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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Revolutionary new treatment for acid reflux**

A revolutionary new procedure for patients with acid reflux has been carried out for the first time in the UK at The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Consultant gastroenterologist Professor Sauid Ishaq and Mr Antonio Santos, consultant upper GI surgeon, have now carried out the groundbreaking operation on two patients, at the Trust's Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley.

It has proved to be lifechanging for patients, including one who had had to give up work and was being sick on a daily basis.

The new GERDX procedure is done through an endoscope, passed down through the mouth, so is minimally invasive. It means up to eight patients a day can be treated, with no overnight stay needed.

Patients who are symptomatic or can't take medication had required conventional laparoscopic anti-reflux surgery which involves a costly stay in hospital.

Other patients are not suitable for surgery and face a lifetime on tablets instead. These tablets often have side effects.

Yvonne Jones had suffered with acid reflux, caused by a hiatus hernia, for almost four and a half years. She had been forced to retire from work and the condition was affecting her whole life.

Because she had previously had a lot of bowel surgery she could not be operated on and the tablets were causing unpleasant side effects.

"Mr Santos told me about GERDX and asked if I was interested, which of course I was," she said. "We had just gone on holiday to France – we had been there three days – when I got a call saying they could carry out the procedure but I would have to go straight home.

"Do I regret having to come back? No. Would I do it again? Yes! It has given me a completely new lease of life. I feel like a new woman; I have never felt so fit and well in my life.

"I haven't needed to take a single tablet since the day it was done. I have had no indigestion, no acid reflux, I haven't felt sick.

“It is such an incredible thing and has really transformed my life. This really needs to be available to so many more people.”

Her husband Bob said the condition had made Yvonne difficult to live with. She was sick every time she ate and had had a reaction to the tablets.

“Since the operation she has been absolutely amazing. She’s the lady I met when she was 16!” he added.

The procedure was carried out at Russells Hall Hospital by Dudley NOTES (Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery) team consisting of Prof Sauid Ishaq, Mr Antonio Santos, Dr Andrea Gait, Dr Andy Downs, Dr Max Hedges, Tracey Young, Kay Boyce, Stephanie Jones and Mr Anthony Kawesha.

Acid reflux is a common problem affecting 10% of the population, and patients with severe reflux require lifelong medication.

Professor Ishaq first became aware of the new procedure when it was in its very early stages in 2006. Following the release of a new version in 2012 he became involved in the training process.

Outside the Trust, GERDX is only in use in Austria and Germany.

Dudley is at the forefront of minimally invasive surgery, mostly endoscopic, and surgeon and gastroenterologist work hand-in-hand to deliver this.

Professor Ishaq, with ENT colleagues, also pioneered the endoscopic treatment for Zenker’s diverticulum and with Mr Anthony Kawesha worked on full thickness resection of early colon cancer in Dudley.

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