Jerusalem Scene



2015 Summer Edition

The Newsletter of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group - The only charitable provider of expert eye care in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem; treating patients regardless of religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay

Then and Now

In order to continue developing, it is useful for us to look to the past to see how the ophthalmic landscape has changed in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt).



We recently compared two studies by Chumbley et al. in the 1980s, 'Eye Disease in the West Bank and Gaza Strip', & 'Treatment of Trachoma in the West Bank', with a more recent study, the 'Rapid assessment of avoidable blindness in the occupied Palestinian territories' (RAAB) 2010, Chiang et al. This is what we found:

Education is key

The studies indicated that medical assistance alone will not solve preventable blindness. As part of our Mobile Outreach Programme, we help patients understand what their conditions

mean, how it may affect their eyesight, how it can be managed, and of the importance of eye care.

Our staff are all specially trained to educate our patients on eye health, promoting lasting and significant change in the region.

Tackling Trachoma

Trachoma is a disease which causes the roughening of the inside of the eye lids and the wearing down of the cornea, which can lead to blindness. In the 1980s, Chumbley found that trachoma was one of the leading causes of blindness in the oPt. In

2010, the RAAB study identified that the condition was no longer causing high levels of blindness amongst the Palestinian population. Chumbley played a significant role in this success, by undertaking clinical trials in villages near Hebron and taking a lead in setting up a St John mobile outreach service. SJEHG funded a portion Chumbley's research into trachoma in the oPt.

Preventing the preventable, curing the curable

One thing that is evident from reviewing Chumbley's and the RAAB studies, is that

preventable sight loss was, and still remains, a serious issue within the oPt. Blindness causes perpetual poverty, and the eradication of preventable blindness is a vital component for securing long term economic stability and development. The biggest cause of blindness in oPt in the 1980s and today is cataracts; a condition that is almost always curable. In 2014, ŠJEHG carried out almost 3,500 cataract surgeries across our services.

Research into eye disease is important in developing our ability to combat preventable blindness. Pioneers like Chumbley et al. and the authors of the RAAB study have laid the foundations for significant leaps forward in ophthalmology in the oPt. Through the establishment of our ground-breaking research programme, SJEHG is building on these foundations. This work will increase our capacity to eradicate preventable blindness from in the region.

Thoughts from our CEC

There are very few dull or even quiet moments in the existence of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group (SJEHG). For example, we are still steaming ahead with building the new hospitals in

their operations.
Along with this, we have altered the admissions procedure within the main Hospital so that paediatrics are received separately from adults, as well as inpatients from outpatients. This



both Gaza and Hebron, concentrating now on the interior design and fittings in each. At the same time, we are looking at resurrecting one of our old clinics in the Old City as a walk-in centre, within what used to be the original hospital for the Knights of St John and which acted as part of our hospital between 1948 and 1961. We are also considering putting in a cataract surgery theatre in Anabta, which would save many patients from having to make the long and often problematic trek from the northern part of the West Bank to Jerusalem for

has meant that the overall flow of patients has become more straightforward and efficient, which has been enormously successful in the opinion of both patients and staff. In addition, we are striving to enhance the patient experience by putting a coffee shop in the main hall, which shall provide good quality produce in a pleasant atmosphere and at a reasonable cost.

I have recently made visits to Charleston and Washington in the US, and Brisbane in Australia. In Brisbane, Isla (our Director of Fundraising) and I were given the opportunity to speak about our work; and we are looking forward to developing our relationship with Australia in the future. These trips were excellent opportunities to gather support, for fundraising, and to raise the profile of SJEHG within the worldwide Order of St John.

A recent fundraising dinner organised by David Dahdal, Head of Development & Grants in Jerusalem, was an excellent way of reintroducing ourselves to the local and diplomatic community; in addition to raising vital funds. I am also now more involved with the diplomatic set out here and that could prove very important in identifying new sources of funding and support. Along the way, I have come to realise from talking to these businessmen and diplomats, just how important the role of St John is within the region as well as just how well regarded we are.

