

St Mark's Hospital
Foundation

May Newsletter



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Charlie Runs the London Marathon



"St Mark's pushes for better screening and awareness for bowel cancer, which is a crucial service to ensure early treatment, and something I want to raise awareness for in any way possible!"

- Charlie, St Mark's Patient

A massive congratulations and huge thank you to Charlie for completing the London Marathon and fundraising for St Mark's Hospital Foundation

to finish off Bowel Cancer Awareness Month!

In early 2020, at the age of 26, Charlie was diagnosed with bowel cancer after noticing persistent symptoms of stomach pain and a change in appetite. He was quickly scheduled for emergency surgery to remove the tumour and underwent several rounds of chemotherapy and other targeted treatments, all with limited degrees of success.

Eventually, genetic testing at St Mark's revealed that Charlie has Lynch Syndrome which predisposed him to developing bowel cancer and proved to be the key to his recovery. As of August 2022, Charlie has been cancer free.



After the race, he shared his thoughts on running the marathon to support St Mark's.

“ The specialist research carried out by St Marks ultimately held the keys to unlock an effective course of treatment for me. The team are also so helpful, approachable and diligent in their advice and care. I therefore want to do my own little bit to give back and

help them to keep doing what they do, as well as raise awareness for their work.

A key piece of advice I received in the lead up to the Marathon was to remember your 'why'. During the race was the longest amount of time I have had to really think about this and realised that there were two 'why's' pushing me on.

The personal one is that having survived bowel cancer, I am determined to live life to the fullest, which means doing challenging things, and staying in shape so that I can be around as long as possible with my loved ones (and keep up with the energy of my son!). The second 'why' was to give back in my own little way to St Mark's, so that they can keep on doing their incredible work and play their part in creating more stories like my own.”

[Join Charlie and Support Research at St Mark's](#)

Improving Support for Patients with Ulcerative Colitis



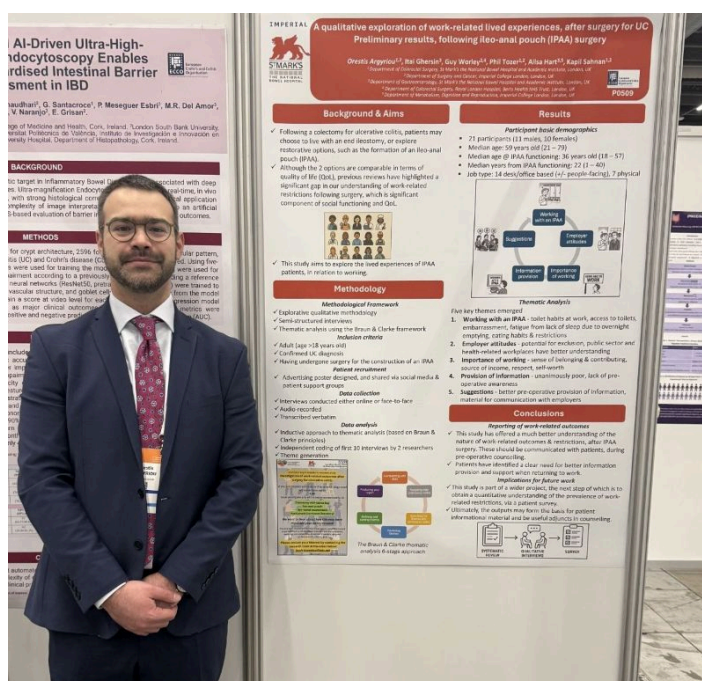
Left to right: Professor Omar Faiz (St Mark's colorectal surgeon), Dr Orestis Argyriou (St Mark's research fellow), Chris Browne (Red Lion Group Trustee), and Mr Kapil Sahnna (St Mark's colorectal surgeon)

St Mark's Hospital Foundation recently received an amazing £3,000 donation from the members of The Red Lion Group, a patient support group for individuals who have had, or are considering J Pouch surgery.

This incredibly generous donation is to help us support the research of Dr Orestis Argyriou, a St Mark's research fellow under the supervision of consultant Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) surgeon, Mr Kapil Sahnna, and consultant IBD gastroenterologist, Professor Ailsa Hart.

Over the last two and a half years of his research fellowship, Orestis has taken on a number of projects with the aim of improving counselling for patients considering surgery for ulcerative colitis, one of the main forms of IBD.

The goal of Orestis's research is not to push ulcerative colitis patients toward a particular treatment choice, but to make sure individuals feel informed, supported, and able to decide what is right for them—based



Orestis presents his research at ECCO, the European Crohn's and Colitis Organisation Conference 2026

produce findings that can be translated directly into everyday clinical practice and that will meaningfully improve the experience of individuals with ulcerative colitis who are considering a pouch.

