

Guy's Hospital Renal Unit

by Chisholm Ogg

An interest in patients with renal disease can be dated back to the 1820's when Richard Bright, who had been born in Bristol (see Bristol Link), was a physician at the hospital. In the early 1960's, Dick White started to develop a service for the investigation and treatment of children with nephrological problems and, in about 1964, Stewart Cameron and Frank Ellis were sent respectively to New York and San Francisco to learn more about renal disease and transplantation. On their return to Guy's formal plans were made to set up a combined service for the treatment of patients with end stage renal disease. Maintenance haemodialysis was started in 1966, followed a year later by renal transplantation from cadaveric donors. In 1968 transplantation from living donors was started in children.

The programmes expanded steadily until 1969 when a number of dialysis patients and staff contracted Hepatitis B. This prompted a change from reusable (Kiil) dialysers to disposable (Gambro) dialysers in hospital and a rapid expansion of home dialysis (Kiil) and transplantation from both living and cadaveric donors. Since then the adult and paediatric dialysis and transplant programmes have expanded steadily to be amongst the largest in the country.