The programme is growing again and more and more people want to donate their kidneys to help someone. It is important that the equipment we now use is reliable, and state of the art.

The St George’s Kidney Patient Association has kindly agreed to purchase a new keyhole stack system called SPIES. This is highly regarded by surgeons and is used at the Royal College of Surgeons of England to train future surgeons.



One of areas of keyhole surgery equipment that has dramatically changed is the screen that the surgeon sees. This is just like the television you would have in your lounge. 10 years ago it was a large box with dull colours. The technology has advanced to use large flat screen monitors, with high definition and sharp images. This makes very small structures and blood vessels easy to see and makes this safer for the patient.

Another key feature of the equipment is that it warms the gas we use to create the space to be able to do the operation. Previously we used cold carbon dioxide, which made the patient cold and would mean it would take them longer to wake them up from the anaesthetic. The fogging of the camera meant that there were several delays to clean the camera again and again. Both issues would prolong the surgery, so the new system will reduce the operation time.

This system will support the programme and St George's kidney patients for many years to come. The team are extremely grateful for your continued support.

Sarah Heap

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