Of the recent donation, Orestis said, *“The Red Lion Group has supported this work from the very beginning. They have shown a strong interest in the projects, offered valuable feedback, and helped share information about studies recruiting patients. We are extremely grateful for this support. For us, one of the strongest signs that this research matters, is seeing that the people*

on clear information, realistic expectations, and their own personal priorities.

The research team has involved patient support groups from an early stage, seeking their advice and feedback as the projects developed. They are confident that the studies will

directly affected by these issues are interested in it and willing to engage with it.”


[Learn More About Orestis's Research](#)

World IBD Day is on May 19th

Currently, 1 in 120 people in the UK live with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, the two main forms of IBD. Every year, World IBD Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of these chronic conditions, which affect millions of people worldwide.

The IBD Patient Panel is a group of current and former St Mark's patients that help develop the hospital's IBD service by providing suggestions for improvement. This year, they will be hosting a stall at Central Middlesex Hospital to mark World IBD Day and raise funds to support research and education at St Mark's.

Stop by anytime between 10am and 3pm to meet the panel members, learn more about the impact of IBD, and hear about the range of IBD services at St Mark's Hospital.



The poster features a central purple ribbon on a light purple globe background. The text 'Join the IBD Patient Panel for' is arched at the top in red. 'World IBD Day 2026' is written in white with a purple outline in the center. A red box at the bottom contains the event details: 'Tuesday 19th of May 2026: 10am - 3pm Central Middlesex Hospital - ACAD Square'. A purple box at the bottom left says 'Meet the IBD Patient Panel and learn more about Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis, and the support available at St Mark's Hospital'. The St Mark's Hospital Foundation logo, featuring a red lion and the text 'ST MARK'S HOSPITAL FOUNDATION', is in the bottom right.

Join the IBD Patient Panel for

World IBD Day
2026

Tuesday 19th of May 2026: 10am - 3pm
Central Middlesex Hospital - ACAD Square

Meet the IBD Patient Panel and learn more about Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis, and the support available at St Mark's Hospital

ST MARK'S
HOSPITAL
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During the IBD Patient Panel event, we are also incredibly excited to host author, Ian Bain. Ian was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis as a child and was referred to St Mark's for surgery nearly 30 years ago.

On World IBD Day, Ian will be signing copies of his new book, *My life in the bathroom - memoir of an ulcerative colitis warrior*. The book is a letter to his teenage self as he navigates the ups and downs of living with IBD and a J-pouch. Ian hopes to raise awareness and help other people feel less alone as they experience the challenges and emotions that come with having IBD.

We are also incredibly grateful to Ian for donating several copies of his book to St Mark's Hospital Foundation. The proceeds from their sale will go to support crucial research at St Mark's that will make a difference in the lives of individuals with complex, and rare, bowel diseases.

[Give a Donation for World IBD Day](#)

Reem's School Bake Sale for St Mark's



A huge thank you to year six student, Reem, and her mum, Ibi, for organising a bake sale at her school to raise money for St Mark's Hospital Foundation.

The daughter of a St Mark's gastroenterologist, Reem was already familiar with St Mark's Hospital when her best friend was recently diagnosed with IBD. To support her friend, increase awareness of IBD, and raise funds to support bowel disease research, Reem planned a bake sale at her school and gave a presentation on IBD to the student body.

Thanks to her hard work, and generous donations of baked goods from local businesses, she and her friends raised an amazing £395!

Reem told us, *“ I decided to do a bake sale for St Mark’s Hospital Foundation because I found out some of my friends have IBD. It made me feel like I wanted to help and also tell more people about it. I wanted to do this charity sale to raise awareness and also raise money to help support research at St Mark’s, so doctors can keep helping people feel better. ”*

[Get in Touch About Hosting Your Own Fundraiser](#)

Upcoming Challenge Events for Fundraisers



Are you interested in taking on a physical challenge to support St Mark's Hospital Foundation this year?

Whether you like to run, walk, swim, or cycle, we have access to charity places for a number of events through our Run for Charity portal. Every St Mark's fundraiser helps us make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals with complex, and rare, bowel diseases.

Check out some of our upcoming challenge events and register at the links below.

- [Edinburgh Running Festival - Half Marathon](#) (August)
- [Richmond Park Half Marathon](#) (September)
- [Manchester Half Marathon](#) (October)
- [Hampton Court Palace 10k](#) (October)
- [Finsbury Park Half Marathon](#) (November)

Find upcoming events for all ages and ability levels on our [Run for Charity](#) page, or by emailing us at info@stmarkshospitalfoundation.org.uk for more information.

Thank you for supporting research, education and innovation at St Mark's, the UK's national bowel hospital.

[Donate to St Mark's Hospital Foundation](#)



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