

To **PROMOTE, EDUCATE, and DISSEMINATE**

St. John Of Jerusalem
Eye Hospital Group



London
SUPPORT

Foreword

On behalf of Great Priory, I am pleased to wish the London Support SJEHG well in their profile raising and fundraising endeavours.

The association between our Knights Templars and the Eye Hospital Group spans over one hundred years. Our KT members have given generously to this wonderful organisation, which has enabled crucial work to be undertaken in often the most challenging of situations. That charitable giving has provided essential equipment, facilities and training over many generations.



Rt. Em. Kt. Jon Whitaker KCT, OStJ, JP, DL
President, Grand Master's Knight Templar Council

Great Priory thank London Support for continuing to promote, and provide education, about this extraordinary cause and commend this publication to you.

Amongst the many privileges and delights of being the Provincial Prior for London is how London Support leads the way in raising awareness of the vital work of the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group. Although much younger than Great Priory, since its existence the Province of London has been committed to supporting the Order's sole charity and it pleases me enormously that, through this broad commitment and through personal connections, the Province is highly regarded by the SJEHG Trustees and Senior Leadership Team as a trusted and effective partner.

Above all, the Province focusses on ensuring that as many people as possible are aware of SJEHG's transformative work in saving sight and transforming lives. It is scarcely comprehensible that, in today's world, 80% of blindness amongst children and adults that SJEHG serves is preventable. Through London Support, we commit to raising awareness of the work of SJEHG and actively enabling their aim of eradicating preventable blindness.



Rt. Em. Kt. David Thompson
Provincial Prior for London

1. Introduction

By virtue of its relationship with the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group (SJEHG) and because of demands made upon it from both London and other Provinces, the role of London Support has developed and adapted over recent years. However, the core aim to **ensure the provision of correct, current and consistent information relating to SJEHG**, remains at the very centre of everything it does. It has no direct fundraising role.

This document provides an overview of how this support works in practice.

Established to increase the awareness of the work of SJEHG to London Knights, London Support has been able to further the relationships it has developed over many years with SJEHG so that it is able to provide up to date information to help support initiatives within London from Preceptories and individuals as well as from Great Priory and other Provinces.

The Province of London has been very fortunate in recent years to have several individuals who are involved directly with SJEHG.

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

- E. Kt. Rev'd Niall Johnston (who is also the Deputy Great Almoner) currently visits SJEHG at least quarterly;
- E.Kt. Vernon King (the Provincial Vice-Chancellor) visits twice a year which serves to further develop the relationship at strategic, operational and personal levels.
- In addition, E. Kt. Jamie Ingham Clark *KStJ*, is a Trustee and Rt. E. Kt. David Thompson (the Provincial Prior) is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee of the Board of Trustees.

2. How we help

The strategy to provide support is comprised of two simple components:

1. **Deepening the Province's direct relationship with SJEHG**, both in the Holy Land and through the Trustees and London-based staff; and
2. **Maintaining a Provincial facility to support** well-informed champions for SJEHG throughout the Province.

Whilst the above is aimed primarily at the Province of London and its Knights, lessons that have been learned by the Provincial Prelate and Vice-Chancellor have proved to be helpful to other Provinces.

1. Deepening the SJEHG relationship

The very close relationship that exists between the London Provincial team and SJEHG is maintained and developed through regular communication and, when appropriate, visits to the various SJEHG sites as well as their London office at Charterhouse.

This relationship allows London Support to maintain a rapport with staff in many different departments including the clinical, medical and surgical teams, catering, facilities, communications, finance, HR, security,

operating theatres and the nurses who run the Clinics as well as the Outreach and School Screening teams. In addition, London Support has been granted privileged access to be present in operating theatres during surgical procedures, to accompany the Mobile Outreach and School Screening teams into the West Bank and has been encouraged by SJEHG to visit all of its centres across the Holy Land including an invitation to participate in the opening of the new hospital in Nablus.

The Province works closely with the SJEHG team in London and will continue to do so. Weekly conversations between London Support and the London SJEHG team and frequent conversations with the Senior Leadership Team in Jerusalem keep the communication routes open.