Life is fairly buzzing here, with all the management, clinical, building, training

and research activities taking place and there is always something new going on. Recently the "something new" was the film-maker Carlo Nero (son of the actress Vanessa Redgrave) and his team filming various aspects of what we do (see picture). The end result will be outstanding. What impressed them the most was going with our outreach teams to remote parts of the West Bank they were so captivated by the professionalism of our team and by the amazing work that they do in areas that are only very rarely visited by any health workers, let alone ones with a critical mission like ours.

The funding for our outreach teams will run out by the beginning of next year and we are appreciative of any support in maintaining this vital service.

There are plenty more challenges ahead but please rest assured that the whole team here is up for it and we'll never cease to do the best we can.

Brigadier Tom Ogilvie-Graham CEO

Blast from the Past





Visionaries can come from anywhere.
Sometimes to make a big difference you can be just a small component in a larger operation which will end up changing the lives of many to follow.

Said Faraj was a stone mason in 1958 when our hospital in Jerusalem was built. He worked on the building for a year and a half, preparing

and carving stone. His legacy, along with all of the others who worked on the construction of our Jerusalem Hospital, was to build an establishment which has been a beacon in the journey against preventable blindness in the occupied Palestinian territories for over 50 years. We would like to thank Said Faraj and all those others that helped create this important building.



Case study

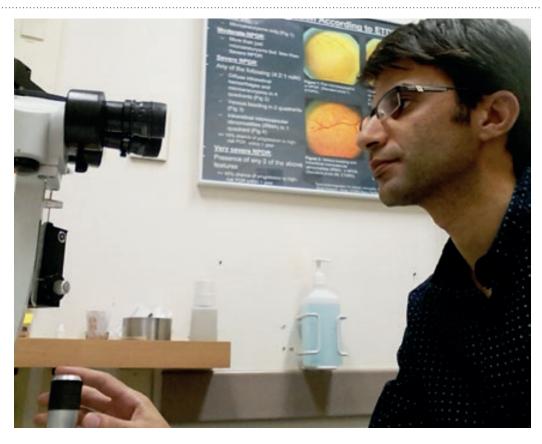
Dr Yahva Sweiti

St John of Jerusalem **Eye Hospital Group** is the only institution within the oPt where doctors can train as specialists in ophthalmology. In July 2014, Dr Yahya Sweiti finished his fouryear residency with SJEHG. Once doctors complete their residency, they can then specialise in a particular aspect of ophthalmology during their fellowship period.

On 1st March Dr Sweiti started his work at the Ophthalmic Department of the Israeli Hadassah Hospital as a fellow in ophthalmic genetics and retinal diseases. The course will last two years.

Dr Sweiti's supervisors are Professor Eyal Banin, a renowned ophthalmic researcher in retinal degenerations and stem cell implants, and Professor Dror Sharon, head of the genetics lab.

For his fellowship, Dr Sweiti spends time in the laboratory becoming adept at molecular genetic techniques related to ocular disease, and time in the clinic, seeing patients and in



the Electrophysiology Department.

Working in the genetics laboratory has allowed him to learn molecular genetic procedures which will be vital for any genetic research.

By the end of the course, Dr Sweiti will be a worldclass geneticist/research ophthalmologist, with a focus on inherited retinal disease. He will then be able to set up a small laboratory at St John Eye Hospital in East Jerusalem, where he will be able to identify the most common genetic mutations of inherited eye diseases. In the future we will need to recruit a genetic consultant, who will be integral to the research laboratory.

Dr Sweiti hopes to start collecting data from patients at St John Eye Hospital in East Jerusalem soon. He will then be able to determine their genetic profile and develop a genetic database for future

genetic counselling and, when it becomes available, gene therapy.

We at SJEHG remain extremely grateful to those who have supported and continue to support Dr Sweiti and our other medical staff members. In addition, our collaboration with the Israeli Hadassah Medical Center sends a strong statement about the possibilities of productive Israeli-Palestinian cooperation.

Trustee Report:

Dr Alastair McPhail

My first experience of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group (SJEHG) came during my preparation for taking up my position as Her Majesty's Consul General in Jerusalem.

My predecessor, Sir Vincent Fean, told me that I would be expected to sit on the Board of Trustees of SJEHG. I felt a slight rush of panic. I was completely unqualified for such a position. But my feelings changed when I got here.

