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MANCHESTER HOSPITAL ANNOUNCES DOUBLE WORLD FIRST

Becky Jones is only 21 but already she has made history twice by being the first patient to have a lung transplant with multi-resistant *Aspergillus** and also multiple fungal balls in her old lungs. On May 29, 2011 she underwent a double lung transplant at UHSM (University Hospital of South Manchester) after being airlifted from her home in Dublin by helicopter. She had been on the waiting list for over a year and was accepted for transplant only because the hospital at Wythenshawe also houses the National Aspergillosis Centre, which specialises in the treatment of multi-resistant *Aspergillus* infection.

Now, just 17 days later she is out of intensive care, tucking into her food and make plans for a future she thought she might never have. Becky said; "***Words simply cannot begin to describe the pure relief I feel. The chains have been lifted; I can breathe! I can't, for the life of me, remember feeling so well! The world is officially my oyster***".

Professor David Denning, who is Director of the National Aspergillosis Centre, said; "Becky's transplant brings together a remarkable set of expertises; in fungal infection, molecular testing, advanced transplantation techniques (Becky did not go on heart lung bypass) and intensive care, all under one roof. With increasing antifungal resistance since 2004, she is a courageous torchbearer for others."

Becky developed aspergillosis because she has cystic fibrosis. She became allergic to the common airborne fungus *Aspergillus*, as is common in those with cystic fibrosis (and sometimes asthma) (allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis or ABPA). Because she needed special drugs to improve her breathing, the fungus grew in her damaged airways to form large fungal balls (aspergillomas). Remarkably she developed 10 of these, never previously described. She was treated with an antifungal drug but the fungus developed resistance. This sequence of events is increasingly common in patients referred to the National Aspergillosis Centre. She is now on preventative antifungal agents given by aerosol and intravenously, to minimise the risk of life-threatening invasive aspergillosis, which is common after lung transplantation because of immune suppression to prevent rejection.

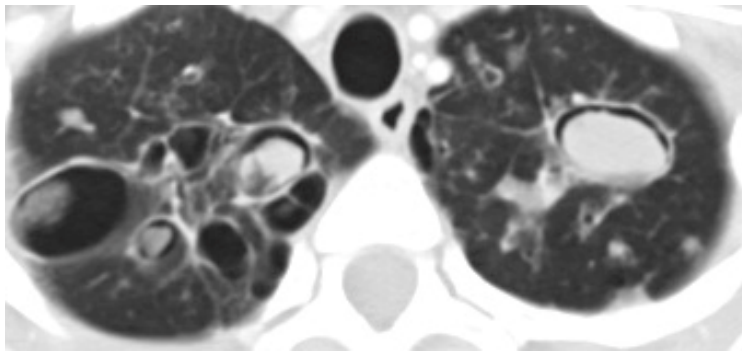
Becky's transplant marks almost to the day the founding of the Fungal Research Trust 20 years ago, which has consistently supported laboratory testing within the National Aspergillosis Centre. Antifungal resistance is now found worldwide in *Aspergillus* having been published first in 1997 by the same clinical team, supported by the Fungal Research Trust. Patients are referred from all over the UK and abroad to Manchester for treatment.

**Aspergillosis describes a large number of diseases involving both infection and growth of fungus as well as allergic responses. Aspergillosis can occur in a variety of organs, both in humans and animals, but is most common in the lungs and sinuses. Allergic aspergillosis (ABPA) is estimated to affect ~150,000 people in the UK, chronic pulmonary aspergillosis (~750) and invasive aspergillosis ~4,000 in any one year.*

Becky after her transplant



Becky's CT scan of her chest showing four of her 10 fungal balls (aspergillomas) in large cavities



One of Becky's fungal balls.



NOTE TO EDITORS:

For further information please contact Susan Osborne, UHSM's Director of Communications and Engagement on 0161 291 4972 or mobile 07836 229208.

- The **National Aspergillosis Centre** and the **Heart and Lung Transplant Centre** both at UHSM are funded by the National Commissioning Group for Highly Specialised Services. The **National Commissioning Group (NCG)** commission medical services for a specific group of patients with extremely rare conditions or which require very unusual or costly treatments. In addition, the NCG advise Ministers on which NHS services are best commissioned nationally rather than locally, to ensure a high quality of clinical care and equity of access for patients, as well as securing value for money.
- **University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (UHSM)** UHSM is a major acute teaching hospital trust providing services for adults and children at Wythenshawe Hospital and Withington Community Hospital (the latter owned by Manchester PCT). We are recognised as a centre of clinical excellence, demonstrated by our mortality rates, which are among the lowest in the UK. We provide district general hospital services and specialist tertiary services to our local community. Our fields of specialist expertise include cardiology and cardiothoracic surgery, heart and lung transplantation, respiratory conditions, burns and plastics, cancer and breast care services.
- The **Fungal Research Trust** (www.fungalresearchtrust.org) is a registered charity which supports patients and funds research into and education about fungal infection. It was set up in 1991 and since then has distributed in excess of £3,500,000 in research grants resulting in more than 145 research publications in clinical and scientific aspects of fungal infection. It has contributed to the postgraduate training of more than 25 scientists and doctors in the UK and overseas, and provides travel grants to scientific congresses. It also supports the encyclopaedic Aspergillus Website at www.aspergillus.org.uk. As well as being a key resource for clinicians and researchers, the website also devotes a section to patients and relatives to help them understand more about the disease. Over 2,000,000 pages are examined monthly from more than 125 countries, from over 50,000 different computers.
- The Fungal Research Trust is hosting a **20th Anniversary meeting** for the public and affected patients on the 18th June 2011 at 11:00 at The Medical Society of London, Lettsom House, 11, Chandos Street, London W1G 9EB. It is today launching a focussed fund raising campaign for £150,000.