2. Creating a Provincial facility for support

London Support currently provides:

- Booklets regarding its role within Knights Templar and 'An Introduction to the SJEHG and its work' has been circulated to all Knights of the Province and is presented to all newly installed Knights when they receive their Great Priory certificate



- With over 100 documents and videos (most written and published by London Support in conjunction with SJEHG), including the latest updates from Gaza, patient and surgical facts and figures, in depth profiles of centres and individuals, case studies on patients, articles on specific work (e.g. DNA research) presenter profiles, maps, glossaries, strategy documents and annual reports, ideas and transcripts for talks and presentations with accompanying support materials, London Support is able to **PROMOTE**, **EDUCATE** and **DISSEMINATE**.

The repository can be found at:

<https://londonknightstemplar.com/sjehg-london-supporter-network/>

- Background for Knights on SJEHG as the sole charity the Order supports and why;
- Support material for the Provincial Prior and his Officers whenever they attend individual Preceptories on an official visit, e.g. recent updates and having the Provincial Swift placed on the table at festive boards;
- Pilgrimages to the Holy Land that include a visit to the main Eye Hospital campus;
- The facilitation of individual and small group visits to SJEHG sites; and
- Facilitation of expert speakers and the undertaking of talks and presentations themselves.

This approach, was developed in close collaboration with the SJEHG Chair of Trustees and the CEO, and was launched at the London Provincial Priory meeting in 2023.

Support outside London

Since London Support was established, lessons have been learned that have proved to be helpful to other Provinces and London Support has excellent access to speakers who can give presentations of varying lengths and styles regarding the work of SJEHG. Whilst always ensuring that Great Priory is kept informed, London Support can provide introductions and contact information, if requested.

Several Provincial Priors, together with individuals from other Provinces, have asked for guidance in establishing direct relations with SJEHG to give greater impact to the funds that they voluntarily donate. As a facilitator, London Support has been successful in responding to such requests by facilitating introductions and providing both guidance and published material. All this will focus on increasing awareness of the work of SJEHG as well as identifying practical needs at a variety of levels. Other Provinces have requested information on the current needs that SJEHG has, and how donations can be best allocated to current needs.

As a facilitator, London Support has:

- Created a WhatsApp group for Provincial Priors, or their nominees, who have requested participation, together with representatives of the MMH team, that is facilitated to provide previews and updates on the work of SJEHG.
- Sponsored the Provincial Prior of the Province of Hertfordshire, on a visit to Jerusalem, where in conjunction with SJEHG, he identified the sponsorship of a Gaza theatre nurse (right) as an appropriate outcome for their 10-year centenary festival appeal.



This was followed by the SJEHG Trustee for Fundraising speaking at their Festival launch and the Executive Head of the UK Office providing an update speech at the following Provincial Meeting – and now annually.

- Sponsored the Provincial Prior of the Province of Durham, on a visit to Jerusalem where in conjunction with SJEHG, he identified the provision of a phaco-emulsifier as the outcome of their 5-year appeal (below) which is now in place.



- Assisted the Province of Hampshire and Isle of Wight in the translation of a desire to support 'outreach' in the sponsorship of the Kufor Aqab outreach clinic in the West Bank.
- Aligned the urgent need, caused by new health regulations, to provide a replacement food trolley for patients in the main Jerusalem hospital with the Province of Essex who were seeking a practical but tangible support opportunity.
- Aligned the donations provided by the Province of Warwickshire to support the provision of replacement fire doors for the kitchens in the main hospital to comply with new fire regulations.
- Facilitated donations made by several preceptories in London and Sussex which have provided patient welfare benches which have been suitably marked to record their donations.
- Assisted in assigning donations from other Provinces to be allocated towards establishing diabetic retinopathy services in Gaza.
- For the above donations, in addition to acquiring formal thanks from SJEHG, London Support has also provided tailored videos for Provinces with the participation of the SJEHG CEO and/or key staff giving an insight into the value of the support that has been offered so that this can be passed back to the Preceptories and Knights involved. At the same time, London Support coordinates with the SJEHG London team and the MMH Finance Charities Manager to ensure that donations are accurately recorded in the Liber.
- On occasion, although as previously stated it is not a fundraising body, London Support has worked with SJEHG to address emergency issues. A recent example of this was the impending failure of the main hospital's water filtration system and an urgent request from SJEHG for suggestions on possible sources of funding. Utilising the WhatsApp group, the Province of Durham agreed to provide full funding of approximately £5,000 in just a few weeks. This allowed it to be purchased and installed far quicker than expected and a video emphasising the thanks from SJEHG and its importance to the main hospital was made by London Support.

