

# 2021 FACT SHEET

St John of Jerusalem  
Eye Hospital Group



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

We are one of the foundations of the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem and are a British, Royal Charity founded in 1882 and committed to Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1888. Our Muristan Clinic operates in the very area where the Order of St John began in 1100 AD.

Today we operate high quality services across three major hospitals, two clinics as well as mobile outreach services across the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In 2021 we saw over **134,000** patients across our services and performed over **6,500** major operations.

The cost to run our services each year amounts to around **£10.9 million** annually of which we need 60% from charitable income. **Your support enables our vital services to continue.**



## UNIQUE CHALLENGES

The occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) have rates of blindness which are **ten times** higher than the UK.

### Access:

Accessing medical care is complicated by movement restrictions, including the Separation Wall and permit system, as well as a lack of investment in specialist screening services.

**59%** of patients and their companions in Gaza are delayed or denied access to treatment outside of their area (**25%** for West Bank)

### Poverty:

The oPt's physical and economic isolation and the frequent outbreaks of conflict have led to high levels of poverty and unemployment, meaning that many patients cannot afford to seek medical care.

- **29%** poverty rate across the oPt
- **43%** of Gazans unemployed with youth unemployment at **65%**

### Lifestyle and Genetics:

The circumstance of political isolation, the desire to preserve cultural traditions and to retain property within the family has led to a rise in intra-familial marriage. This leads to high levels of genetic eye disease. Palestinians are also genetically more likely to suffer from diabetes, as well as suffering due to lifestyle factors (impacted further by a lack of access to health care and education).

- **50%** of marriages in the oPt are intra-familial.
- **24%** of blindness in the oPt caused by diabetic retinopathy (up from just **8.3%** a decade earlier).





## Patient Centered Services

**Accessibility:** St John Eye Hospital has been working to increase accessibility to eye care in the oPt. This has grown to include three hospitals in Jerusalem, Gaza and Hebron; three clinics in Anabta, Kufr Aqab and the Old City (Muristan); and a Mobile Outreach Programme in the West Bank and Gaza.

**Quality Eye Care:** We are committed to providing quality tertiary, secondary and primary eye care. Our Jerusalem Hospital is the first in the oPt to provide care for all ophthalmic subspecialties (excluding oncology) and the first to receive Joint Commission International accreditation, the gold-standard for healthcare worldwide. Our four satellite centres benefit from regular outpatient clinics ran by our Jerusalem specialists.

We are also focusing on developing our ability to provide subspecialty treatment from within Gaza through training and increased resources.

## Excellence, Education, & Innovation

**Education:** For over 140 years SJEHG has led on eye health for the oPt, and as part of the wider international ophthalmic community. We offer up to ten places each year at our prestigious Sir Stephen Miller School of Nursing. This is complemented by a training programme for ophthalmic assistants in Gaza, as well as training general community health workers to identify and refer eye conditions to SJEHG centres.

Our ability to offer most subspecialties of eye care (excluding oncology) is achieved through our Medical Residency Programme and Joint Teaching Programme.

**Research:** We work to deliver a service which reflects current population needs and do this by ensuring that our specialists collaborate on developing ophthalmic best practice through research.

## 2021 in figures

**134,000** patients reached

**6,500** major surgeries performed

**13%** increase in major surgeries across the group

**260** staff members employed

**10** quality research papers published

**3** doctors began subspecialist training

**130** families screened for inherited retinal degenerations

