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EMERGENCY APPEAL FOR ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM EYE HOSPITAL GROUP

In October the US Administration cut $25m of funding to six East Jerusalem hospitals, of which St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group (SJEHG) is one. This development was unexpected because these hospitals had specifically been exempted from a previous round of funding cuts in March in recognition of their humanitarian work and reputation in the region. Unfortunately, this exemption has now been revoked.

The Administration's decision results in an immediate loss of around £500,000 this year, and the need to find alternative sources of comparable levels of funding in future years.

Where are the funds lost from?

- Core Costs

In recent years, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided generous assistance towards core costs of SJEHG, including patient programmes and the cost of vital equipment. As a result of the recent decision, $500,000 which had been committed for an urgent patient programme in Gaza has now been withdrawn, resulting in a further loss of connected funds from other sources. A further $1.8m which had received internal approval will now not proceed.

- Patient Income

The US gives a substantial proportion of funding to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and United Nations Relief & Works Agency (UNRWA), which has now been withdrawn. Both the PA and UNRWA are seeking alternative sources of funding to reduce the impact, but in the current circumstances, even these payments may be at risk.

What does this mean for our services?

To put it into perspective £500,000 is roughly the annual cost of:

- Our West Bank and Gaza Mobile Outreach units, which see 27,400 vulnerable patients a year; or

- Over 700 life-changing cataract surgeries; or

- Approximately the annual running cost of each of our Hebron and Anabta centres.

This is, therefore, a critical moment in our 136-year history , and we are appealing to the public to help us through. The Hospital has seen troubles before but the help of our supporters has enabled us to thrive as a bastion of hope, empowerment and life-changing services in the region.

SJEHG 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.

If you would like more information on this appeal, please contact David Dahdal on +972 54 940 0729 or david@sjeh.org. Donations and further information can be found here: https://www.stjohneyehospital.org/emergency-appeal-2018