



Report on St John Medical Outreach Mission, Jerusalem 2020

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As a young eye surgeon currently completing my fellowship at Moorfields Eye Hospital, I had the great honor of being invited to visit and work at the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem in January 2020. I have long been inspired by reports about the incredible work being done by this institution, but experiencing it first-hand has been altogether awe-inspiring and humbling.

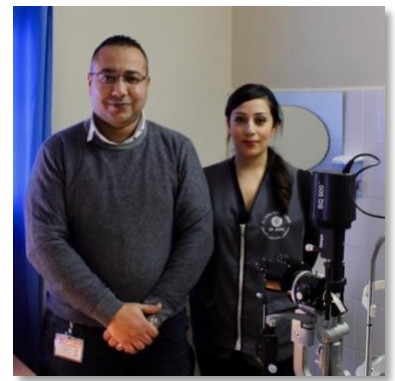
St John Eye Hospital provides critical medical outreach to Jerusalem and to the most vulnerable regions of the West Bank and Gaza. During my visit, I had the opportunity to join mobile outreach teams as well as assess and treat patients in both clinic and OR facilities. I was also part of the organizing committee and lecturing faculty for the 2nd SOA-Middle East Ophthalmology Congress that brought together expert surgeons from across Europe and the Middle East to discuss complex eye diseases and management strategies.



Left: Medical outreach team in Hebliah, a remote village on the West Bank. Team of 2 surgeons, 1 nurse practitioner, and 5 supporting staff treated 50+ patients.

Right: Mr. Verity and Dr. Khan at the 2nd SOA- Middle East Ophthalmology Congress.

The medical cases I witnessed during this mission were truly heart-wrenching. A 5-year-old girl from Gaza was one of the first patients I encountered. She developed a traumatic cataract, causing almost complete vision loss in her right eye. Unable to access surgical care for over a year, she was finally examined and treated at St John Eye Hospital during my visit. We performed a lensectomy and she has now recovered 80% of her visual function.



The 2nd SOA-Middle East Ophthalmology Congress was a great success. Expert surgeons from Israel, Palestine, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany (Dr. Christoph Hintschich and Dr. Daniel Briscoe, among others) came together to lecture on topics ranging from orbital trauma to retinal disease. Local residents and fellows of St John were also present, and stimulating discussions took place on a variety of complex cases from around the world.

There is a great sense of humanitarianism amongst the St John Hospital group, and true eagerness to help people regardless of their religious affiliations or ethnicities. In a country so stricken with conflict, St John Eye Hospital truly is a beacon of hope. I look forward to returning to Jerusalem and continuing to serve the local communities and the hospital.

The SOA was proud to sponsor Dr Khan's visit to St John Eye Hospital