

## Another seasonal period is upon us, providing a time for reflection and thanks.

When we reflect on the things that make St Mark's unique, we think about how each generation of the hospital's medical professionals has imparted its expertise to the next.

This solidarity can be seen amongst the multi-disciplinary teams working across St Mark's specialist units. Patients are treated by teams of individuals and this holistic approach has enabled St Mark's to improve patients' lives for almost two centuries.

We are delighted to introduce you to some of our specialist teams, and in their words, our patients express the depth of their gratitude.

## The future we wish to see for our patients

Natalie, Andrea, Eloise and Hilary represent what we strive to achieve for all our patients with complex bowel diseases. The most meaningful expression of gratitude we can hope to receive is seeing them live full lives.

Nothing makes us happier than our patients having a chance to find their joy, whether that is through dance, celebrations with friends, walks with four legged-friends or time spent with loved ones.

In the same way that our specialist teams are stronger together, with your support, we will realise the future we wish to see for our patients.

Wishing you and your loved ones a healthy and happy festive season.

Thank you sincerely,

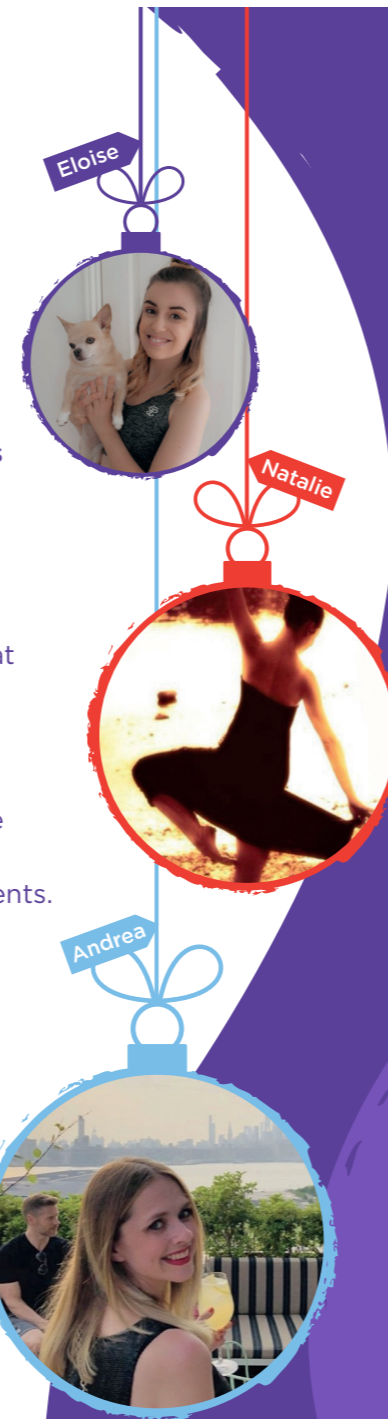
Jason Bacon  
CEO, St Mark's Hospital Foundation



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## St Mark's CONNECTED BY CARE

St Mark's Hospital, where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts



A future free from the fear of bowel disease



During the Covid-19 pandemic, St Mark's specialist teams have been delivering clinical services from two hospital sites. We are proud that, despite this challenge, they have shown even greater solidarity. By maintaining connectedness, they continue to put our patients first.

PROFESSOR OMAR FAIZ & MISS CAROLYNNE VAIZEY  
CONSULTANT SURGEONS & JOINT DIVISIONAL CLINICAL DIRECTORS,  
ST MARK'S HOSPITAL

Left: Dr Claire Taylor MBE: Macmillan Nurse Consultant in Colorectal Cancer, St Mark's and Visiting Lecturer, King's College, London  
 Right: Natalie recovering from surgery



## Complex Cancer

This team sits within the St Mark's Complex Cancer Centre, one of the largest such centres in the world; its research is improving outcomes for bowel cancer patients. Lived experience is valued, so patients like Natalie are important allies of our research and our commitment to deliver person-centred care.

