



Transplanting Skills, For Life

UK medical charity gives life-saving transplant to boy from Ghana

A UK charity, Transplant Links, has offered the chance of life to a young boy from Ghana with renal failure. Felix Yeboah would have died within weeks without a kidney transplant, but thanks to the new charity Transplant Links, he had a kidney from his father transplanted on 2nd March offering him a chance for survival. The operation was a great success and Felix and his father are now looking forward to going home, and a new life ahead of them.

When asked what the operation meant to him Felix said "I will be able to play football again, and have a chance for success - so that I can become a doctor or plan for Aston Villa". The illness has had an impact on the whole family, and meant that his brothers and sisters can't go to school because of the need to pay for his treatment. His father, Michael, said "He is my beloved son and I can't let him die if all he needs is one of my kidneys."

Transplant Links (also known as TLC) is a charity set up by a group of British doctors with the goal to save the lives of children and adults in developing countries who suffer from kidney disease. Through TLC, transplant surgeons and physicians take their skills to countries where they are most needed, and dialysis is often not available. They work with medical teams on location helping them to develop their own expertise in running a living transplant program, allowing one member of a family to save the life of another, often their own child. The vision of founder, Jennie Jewitt-Harris, was to give parents the chance to save the life of their own child.

Transplant surgeon Mr Andrew Ready, who performed the operation on Felix and his Dad Michael, and is Medical Director of Transplant Links said "While we were in Ghana recently making plans to help out there we met Felix. His condition meant that he was unlikely to survive long enough for the team to help him when we go to Accra later this year. We felt we couldn't walk away from him without doing something. Whilst his plight is so common in developing countries, he had found us, and we had to do everything we could to help him"

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Transplant Links put the plans into place to bring him to the UK. Dr Jewitt-Harris, Chief Executive of Transplant Links said "In the future, our goal is for children like Felix to have their live transplants in Ghana with the support and teaching of TLC. This is an exceptional circumstance where we had to do something urgently to help. It has always been the goal of TLC to give parents the chance to save the life of their own child with kidney failure. We are delighted to have given this chance to Michael Yeboah and his son, Felix. Both of them are doing really well, and Felix is keen to get back to a normal life again"

Felix like many patients with renal failure in developing countries had little chance of survival. Dialysis costs about 100 US dollars a session in Ghana which means most patients cannot afford it. Dr Dwomoa Adu, also a trustee of Transplant Links, said "Renal failure is tantamount to a death sentence in developing countries like Ghana. Here when patients are diagnosed with kidney failure, they're put onto dialysis and may have a transplant, which is something we tend to take for granted. That simply doesn't happen in the developing world where people are dying instead of getting treatment"

Mr Ready's operating team came into the hospital to perform the operation during their own time, so as not to take any staff away from planned procedures. "My team was happy to come in on a Sunday. That's how passionately they believe in what we can do here and what Transplant Links wants to do in places like Ghana"

Transplant Links are very grateful to all the fund-raisers who have helped to make this possible, and to British Airways for their cooperation and looking after Felix and his family so well on the way here.

To make a donation to Transplant Links to support their work, or find out more please visit the website on

www.transplantlinks.org or call Dr Jewitt-Harris on 07738 539633

All media enquiries please to Dr Jewitt-Harris on 07738 539633 or by email on jennie.jh@gmail.com

Transplant Links is a UK registered charity no 1119923

Patrons include TV presenter Adam Hart-Davis, Radio broadcaster Quentin Cooper, Baroness Cumberlege, Ian Gibson MP and Mr Bernard Ribeiro, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England