



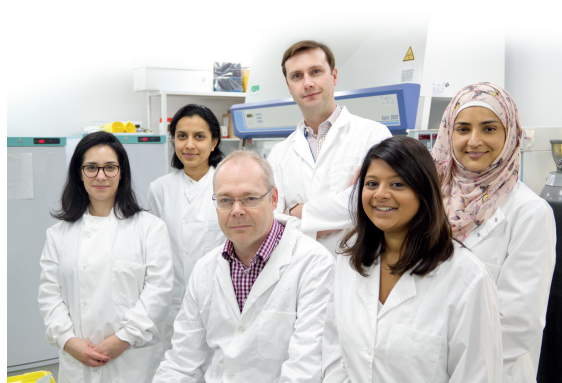
## Today is World IBD Day

Today, Tuesday 19th May is World IBD Day, where the world comes together to raise awareness of the conditions Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis to help improve visibility of these debilitating and often misunderstood illnesses. We recognise that World IBD Day comes this year during a time of a national public health crisis, and although our clinical services were impacted like many across the country, our specialist nurse teams, gastroenterologists and surgeons remain focused on supporting our patients.

At St Mark's we are always striving to help raise awareness of all complex bowel diseases and we are immensely proud of all the vital research that has been supported in this field by our incredible patients and donors.

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## Innovations in IBD Research



On this day we would like assure you that the IBD research initiatives at St Mark's, the UK's National Bowel Hospital are more relevant than ever. We continue to collaborate with our partner organisations at CCUK, Barts Cancer Institute, Imperial, UCL and elsewhere to work on new and innovative research projects to benefit people with complex IBD.

Our existing research has already helped our patients and we have adapted projects as a result of Covid-19. We want to ensure our supporters that we can investigate more specific and relevant clinical pathways based on stratifying cancer risk and diagnostic effectiveness for

each patient in a more challenging clinical environment.

## Tissue Engineering

One existing research project that is being led by St Mark's Dr Simon Gabe and Dr Greco of The Griffin Institute, is focused on tissue engineering, which is truly innovative in its ambitions. As high numbers of IBD patients require surgery to help alleviate their symptoms, if significant lengths of bowel are removed, a patient's ability to absorb nutrition through food becomes compromised and they will become reliant on a process called parenteral nutrition to receive the necessary vitamins and minerals. The aim of this novel research is to generate alternative healthy bowel tissue to replace that lost by disease, offering an alternative to parenteral nutrition. This research provides hope to patients who have lost significant amounts of bowel due to surgery or trauma, and has the potential to radically transform the lives of thousands of patients.

## A Selection of St Mark's IBD Specialisms



### Specialist Stoma Care

Pictured is one of our specialist stoma care nurses, Ms Zarah Perry-Woodford, who will be a familiar face to many of our readers. As a specialist Consultant Nurse Zarah has developed and expanded the ileo-anal pouch service at St Mark's, and continues to provide expert care to her patients. All at St Mark's are immensely proud of our nurses, their tireless devotion and dedication to their patients and their passion for this specialist field is truly commendable.

### Specialist Psychological Services

The psychological medicine unit is led by Dr Yoram Inspector, and promotes a biophysical model of understanding and managing complex bowel conditions. As yesterday marked the start of World Mental Health Week, St Mark's is proud of its promotion of a holistic approach of treating the physical illness, in addition to ensuring that there is access to therapy to support the psychological well being of all patients. During these difficult and unsettling times, it is very important that your mental health is looked after, and to know that you are

not alone. If you need support, reach out to your family, and friends, and stay connected.

**Engage with us on social media using the hashtags #WorldIBDday2020, #IBD, #Crohns #Colitis and #WeAreStMarks.**

**Don't forget to tag us in your posts and stories! It is humbling and an absolute privilege that we have so many incredible patients and supporters who share their personal experiences in order to raise awareness of living with IBD, so we thank you.**



**On behalf of the fundraising team and medical staff, we thank you for your continued support of St Mark's Hospital Foundation.**

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