Not long after my arrival, the CEO, Brigadier Tom Ogilvie-Graham, invited me round to the hospital. It is only a five minute walk from the British Consulate and so it was easy to fit into my hectic round of introductory calls. I was impressed by the staff's motivation and their excellent relationship with their patients. When Tom asked me whether I would agree to be a Trustee, I jumped at the chance. I knew it would be an honour to be associated with the SJEHG and a privilege to work with such devoted staff. It was one of



the easiest decisions that I have had to take in Jerusalem. When I participated in a Board meeting last year, I enjoyed being part of something positive. The same was true of the Christmas carol service for the children.

Jerusalem faces a number of challenges. This is especially true in the east of the city. The hospital is a cherished institution here, but the staff have also managed to extend their care into the West Bank and Gaza. Medical services

of all kinds are in great demand in the occupied Palestinian territories. SJEHG's opening of two new clinics in Hebron and Gaza in the next year will be tremendous achievements and will provide much-needed services to vulnerable communities.

My time in Jerusalem has seen a great deal of tension and upheaval. When I arrived the peace talks still had four months to run. But they collapsed, followed by the kidnapping of three Israeli teenagers, the murder of

a Palestinian teenager in East Jerusalem, the war in Gaza and then tensions in East Jerusalem. I could regularly hear gunfire and smell tear gas coming up from neighbouring areas.

While we all work to bring peace to this troubled region, I know one thing for sure – that the staff of SJEHG will continue to provide a first-class, sensitive service to the people here.

Dr Alastair McPhail British Consul General to Jerusalem

Case study

Kahlil

Kahlil, aged 12 from Gaza, had been suffering from eye problems since he was seven. He had poor vision and found it difficult to play with his schoolmates. Doctors recommended that

eye examination, our doctors were able to diagnose Kahlil with keratoconus, a condition which results in the weakening and thinning of the cornea, leading to the front of the eye developing a conical Kahlil's keratoconus was treated at our Gaza Clinic using corneal strengthening surgery (cross-linking), a technique which uses UV light and a photosensitizer to strengthen the chemical bonds within the vision problem, and it was difficult for him to play with his friends. I am so happy that my son will no longer suffer."

Kahlil's family could not afford to pay for the treatment he needed, so we waived his fees for the cross-linking procedure. Thankfully, Kahlil's outlook has improved significantly since he had his procedure, and he is now enjoying being a normal twelve year old.

Unfortunately, Kahlil is not the only child in need of our help in the occupied Palestinian territories, and for every happy ending like Kahlil's story there are many others that need our help. As 80% of blindness is preventable or curable. early intervention is the best weapon against preventable sight loss. No child should lose their sight due to a preventable or curable condition. In 2014, we treated 37,500 children across our sight saving services in the oPt. We aim to increase this number each year in order to ensure that no child loses their childhood to blindness.



Kahlil wore glasses in the hope that it might partially correct his vision. However, when his parents realised that there had been little improvement, they took Kahlil to our Gaza Clinic. After carrying out an shape. This can lead to a loss in transparency of the cornea, short sightedness, and, if the steepening of the eye is uneven, astigmatism, a condition which causes blurred and distorted vision. cornea and prevent it from thinning any further. Kahlil's treatment was a great success, and speaking about his treatment, Kahlil's mother said "Kahlil was not progressing well in his school because of his

Funding Today

Our work would not be possible without our kind donors, whose generosity allows us to continue saving sight and changing lives. We would like to thank everyone who has given in 2015 so far, and everyone else who has taken part or organised any fundraising activities on our behalf.

Major Donors 2015:

Australian Representative's Office, Ramallah

The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation

The British Humane Association

The Clothworkers' Foundation

Children of Peace

Christian Blind Mission

The late Aubrey Desmond Donald

The Eranda Foundation

The Evan Cornish Foundation

Fred Hollows Foundation

Greendale Foundation

The Jerusalem Governate

The Karl Kahane Foundation

Julietta Khoury

The Linbury Trust

The MBC Heritage of Islam Trust

The Park House Charitable Trust

The late Dorothy Peacock

Pictures on Walls

The Sobell Foundation

United States Agency for International

Development (USAIĎ)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Welfare Association

World Diabetes Foundation



Yellow running vests and wellearned rests

Our marathon runners have raised a staggering £14,668. Thank you, Campbell Fullarton, Cat Ross, James Denselow, Sinead Anne Roberts, Mike Rosenstock, and Paul Ashley!









