

# Price of new life in sex-change city

A TOP surgeon at a leading teaching hospital has made London a sex-change capital of the world.

Patients paying private medical and clinic fees of up to £2,000 each come to him from as far away as Asia.

This week part of the twilight world of the trans-sexuals will be shown in three BBC 2 programmes featuring a sex-change operation.

But a News of the World investigation has revealed that the high fees charged for the operations are no guarantee of happiness.

And sometimes the money paid to jump the National Health queue is earned from strip shows or prostitution. The centre for

## SPECIAL INQUIRY By WILLIAM RANKINE

NHS sex-changes is the Charing Cross Hospital in Fulham, London, where trans-sexuals are seen by psychiatrist Dr John Randell.

If he approves, patients are placed on consultant urologist Mr Peter Philip's waiting list.

But as well as his NHS work, Mr. Philip carries out sex-change operations at the Bowley Private Clinic in Notting Hill Gate, London.

There, director Mrs. Dorothy Benbow, told us that Mr. Philip does about one operation a fortnight.

But a charity organisation which helps trans-sexuals puts the figure higher.

At the clinic we asked the matron about arranging a sex change for a wealthy American living in Paris.

She said Mr Philip would accept only male patients—recommended by a psychiatrist—who had lived successfully as women for a year.

Later, she said Mr Philip suggested getting in touch with Dr Randell at his Harley Street address.

Former patients told us that Dr Randell charged £20 for a private appointment and they paid Mr Philip £750 for the operation.

## Debts

But fees to the clinic can add up to £1,100 to the bill, according to Mrs Benbow.

Company accounts show that she and her fellow director Miss Pamela Crutchley shared £325,503 in salaries in the last two financial years.

Mrs Benbow said: "We didn't receive all this money. A lot of it was bad debts.

"We are not doing nearly so well now and the next accounts will tell a quite different story."

A psychiatrist who has treated trans-sexuals said: "There's a lot of work in this field. For some people the end result isn't as happy as it might be.

"They all think everything will be rosy. But it very seldom is.

"There is a lot more work after the operation, to adjust to life."

Dr Randell and Mr Philip did not wish to comment.

# OPS DON'T CURE THE PROBLEM

LIFE for sex-swop patients is fraught with problems — before and after the operation.

Many take their troubles to the charity the Genetic Research Foundation.

Secretary George Colchester, also known as Elaine, said: "Surgery isn't always a solution.

"Often people are no happier afterwards.

"And many have difficulty raising the cash — sometimes resorting to prostitution and striptease.

"It annoys me that so much money can be made out of people like me. I paid £650 for breast implants — but we can't find doctors who really want to

Investigate why we are like this."

Another trans-sexual, June, could not afford a private operation and had to wait seven years to become a woman on the National Health.

"But a friend went privately and had it done within a week," she said.

Stephen, 25, was born a girl but had a National Health sex-change last year after a five-year wait.

"My girlfriend's mother was very upset," he said. "But my girl and I have come to terms with it. Our sex life is fairly good."

PRESS CUT  
from

PRESS MATS

[Press monitoring  
Agency for  
TRANS-SEXUALS]