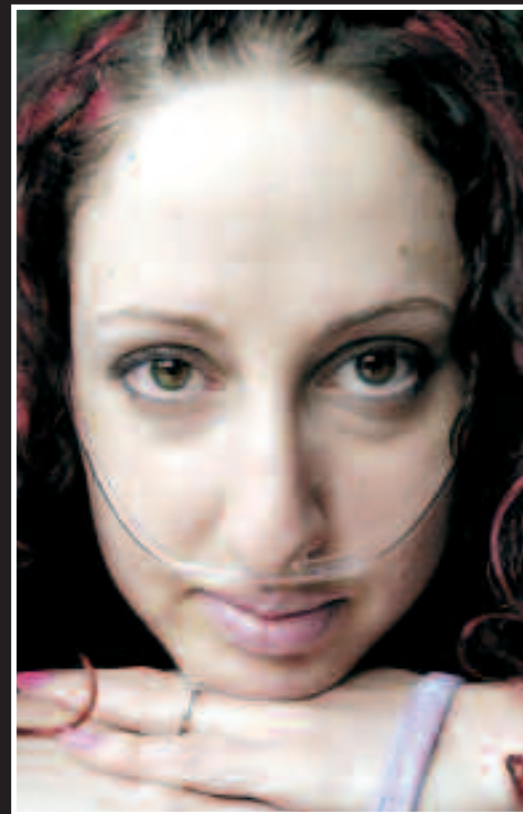


Dancer finds lung donor at the last minute



Planning for the future: Justine Laymond

By Henry Ellis

THE life of a young Potters Bar dance instructor who launched a campaign to get people to carry donor cards has been saved as a lung donor was found at the eleventh hour.

Justine Laymond, 33, had her hopes of finding a donor agonisingly dashed three times before her life-saving operation was carried out on Sunday.

She is now recovering after surgery to replace both her lungs, which had wasted away with the extremely rare disease lymphangiomyomatosis.

The good news came as National Donor Week was launched to highlight the national shortage of donors.

Mum Joanna, of Byng Drive, Potters Bar, told The Press: "I am so overwhelmed, it's absolutely brilliant.

"I can't put into words how grateful I am to the poor family who have lost their daughter. They have given me back my daughter and suddenly we have a future to plan for.

"The last 18 months have been a nightmare, but Justine has been such an inspiration.

"As a parent you can never be prepared for your child to be struck down by something like this. We had to be strong for her but it has been very hard."

Justine, who launched a campaign to raise awareness about transplants and the desperate shortage of donors in The Press last July, plans to wed her fiancé

Jon when she is back on her feet.

But 15 months after she was diagnosed with LAM, Justine's family were beginning to give up hope.

Hours before the operation at Harefield Hospital, she told her mum: "If there is a problem again and I don't have the operation, I haven't got long to live."

The wait for three other Barnet families whose loved ones need heart and lung transplant surgery continues, and two Barnet residents have died in the past 12 months because suitable organs could not be found.

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- Seventy-eight Barnet residents need a kidney transplant.
- Two Barnet residents need a lung transplant; one needs a new heart and lungs.
- One Barnet resident needs a liver transplant.