

george's news

Issue 16, April 2008

Newsletter for St George's, University of London



Meet the Principal

Professor Peter
Kopelman (pages 2-3)

Your George's...

WELCOME to the April edition of George's News – and St George's new Principal, Professor Peter Kopelman, who joins us from the University of East Anglia, where he was Dean of the Health Faculty. Professor Kopelman has ties to St George's stretching back to his time as a medical student here and a number of stints as a junior doctor at the hospital – not to mention the fact that he's the proud father of two children born there. Here, he talks happy memories, management styles and the truth about those 'merger rumours'...



Communications Manager
Tamsin Starr

Contents

04 St George's speaks

A first look at the report into where St George's should be in 10 years' time, drawn up by staff and students

05 Have your say

As the voice of non-academic staff, on the "board" of St George's, Jill Edwards tells us how to get more involved in shaping the institution's future

06 Nepal or nothing

Final year medical student Miriam Dias on her life-changing - and threatening - experience helping to set up an antenatal clinic in rural Nepal

08 Sharp shooter

Yusuf Ozkizil blames his lack of Turkish for his "second career" as a guerrilla photographer

09 Peak fitness

Dr Chris Owen reveals what happens when your oxygen mask freezes at the Summit of Everest – with no rescue in sight

10 Hitting the headlines

Our round-up of events, grants, new staff and training

12 The main event

RAG beats last year's fundraising total – and the Fashion Show cuts a dash for cash

Return of the native

Q So, it seems like you can't keep away from St George's! What is it about the place that draws you back?

A: It is very much a personal and emotional tie. I was born at St George's, my parents trained at Hyde Park Corner, I met my wife at St George's and our two daughters were born here in Tooting. Moreover, St George's has kept its very friendly and supportive atmosphere that is to my mind unique in London and elsewhere. The hospital is also distinctive in serving a fascinatingly diverse population and providing wonderful opportunities and experiences for teaching and research.

Q Do you have happy memories of being a medical student here?

A: Yes – many – a mix of social and sporting events, plus the richness of the clinical experience and clinical teaching. George's was truly a happy place to train in medicine.

Q And anything you'd rather forget?!

A: The first two years of the MBBS programme was at King's in the Strand. I found King's a dreadfully cold and impersonal place and I could not wait to move on to Tooting and Hyde Park Corner for the clinical course.

Q Was it always your ambition to be Principal of St George's?

A: No. When I left St George's to become a lecturer at the London Hospital Medical College I always hoped that I might have an



Professor Peter Kopelman on becoming the Dean of the Health Faculty at UEA

Name: Professor Peter Kopelman

Address: South Woodford, London.

Nationality: British

Status: Married with three children - two daughters and one son

Education at St George's:

1969 – 1974 St George's, University of London - MBBS

Employment History at St George's:

April 2008 Principal, St George's, University of London
Oct 1979 – Aug 1980 Research Registrar Department of Medicine
Feb 1978 – Oct 1979 Honorary Registrar in General Medicine
Jan – Jul 1977 Senior House Officer in Cardiology
Jan – Dec 1976 Senior House Officer in Infectious Diseases
Dec 1974 – Jan 1975 Pre-Registration House Physician

Other notable jobs:

2006 – 2008 University of East Anglia, Norwich, England
Dean, Faculty of Health

1996 – 2006 Barts & The London School of Medicine & Dentistry, Queen Mary, University of London
Reader in Medicine
Dean of Education
Deputy Warden
Vice Principal (NHS Liaison)
Vice Principal (Strategic Alliances)

The London Hospital Medical College, London
Senior Lecture in Medicine

Milestones:

1976 Membership of the Royal College of Physicians
1992 Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians
1982 Doctor of Medicine (MD)
2005 Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health

Hobbies: Reading – Political Biographies; Music – "To listen to not to play – my kids say I'm tone deaf!"; Art – "Though it's been a long time since I have done any drawing"; Walking – Rambles along the Norfolk Coast are a favourite.



opportunity to return. I have been very fortunate in having a wide experience as a consultant/senior lecturer in medicine and it was a growing interest in teaching and education that led later in my career to an ambition to become a medical school dean. It is a real privilege and honour to return to St George's as Principal – something that gives me enormous pleasure.

Q There have been many different approaches to the top job over the years – what kind of Principal will you be?

A: An important question. I am very much a "team" player. I enjoy leading the team but I am anxious that everyone feels engaged and part of the "team". The "team" at St George's includes everyone – students, porters, cleaners, administrative staff, technicians, and academic staff. I wish to have an inclusive style of management and I recognise the importance of making myself easily accessible.

Q What do you see as your top priorities in the job?

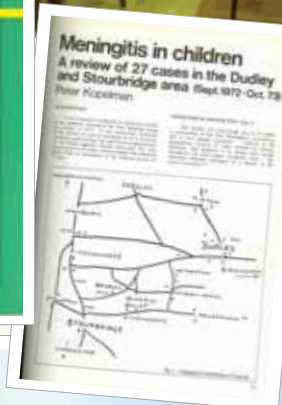
A: My immediate priority is to have

an agreed strategy to take St George's forward during the next 10 years. The strategy must grow the distinctiveness of our teaching, research and enterprise, strengthen and harmonise our relationships with our NHS partners, most particularly St George's Hospital Trust, and create a sustainable future.

