

Back on her feet



A former dancer says years of misdiagnosis in Britain led her to pay £10k for a hip operation in Poland **See page 2**

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Earlier this year Julie could hardly move...

SUNBURY: Polish operation has her dancing for joy

By Adam Courtney
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AN EX-PROFESSIONAL dancer says five years of 'medical misdiagnosis' forced her to go to Poland and pay for a £10,000 hip operation.

Julia Bird, of Camilla Close, Sunbury, made the decision to spend the money after being told by a chiropractor her hip joints were practically worn out and she urgently needed surgery to replace them.

The diagnosis followed five years of visits to her GP and an osteopath, neither of whom she says were able to come up with a cure for her pain, which became so bad earlier this year she ended up practically housebound.

Although now pain-free and able to dance for fun again, Julia, 42, says her condition should have been diagnosed much earlier.

She is furious she was not once sent for an x-ray when it was clear painkillers prescribed by the GP were not working.

She said: "I believe something as simple as an x-ray would have saved me five years of suffering. In my ignorance, I thought the pain was coming from my lower back but it turned out I was born with shallow hip sockets.

"My GP told me I should give up dancing when I first complained of pain. But dancing is my life and the thought of giving something up I have been doing since I was two was terrible. I knew this was nothing to do with the dancing as there were 70 and 80-year-olds at my club being just as active."

Having lost faith in the British medical system, Julia, who used to be a theatre dancer, went about seeking an alternative and ended up in Krakow.

She says the money spent on her operation was well worth it and says the facilities in Poland are 'exceptional'.

Through a Croydon-based firm, she was given door-to-door service, having the operation and then spending a month in a special rehabilitation centre.

She said. "You see people in the UK hobbling around with walking frames for months after their ops.

"I was walking again unaided after two weeks and I'm back dancing."

A Surrey Primary Care Trust spokesman said: "Every patient's circumstances are taken into careful considerations by clinicians when decisions about treatment are made.

"Surgery may not always be the most appropriate course of treatment.

"Anyone who has concerns about the care they receive from their GP should raise the matter with their GP or let us know so we can investigate thoroughly."

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■ **SO HAPPY:** Louisa Bird went for a hip operation in Poland
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