

Student to receive pioneering treatment



MAKING NEWS: The Evening Post in March last year and Louise with surgeon Colin Hopper



By **HURTEJ KAUR**

A STUDENT with a rare form of cancer has been given fresh hope in her battle against the disease.

Louise Longman, 20, from Aspley, is to have pioneering light and drug treatment to see if she can be cured of Von Hippel Lindau syndrome.

And her father David, 51, is so hopeful that today he launched a charity called Killing Cancer to raise cash for research and pay for treatment for other sufferers.

Louise's condition causes tumours to grow into the bone of her arm. Doctors in the UK have said there is not much they can do except amputate her limb.

Last summer, the *Post* reported how she travelled to Moscow and Salzburg to be treated by one of Russian President Vladimir Putin's doctors.

But Louise, a biomedical sciences student at the West of England University, Bristol, was devastated to learn the treatment had had little effect.

She said: "I went through so much pain having the treatment, and had been given so much hope.

"To realise that I had been through so much and that it had all been for nothing really tore me apart.

"Having the daily pain is one thing, but to have your hopes dashed and apparently have your last hope blow up in your face, almost destroyed me emotionally."

Two years ago, doctors at Hammersmith Hospital in London tried to burn the tumours away with chemicals — but it didn't work and left Louise in a lot of pain.

Twelve months on and Louise is to be treated in London with Photodynamic Therapy (PDT) at the National Medical Laser Centre at University College London.

Louise, who has suffered from the condition since the age of six, is hopeful the new treatment will work.

Her father David said: "Louise and the family have spent months learning more about PDT."

Referring to new charity Killing Cancer, he added: "I have formed the charity to help the National Medical Laser Centre to raise funds to extend the current research and development of PDT.

"The campaign is also designed to

tell the public more about PDT."

Colin Hopper, head and neck surgeon at the centre, will carry out the treatment with the help of an orthopaedic surgeon.

He said: "The technology we use

will show up the malformation of blood vessels between the two bones in Louise's forearm. There are too many blood vessels and that is what's making her arm so uncomfortable.

Surgeon offers fresh hope to tumour sufferer Louise

WHAT IS PDT?

PHOTODYNAMIC Therapy (PDT) was developed 100 years ago.

Louise's arm will be injected with something similar to the chlorophyll found in leaves.

The medical team will feed four hollow tubes into her arm through which the drugs will be injected.

One fibre will travel the length of the growth from her elbow to her wrist.

Three more will be put into the middle of the cell malformation.

Small lights are then switched on to activate the drug when it has had time to be absorbed by the cells.

The last part of the treatment — light exposure — will last a few minutes, and Louise should start to feel the effects of the therapy working within hours.

At this stage, the lining of the blood vessels which causes the tumours is killed.

Following the treatment, Louise will have to stay in a darkened room because natural light could damage other healthy cells before the drug has had time to spread and be flushed out of her body.

"Louise will be given a drug which makes her sensitive to light — especially red light.

"I have never come across a situation where you can't kill tissue.

"I'm pretty confident and optimistic that the treatment will be successful."

For more details about the Killing Cancer charity, go to www.killingcancer.co.uk.