Natalie underwent major surgery for advanced, recurrent cancer at St Mark's during the pandemic.



**St Mark's was my last hope for living, they take on cases when nobody else can. Without my specialist cancer nurses I would have felt totally alone, they were a lifeline for me.**

**NATALIE**

## Stoma & Pouch Care

Stoma surgery may be necessary to control or manage active Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), and also in cancer patients.

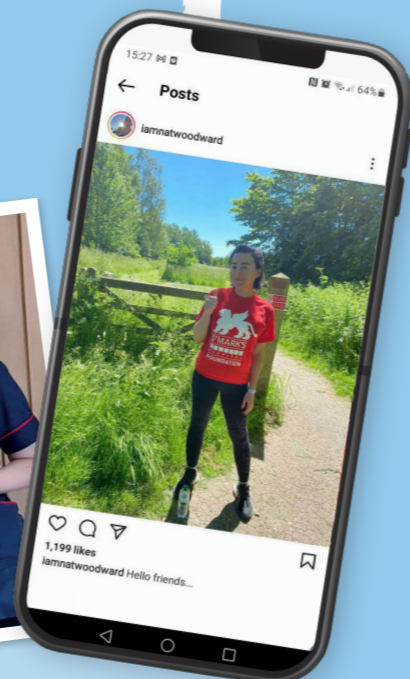
During the pandemic, stoma and pouch nurse specialists from this team and the team's Consultant Nurse have co-authored a book to empower patients and guide them to independently care for their stoma.

Advanced, recurrent cancer survivor, Natalie, now has a permanent stoma. She describes the book as brilliant and a must-have for anyone with a stoma. Recalling an appointment with this specialist team she observes, **"I am not sure nurses truly know how life changing they are to patients. Feeling seen and like someone cares has such a huge impact on our mental health."**



Bottom Left: The co-authors of, 'Stoma Care - A Guide for Patients'

Right: Natalie with her copy of the book and recovering well 12 months post cancer surgery



## Inflammatory Bowel Disease Nursing

This team is the cornerstone of the IBD service at the hospital.

IBD patients can develop intestinal failure; they can also have an increased risk of bowel cancer. Andrea developed ulcerative colitis-associated bowel cancer and is now in remission.

She says, **"My team is my safety blanket, always there to get me through a flare up, a hospital stay and answer my questions. I'm so grateful."**



Below: Some of the St Mark's IBD Nursing team  
 Left: Eloise receiving treatment at St Mark's  
 Bottom Left: Andrea after treatment



## Intestinal Rehabilitation

The Lennard-Jones Intestinal Rehabilitation Unit (IRU) at St Mark's is a specialist centre dedicated to the assessment and management of patients with intestinal failure. During the pandemic, the opportunity to deliver its specialist clinical services from another hospital within the same NHS Trust as St Mark's has protected its ability to provide ongoing care to individuals like Eloise.

Eloise explains, **"I've had a long journey with my health, including misdiagnoses. Being referred to St Mark's was the start of my journey back to good health. The IRU has given me back my life."**



Left: Dr Andrew Latchford: Consultant Gastroenterologist and Sub-Director Polyposis Registry, St Mark's  
 Right: Hilary (second left) and her husband (far right) with three generations of their family

## Inherited Cancer

The Polyposis Registry sits within this team and the majority of its patients have a family history of bowel cancer.

The specialist team behind the Polyposis Registry has been looking after Hilary for more than three decades; her mother and brother died of bowel cancer within weeks of each other. Screening saved Hilary's life.

The multi-disciplinary team working between the Polyposis Registry and St Mark's Endoscopy Department is extremely important; endoscopic screening is a vital tool for cancer prevention in families like Hilary's. Hilary's affected family members continue to be monitored.



**Thanks to St Mark's, I have enjoyed thirty bonus years of happy marriage and experienced the joy of seeing different generations of my family grow up in good health.**

**HILARY**