Employees of the month

February

Kahlil Saayreh (Staff Nurse) Kahlil is a hard worker, active, flexible, and has very good communication skills.

March

Sa'ed Salameh (Staff Nurse) Sa'ed is flexible, dedicated to his duties, and often stays after working hours to help out.

April

Reem Shaheen (Accountant) Reem quietly works hard every day, tailoring her efforts to meet the needs of the Finance Department. She is a good communicator and always willing to learn new things.

Mav

Khawla Zaiter (Staff Nurse) Khawla approaches work with high levels of enthusiasm, is punctual and stays after working hours to help out. She interacts with patients and staff well, and is good at working under pressure, and being flexible, and professional.

If you would like to sponsor any of these individuals please contact Isla Richards (Isla. Richards@stjohneyehospital.org 020 7553 6963)

Supporter Corner

The Dowager Countess Cathcart, Gail Goltra, & Patricia Tallon

At St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group we are fortunate to have long standing friendships with some of our most dedicated supporters.

Having such wonderful relationships makes it hard to say goodbye. Recently, The Dowager Countess Cathcart, Gail Goltra, and Patricia Tallon sadly passed away. We will not forget the support they have given us over the years.

Tribute to The Dowager Countess Cathcart by our Patron The Lord Vestey KCVO DL

There have been few people who have demonstrated more passion for The Order of St John and in particular St John of Jerusalem Eve Hospital Group, than Mariebelle Cathcart. On the appointment of her husband Earl Cathcart as Lord Prior, she immersed herself in the worldwide activities of The Order and travelled with him extensively. She was highly respected by both

staff and volunteers. She took up the Chair of the Ladies Guild in 1985, and gathered around her personal friends to enhance the size of the Committee and identify sympathetic sponsors who would go on to support her throughout her tenure of office.

The Committee was run with meticulous attention to detail and she soon realised there was much untapped support for the Hospital. This led her to plan and execute the first Special Event on behalf of the Hospital, a lunch at the Savoy Hotel which generated over £50,000. Buoyed by the unqualified success of the lunch, she persuaded the Guild to undertake a major annual event. The respect in which she was held enabled her to command spectacular venues including Royal Palaces and City Livery Company Halls.

In order to ensure all members of the Committee could play their part she set about increasing the number and style of events. Her first efforts saw the annual fair (named by her husband)



The Gift of Sight Fair, move back into central London. This led to a tenfold increase in income. More events followed including an annual Bridge party at Diplomatic Residences in London and a private viewing day at the Frogmore Estate in Windsor. A keen gardener, the latter gave her much pleasure.

The vast increase in income by The Guild enabled them to support very necessary upgrading of the Hospital's staff accommodation. This was vital to ensure the continued recruitment of expatriate Medical and Nursing staff and demonstrate awareness of supporters from abroad of the needs of the local population.

Mariebelle Cathcart was an exceptionally talented individual. She was an excellent needlewoman and took great joy in an exhibition held in Somerset by the Royal School of Needlework wherein pieces sewn by her mother, herself, Tara and Tara's daughter Natalya were shown. She also became a proficient artist and produced wonderful watercolours, particularly in scenes surrounding the French home of Alan and Tara Elliot.

Lord Cathcart had been my first Commanding Officer when I joined the Scots Guards and he went on to become the General Officer commanding Berlin. It was a great pleasure to work for him when he was Lord Prior and Celia and I were fortunate in having such good friends.

Lady Cathcart led an active life fulfilled by her deep faith and the love of her children Anthony and Tara, grandchildren and great grandchildren.
All of us at St John will miss a very special lady.

Denise Magauran, former Medical Director, remembers her good friend Patricia Tallon

I first met Patricia some years ago and thought she was a lovely person. We got talking and immediately became friends.

