



Pioneering surgery prevented grandmother from losing leg

Sophie Day

sophie.day@archant.co.uk

A retired cleaner who was at risk of losing her leg has undergone a life-changing operation that has seen her become the first patient at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital to have implants fitted in her knee.

Jacqueline Baxter, of Ferrars Court, in Huntingdon, was in danger of losing the lower part of her right leg and the ability to walk unaided last year after a series of falls.

"I had a fall in 2014 but, when it happened, it didn't hurt and I didn't realise anything had happened so carried on working."

Due to initial lack of pain, Mrs Baxter continued her cleaning role at Jewson and carried on riding her bike everyday.

"Over the year my knee gradually started to give way and then it got worse. It started to become more painful and difficult to do things."

"It started to make it impossible for me to be able to do things properly, I wasn't able to work or ride my bike or run around after my great-grandchildren as it would cause too much pain."

During this time Mrs Baxter suffered a number of other falls and had to give up work due to the pain. Finally, in September last year, she was referred to Ali Ghaz, consultant trauma and orthopaedic surgeon at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

She said: "Following the x-rays I was told that I had dislocated my knee and that the only thing that was keeping the top and bottom of my leg together was tendons and ligaments. I was also told that my femur had completely turned round."

"After having a knee operation four years ago, I was shocked that this had happened."

Mrs Baxter, 70, was then told that she would need immediate surgery other-



■ Main pic:
Jacqueline Baxter.
Inset, consultant Ali
Ghoz.
Picture: HELEN DRAKE

wise she may lose her leg and not be able to walk again.

"I was surprised about the situation because none of it had broken the skin, although it was hurting."

"After the appointment I was sent home and told not to walk at all or put any pressure on it as the outcome could have been so much worse."

In November last year, Mrs Baxter underwent the surgery, not experienced by any patient at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital previously.

Mr Ghaz told *The Hunts Post*: "It was decided that instead of Mrs Baxter going to Birmingham for the operation I would carry out the procedure. After talking the doctors in Birmingham we all decided that this would be best for

her."

During the operation, Mrs Baxter had a custom made implant inserted in the damaged knee to support bone growth.

"This was the first time that this operation had been carried out at Hinchingsbrooke. I am delighted for Mrs Baxter. From not being able to walk and being in constant pain she now has the ability to walk again," added Mr Ghaz.

After several sessions of physiotherapy Mr Baxter is now living life to the full and is able to ride her bike and run around after her four great-grandchildren with ease.

She said: "It is absolutely marvellous; I really had no pain after I came out of the operation and it has changed my life for the better."

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