

Joint Replacement Pathways Framework

Appendix 3

Patient Stories

The patient stories form part of the Joint Replacement Pathways Framework. They are from actual patients who have had positive experiences from same day joint replacement surgery.

Patient Story 1 from NSLHD

HOW A 'TEAM EFFORT' TREATMENT HAS GOT DAVID BACK ON TRACK

A treatment program combining cutting-edge same day surgery, clinical collaboration and his own sheer determination is helping Northern Sydney Local Health District hip replacement patient David Moore on the path to a remarkable recovery.

The former marathon runner, State League soccer referee and all-round keen sportsman had endured more than a decade of debilitating back pain, with a succession of treatments and diagnoses unable to solve the problem.

After eventually being diagnosed with hip osteoarthritis, a multi-disciplinary treatment program provided by NSLHD incorporating same-day joint hip replacement, both pre and post-operation hydrotherapy and other physiotherapy is helping him return to peak fitness.

David's pain, which started in 2008 and was unsuccessfully diagnosed by a succession of doctors and specialists as a spinal issue, left him struggling for basic mobility.

"Supermarket staff had to bring out a chair for me as I couldn't walk," he said. "I had run marathons - now I was struggling to cross the road.

"I couldn't sleep because of the pain - it was terrible."

In 2021 David was referred by his GP to the Royal North Shore Hospital Neurosurgery Clinic. As part of the Spinal Pain Pathway Triage Service, he received a comprehensive assessment by a physiotherapist and his condition was identified as hip osteoarthritis.

He then underwent a seven-month treatment program incorporating aquatic physiotherapy and exercises with NSLHD's Osteoarthritis Chronic Care Program.

In February he received same-day hip replacement, performed by RNSH surgeon Dr Andrew Ellis. RNSH is believed to be one of the few hospitals in Australia to offer same-day treatment in this area, which enabled David to return home within a few hours of surgery.

A further six-month physiotherapy program post-surgery, including further aquatic physiotherapy sessions at Ryde Hospital, has helped David resume hobbies including long walking and cycling.

"The empathy and care of the whole team at RNSH Hospital helped me so much on my journey," David said.

"It was inspirational in my determination to prepare so well, both pre-operation and

then through recovery.

"Perhaps same day surgery would not suit all but I highly recommend it for those who are suitable. To return home in your own surroundings helps you recover quicker, I believe.

"It's so important to follow guidance and equally to put the effort in."

RNSH Outpatient Department and Hydrotherapy Senior Physiotherapist Katrina Ferguson said good communication between all the teams and practitioners had also been key to David's positive outcome.

"It's a great example of how we can work together well as a team," she said.

"It's incredibly rewarding being part of a patient's successful journey like this and seeing the impact on lives."



Patient Story 2 from Regional NSW- Grafton Base Hospital, NNSW LHD

SRH is a retired nurse with many years of knee pain. When first interacting with the department at age 52 she had been using a crutch for 6 months. At this time, she weighed 117kg and she is 162 cm tall, giving a BMI of 44.58.

SRH underwent left TKR at Grafton Base Hospital on 03/12/18. She did well on the ward and was discharged day 1 post-op. On follow up at Maclean Community Health she has reasonable ROM but was very weak. She progressed well and returned to hydrotherapy which had been her primary form of exercise prior to the knee replacement. She particularly benefitted from pacing advice around her daily activities managing her property.

SRH was progressed from the hydrotherapy pool onto a gym group as part of the Knee and Hip Arthritis Service with a view to preparing for her right TKR. She attended the gym group for most of 2019 and during this time she was also able to work on losing weight. By 2020 she had set up her exercise program sufficiently at home that she did not need to attend the gym further. SRH prepared for her joint replacement by doing regular strengthening exercise, water-based exercise and even built up her ability to walk with a weighted backpack. Despite needing pain medication to keep up this level of exercise SRH knew that she couldn't do more damage to her knee and that it would aid her recovery to stay fit and strong.

SRH underwent R TKR on 24/09/20 having been identified as a possible day zero discharge. She was identified through the Knee and Hip Arthritis service and met the inclusion criteria. Preoperative education on recovery and expectations was provided by a Physiotherapy Coordinator.

She now weighed 98kg with a BMI of 37.34. She was successfully discharged as a day surgery case using crutches. She was followed up by telephone call day 1 post operatively by a Physiotherapy Coordinator and was going well, not requiring any opioids, albeit with a pain buster insitu. She did not require immediate review and in fact was able to make dinner for her and her husband that evening. On day 3 post op the pain buster was removed in clinic.

At day 7 post op she walked into her out-patient appointment unaided with minimal pain. SRH has goals of returning to horse riding and plans to continue her weight loss journey.

Patient Story 3 from NSLHD

SAME DAY JOINT REPLACEMENT TRIAL SHOWS PROMISE

A trial allowing joint replacement patients to return home on the same day of their surgery is underway at Royal North Shore Hospital, and early results are promising.

Patients like Susan Stackhouse, the first patient to take part in the trial, have nothing but praise for the concept which turns a potential two to five day stay for a hip or knee replacement, into a same day discharge.

"I was very excited because it meant I could recover at home in familiar surroundings," she said.

"I'd been two years in pain since the start of COVID-19. My university work reduced me to being in front of a computer eight or more hours a day which exacerbated my pain.

"The few months before the operation, I could hardly walk down the road – it was that painful."

Sport orientated and a yogi with 40 years of experience and her own studio, she said she was a little anxious on the morning of the operation, but was at ease when she met those who would be helping her in her rehab.

"Everybody was very helpful, they reassured me and made me feel very comfortable," she said.

Orthopaedics Clinical Nurse Consultant Wassim El Abed, who has spearheaded the trial, said the feedback from patients had been stellar.



Surgery patient Susan Stackhouse

"We are still in the trial phase of the program, meaning we are still bumping into small issues and finding out the best way to do things... but so far the feedback has been really positive," he said.

"Patients really enjoy being in their home when recovering, while being cared for by the hospital in the home (APAC) staff and their friends and family."

The trial has strict eligibility criteria, and patients must commit to practicing their rehab exercises and crutch use in the weeks prior to their surgery.

"The day of surgery is intense as the patient is seen multiple times by different people – including physiotherapist, occupational therapist, acute pain service, pharmacy, the orthopaedics clinical nurse consultant and orthopaedics team – and is provided with

plenty of education prior to being cleared to discharge. We aim to discharge the patient by 6pm," Wassim said.

"APAC will then see the patient daily for seven days. They are also followed up by the orthopaedic team every day for the first four days as part of their 'virtual rounding'."

The trial, should it be implemented on a permanent basis, also holds promise in helping others get their surgery quicker.

Meanwhile for Susan, who is now almost two months post-op, the results are not just a new hip, but a whole new lease on life.

"Since I've had the surgery, people have said my whole demeanour has changed, and I am back doing the things I want to do" she said.