In my mind I thought she would be just the person to join our Ladies' Guild. She came to one or two of our meetings, became interested and was appointed to the Guild.

She was extremely good as a committee member. She had many friends, especially in London and she would persuade them to come to our events. She had constructive ideas for events and showed great organisational skills in helping with the Gift of Sight Fair and the Champagne Preview Evening.

I was still working in the Hospital when she joined the Guild and she came out to the Jerusalem Hospital several times. She came to clinics, saw the theatre and came on outreach. She enjoyed everything and was very impressed by the Hospital. Patricia also visited the St John Gaza Clinic and wanted to go back for the opening of the new hospital in Gaza later this year. She was very friendly with everyone there.

Patricia was Chair of the Guild for two years and organised a very successful tour to the Hospital, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem with other members of the Guild and friends.

She was recognised for her good work in aid of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group by her appointment as a Serving Sister, and she was soon to be appointed to Serving Officer.

Patricia was attractive and stylish with a keen sense of humour. Patricia died of cancer very recently. She and her partner Gerry enjoyed their life together and were planning on marrying in June.

She will be a great loss to the Hospital, all her friends on the Guild and all who were lucky enough to know her.



Carolyn Goltra remembers her aunt, Gail Goltra

Gail Wright Goltra was a woman who was infused with a love of helping others and an interest and understanding of the various cultures in our world. At the tender age of three in 1945, her family moved to Oberursel near Frankfurt, Germany where her father, Frank C. Wright, a well-known artist, worked with General Clay in the Reconstruction. Their house was across the street from a displaced persons (DP) camp and the memories of those with such misfortune stayed with Gail for life.

Her keen inquisitive nature led her to fuse her interest in art, grown from watching her father, with her young knowledge of the greater world by becoming an art historian at Brown University. Upon graduating in 1964, she voraciously sought out culture by going on to study with Julius Held in Vienna, then archeology in Athens, and finally Japanese art and architecture in Kyoto.

Her interest also took on an anthropological path when she lived in a monastery on the Ise Peninsula, Japan. While back in New York, Gail met and married Peter Goltra in 1982. began her impressive efforts to support their cause. In her life as a member, she made a total of nine visits to the hospital in Jerusalem, as well as two to the St John Clinic in Gaza.

Gail Goltra in Gaza with Nursing Director Ahmad Ma'ali (I) and Medical Engineer Fathi Qaisi (r)

As they left St Patrick's Cathedral they were cheered by hundreds of thousands of peace marchers walking up Fifth Avenue who were part of the one million participants of the 1982 March and Rally for Peace. A few years later Gail was introduced to the Order of St John by Mary Carter Jones, DStJ. The work of its Eye Hospital in East Jerusalem was something that Gail quickly took to, and

While in Gaza, Gail and her husband recognised the need of the Palestinian people. Together they replaced the phacoemulsifier, and raised the funds to replace a lens of the operating microscope in the Gaza Clinic. Without this work, all procedures would have come to a halt in the operating room. Gail loved to roll up her sleeves and dig right into work needing to be done. In 2005, the

Jerusalem Hospital put on a Charity Ball, and Gail put her Flower Committee experience to work making the table arrangements. Her efforts to contribute her time and talent were mirrored by her generosity, as she joined the then Hospital CEO, Steve James, on the podium later that evening as he auctioned off the Grand Prize she had donated. In recognition of her tremendous efforts, support and commitment, Gail was made a Dame of Grace of the Order by Her Majesty the Queen in 2001 and became a Dame of Justice in 2010.

She passed away peacefully on April 17, ending a 22-year battle with cancer. She was 73. A graveside service was held on May 23 at the New Westside Cemetery in Edgartown, Massachusetts. Her husband. Peter. her two stepsons Tad and Alexis and their children Phoebe, Wells, Charlotte and Josie, as well as her sister, Gill Bentley, continue her legacy as a humanitarian who did so much in the service of others.



Surgical Microscope Appeal

At SJEHG we pride ourselves on maintaining the highest level of care for our patients.