- The Province of London has sponsored the Christmas Gift of Sight Fair in Chelsea, for the benefit of SJEHG.



- In conjunction with the Provincial Prior of Durham, London Support has assisted in providing a talk at the Great Priory Preceptory for Marshals.
- Several Provinces including Essex, Kent, Lincolnshire, Middlesex, Surrey, and Worcestershire, have received (and more have now requested) talks on 'What is happening now' in relation to SJEHG. These are an illustrative talk/presentation, regularly updated from recent visits to SJEHG, and these have been asked to be given to all types of Preceptories both from within and outside of London as well as units of other Orders.
- Several Provincial Priors have asked for assistance in organising pilgrimages to the Holy Land that would include a visit to both Muristan and the main hospital campus. London Support, through the Prelate/Deputy Great Almoner, can offer other Provinces the opportunity to arrange

a small group pilgrimage as part of a larger KT pilgrimage with each Province being able to have its own 'branding'. Such pilgrimages only take place when Government travel advice permits. London Support can always assist with individual and small group visits to SJEHG including logistical arrangements in-country.

- Following the approval of the 'An Introduction to the SJEHG and its work' booklet, the Director of Development and Grants requested that London Support provide a generic version that could be adapted for use with its major donors.
- At the request of the London SJEHG communications team, London Support provide advice on content for both Jerusalem Scene and the KT newsletter.

London Support is keen to support the formal link between Great Priory and the Eye Hospital and hopes to complement this by helping to increase the awareness of the work and success of the Hospital in Jerusalem, by providing **current, consistent** and **correct** information relating to the patients it cares for, its people and the services that the Eye Hospital Group provides across all of its outlets,

3. Conclusion

Normally, the relationship between a charity and an individual is a direct, one-to-one connection. With the United Orders and SJEHG, however, this link is indirect. There is a further difference in the relationship, albeit a subtle one, in that the United Orders are not, and have no intention of being, a fund-raising arm for SJEHG; the decision to gift funds rests with the KT Fund of Benevolence and Grand Master's Council, Provinces, Preceptories and individual Knights.

London Support has successfully worked with SJEHG to provide a more direct link and to increase the awareness of the Knights under its remit. Now, at the presentation of their Great Priory Certificate, the booklet 'An introduction to the SJEHG and its work' previously mentioned is handed over and the awareness and understanding begins. Later communication will bring them in touch with the Central Repository of information:

<https://londonknightstemplar.com/sjehg-london-supporter-network/>

However, the production, maintenance and updating of printed material, along with the provision of more detailed statistics and information for those so interested, requires a team. It also requires the time and input of SJEHG itself. Fielding requests from twenty-

nine separate Preceptories in London could tie up the time of SJEHG which would be more effectively utilised elsewhere.

Establishing the Central Repository and a central point of contact has improved the efficiency of the relationship with SJEHG.

London Support can supply information directly and/or act as a conduit in establishing a more direct link, if required. London Support remains very grateful for the continuing support of the SJEHG Trustees and Senior Leadership Team for this initiative.

E. Kt. Rev'd Niall Johnston Dep.Gt.Alm –
London Provincial Prelate

E. Kt. Vernon King P.Dep.Gt.Swd.B. –
London Provincial Vice-Chancellor

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Afterword



It is a privilege to be asked to contribute this afterword for London Support.

The relationship between St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group and the Knights Templar is an incredibly special one, extending over more

than 100 years, and your support enables us to continue our sight-saving work in one of the world's most complex regions.

The Knights Templar, and especially the London Support team, play a vital role not only in championing our values of delivering expert eye-care to all patients regardless of religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay, but also in raising funds to achieve our mission of preventing curable blindness in the Holy Land.

Your support truly does change lives. Palestinians are 10 times more likely to go blind than those in the West, with poor access to eye care, genetics, poverty, and other socioeconomic factors all contributing to an increased risk of preventable blindness.

Thanks to the steadfast support of the Knights Templar, we're able to give patients not just their sight back, but a future they can truly look forward to.

Thank you for all that you do.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ahmad Ma'ali".

Dr Ahmad Ma'ali KStJ PhD MPH BSN PGCE ENB

CEO St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group