Q You recently said you wanted to operate an 'open-door' policy for students. What does this mean, and does it apply to staff as well?

A: I would like to be considered very much part of the St George's community – I have a daughter who is a medical student and I appreciate feelings about remoteness of senior members of academic staff. So, yes I wish to be approachable and contactable. For students of course they have a very strong contact to me through Paolo and his team in the SU office and it is one of my priorities to strengthen this link.

Q The hot topic of the moment is whether St



Clockwise from left: the University of East Anglia's Health Faculty the Principal helps out at St George's recent Spring School; George's Hospital canteen in the 1970s; one of Prof Kopelman's first published articles – in George's Hospital Gazette, 1973; walks in Norfolk are a favourite



Photography: with thanks to Marina Logan-Bruce, Dr Ian Kemp and UEA

George's will form an alliance with another institution. Where do you stand on this?

A: The university world is an increasingly competitive one, and very much so in London where there are powerful and influential competitors. I believe that it is important for St George's to continue to explore possible partnerships which includes strengthening present alliances with other universities. However, it is absolutely crucial that such explorations are driven by us and for St George's to define the relationship and the meaning of any partnership. We must determine our future and not have it determined by others.

Q Is it basically a two-horse race (Surrey and Kingston universities) or would we consider other potential partners?

A: There are a number of potential partners – we should also not overlook the benefits that have followed SWan. I very much appreciate the emotional aspect of any perceived partnership and I am keen to maintain an open mind

until we have explored in considerable depth what the real opportunities are for St George's. As a first step, I have established a Principal's Advisory Group of senior academics and administrators to develop and test a framework against each potential partnership. We will share the findings with everyone in the university and consult on views.

Q How will you ensure you listen to everyone's views on this?

A: This very much follows on from the previous question. I wish to meet as many people as possible within the university and hear their views. I will continue the Principal's Blog once I have mastered the technology and ensure that we have regular Open Fora. In addition, I am keen to hold smaller focus groups with representative staff and students – these will include the university's divisions, the joint faculty, and administrative staff from all departments. I am very open to

"I am keen to maintain an open mind until we have explored options in considerable depth"

any other suggestions about improving communication.

Q Your published research focuses on obesity-related health problems. How did you get interested in this area?

A: This is a story that spans 30 years. The interest was sparked by the then professor of medicine at St George's who invited me, in the last century, to apply for a research fellowship with him looking at the impact on endocrine function following substantial weight loss in obesity. This investigation was extremely productive and I have maintained my research interest ever since. When I started, other research fellows considered that I was "crazy" to study obesity – I have given two inaugural lectures in recent years which I entitled "Still

crazy after all these years". In truth, I never anticipated that obesity would become such a major health issue.

Q Will you still pursue your research interests and clinical work?

A: I am keen to do so – I shall be doing a weekly diabetic clinic in the Trust shortly. I remain very much a clinician at heart and truly enjoy seeing patients – it was only two years ago that I came off the on-call medical emergencies duty rota at Barts and The London due to my many other non-clinical commitments.

Q In a nutshell, what is your philosophy on life?

A: Always look to the future but respect the past, pursue opportunities whenever they appear but remember to test the benefits against potential risks – and help and encourage others to develop their skills and career ambitions.

Shaping our future

THE staff and students of St George's have spent weeks locked in debate – and George's News can now reveal their vision of our future.

A working group of 15 volunteers – a range of academic and administrative staff, as well as SU President Paolo Perella – have produced a report outlining St George's mission and aims, in the wake of bids for the institution to form an alliance with one of three 'suitor' universities.

The report, presented to the School Council on 18 March, outlined the main aims for the institution to achieve over the next decade (see box, below).

The report recommended a "considered approach" in examining options and further analysis of St George's current and future positions. In a list of 'Next Steps', it called for a thorough financial and strategic assessment of our current and potential partners; market research into the St George's brand; an examination of how other institutions have coped with similar challenges to SGUL's and an assessment of the University of London federation and our position within it.

SGUL Principal Professor Peter Kopelman said of the report: "It's important that a group from within



A working group of 15 volunteers drawn from across the staff and student body gave their report on our future mission and aims

St George's has engaged in the complex issues surrounding what kind of institution we want to be in 10 years' time, and given clear recommendations on how best to achieve this.

"I thoroughly endorse both a considered approach and an in-depth look at the options on offer. However, it is vital that a decision is made before the end of this calendar year, as the longer uncertainty remains, the more we

risk not attracting and retaining the most talented students and staff."

The Principal pledged to continue canvassing views across the institution, with focus groups, a series of Open Fora, and a new Principal's blog all planned to start this Spring.

A new Principal's Advisory Group, comprising Vice Principals, Deans and members of the Executive, will meet weekly to

discuss the business of the university, reporting to the SPARC committee.