An important way of achieving this is to ensure that we obtain the right cutting edge surgical technology for the sight saving operations we carry out. We currently have a need for a surgical microscope for our new hospital in Hebron. The model that we are looking to purchase is the Lumera 700 surgical microscope from ZEISS. This device is the pinnacle of ophthalmic surgical equipment, and will enhance our ability to save sight and change lives.

The cost of this important piece of equipment is £80,000, which includes the additional adaptations. Any donations towards the purchase of this item will be very greatly received. If you would like to make a donation, please fill in the form at the back of this newsletter or contact the office on 020 7553 6969. Thank you.

New!!! St John logo and SJEHG coat of arms cards

Here is your chance to be one of the first to use our new blank cards, one featuring the logo of St John, and the other featuring our new coat of arms. Blank inside for own message, 10 cards per pack - \$4.50

Early Bird Christmas Announcement

Those of you who like to be prepared might like to know that we have two new Christmas card designs this year. Available for order now.











To order online: please visit www.stjohneye hospital.org/merchandise

To order over the phone: call our Christmas Card Hotline on 0207 553 6960 to pay by card over the phone.

To order by post:

send in a cheque made out to 'St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group' Christmas Cards, 4 Charterhouse Mews, London, EC1M 6BB.



Upcoming Events

Gift of Sight Fair 9th & 10th November

St John Tour of the Holy Land May 2016

led by Brigadier John Hemsley OBE, Call 01255 871423 for more information



How You Can Help

Regular Giving

Regular giving by
Direct Debit is a great
way to partner with St
John of Jerusalem Eye
Hospital Group. Regular
giving allows us
to confidently plan for
the future, safe in the
knowledge that funding
is available. It saves you
time while reducing
our administration
costs. Please contact us
or visit our website to set
up a regular donation.

In Memory

Support us in the name of a loved one. In memory gifts can be arranged through funeral directors or through us.

A Legacy Gift

We do understand that this is a personal decision and that your commitment to your loved ones comes first. Whenever a legacy is left to us we enter your name into our Book of Remembrance, which will be sent to Jerusalem when completed. Please contact Diana Safieh (as below) to receive a copy of our new Legacy Information Pack.

Sign up for our E-Newsletter

Contact us or visit our website to receive electronic versions of Jerusalem Scene as well as other news and events throughout the year.
Please state if you would still like to receive a hard copy of Jerusalem Scene, or whether we can remove you from this list in order to reduce our costs.

Join our Sponsored Events Team

If you're interested in doing a sponsored event for us, or if you are interested in running the London Marathon on our behalf, please get in touch. You can also visit our Virgin Money Giving page to set up your own fundraising page, and you can download our new Sponsored Events pack from our website.

Social Media

Like our Facebook page or Follow our Linkedin account.

www.stjohneyehospital.org

For more information about regular giving, events, in memory and legacy giving, please contact

Diana Safieh on 020 7553 6969 or diana.safieh@ stjohneyehospital.org.

Your support is vital to the continuation of our work.

Donortion Form, Summer 2015 Please return to: The Editor, Jerusalem Scene, St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group, 4 Charterhouse Mews, London EC1M 6BB **Regular Giving One-off Donation** I would like to make a regular donation to I would like to support the work of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group per: I would like to support the Surgical Microscope Appeal (in figures)..... £100 £1000 Starting on the 1st of (month) for I will pay by Cheque/Card (delete as applicable) Cheques to be made payable to 'St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group' Name of Account Holder Mastercard Switch/Maestro Name and Address of your Bank Card No. Security Code **Valid From** Issue Number (Switch/Maestro only) Date Please fill out your details and sign here Signed Address Postcode Please tick if you are a UK taxpayer and would like St John Eye Hospital Group to treat all Please tick if you are Please tick if you would like to receive not a UK Tax payer. donations you make from this date forward as Gift Aid donations, until you notify us otherwise.* information about Legacy or In Memory Giving Gift Aid Notes: I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of UK Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes, such as VAT and Council Tax, do not qualify. I understand that the charity will reclaim 25p on every £1 that I give after 6 April, 2008. I understand that the charity will reclaim 28p on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April, 2008. St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group, 4 Charterhouse Mews, London EC1M 6BB Tel +44 (0) 20 7553 6969 info@stjohneyehospital.org Thank You very much for your support

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