The next Principal's "Have Your Say" Open Forum is on Tuesday 27 May at 12.30pm in Lecture Theatre G. Any staff or student can submit a question to be put to the Principal by emailing their query to tstarr@sgul.ac.uk with "Have Your Say" in the subject line. Questions will also be taken from the floor at the end of the meeting. ■

Our future aims

- To strengthen our research activity through the continued development of key areas of expertise, creating research environments with the critical mass to attract the best young basic and applied scientists and to ensure progress and sustainability.
- To achieve excellence in high-quality translational research underpinned and sustained by innovative basic research.
- To promote translational research in those areas where we have complementary expertise in basic science and strong speciality expertise in the local NHS Trusts and in

those areas where research is driven by the needs of local communities or of specialist referrals.

- To develop new and innovative postgraduate research courses (such as MRes and new-route PhDs) in collaboration with local academic partners.
- To diversify our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, to sustain growth and to address potential challenges posed by NHS workforce planning and HEFCE directives.
- To increase our capacity to meet the learning requirements of additional student numbers.

- To pursue the Department of Health agenda for workforce redesign through the strategic development of foundation, undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses for new and emerging healthcare professions and disciplines.

- To develop postgraduate education, informed by market research, and to capitalise on this income stream.

- To invest in a targeted and co-ordinated approach to the recruitment of international students.

- To generate income /investment for significant redevelopment of the estate.

- To realise the full potential of established partnerships, and to develop further partnerships.

- To build upon the SWan Alliance and relationships with our NHS partners to become the academic and clinical hub for healthcare sciences in South West London and beyond.

- To develop our partnerships and realise the commercial benefits of a wider range of our intellectual property. To reinvest income from current commercial activities in order to increase our capacity to generate new income streams.

Now have your voice heard...

WHEN it comes to voicing opinions on the future of St George's, administrator Jill Edwards has more experience than most. For a start, she started her first day here over three decades ago, and has seen more than her fair share of change.

Starting out as a secretary back in 1979, the Clinical Development Sciences administrator admits:

"Whether you feel you are at the top or bottom of the pile, your voice needs to be heard"

"We began as old-fashioned secretaries and then we evolved. When I first started working I had a panic attack because I had to do a typing test on an electric typewriter – I kept looking for the return arm!"

She is putting that wealth of experience to good use, as a clerical and secretarial representative on the Staff Forum alongside Michelle Parginou and as a recently appointed member of the School Council, responsible for representing non-academic staff on issues such as the ongoing review to decide the institution's future.

The staff forum is a consultative body made up of 21 members of St George's, University of London staff from a wide area of disciplines. The forum provides a mode for discussion of matters affecting the working lives of all staff such as health and safety matters, updates from the School Council, draft policies and procedures, and updates from the Human Resources Department.



Staff Forum rep and School Council member Jill Edwards is waiting to hear your opinion on issues affecting St George's

Talking of her new role, she stresses that she wants to do her best in providing an effective voice for staff, and alerting the Council to any concerns. She says: "I'm not a high powered person. I don't have a degree, I didn't go onto higher education, so hopefully that makes me approachable for people. Whether you feel you are at the top or bottom of the pile your voice needs to be heard. It is not constructive to just whinge, if you don't like something you should say why and suggest how it might be changed."

Talking on George's future she says: "Our students and staff are the best asset we have". Although the hot topic staff approach her with is the possibility of St George's forming an alliance with another institution, she says closer working partnerships are an issue not only for St George's, but for medical schools around the country facing a future funding squeeze. "I don't know where we will be in five years' time, but hopefully wherever we will be, will be a result of consensus, decisions and evidence from both inside and outside," she says. ■

Who you gonna call

If you have concerns about any aspect of your working life at St George's or topics that you would like raised at the Staff Forum, please speak to your Staff Group Representative.

A list of these can be found on the Staff Forum homepage at <https://portal.sgul.ac.uk/org/organisation/cs/hr/staff-forum>

Feature

It was Nepal o

Medical student Miriam Dias helped set up an ar
Nepalese village for her elective. She recall



Fact box

- **Geography:** bordering India and Tibet, Nepal is perched on the southern slope of the Himalayas.
- **Politics:** 11 years of civil war have left Nepal the poorest country in Asia, and civil strife has caused severe hardship in many rural areas
- **Health:** only 15% of the population have access to health services, half of all children are malnourished and a third of Nepalese have no clean water. The average income is £100 a year.

r nothing...



Miriam Dias -
MBBS final year

antenatal clinic in a remote
s a life-changing 24 hours

Waking up to the picturesque scenery of the remote hilltop village of Mirge, East Nepal, populated by possibly the friendliest people in the world, little could have prepared me for the day ahead.

Based in what's called a Sub Health Post – resembling a pharmacy stocked with whatever medicines the lone health worker staffing it could buy from charity donations – for my seven-week elective, the 3,000 patients it served were used to the most basic of services. My first challenge on arriving had been to get the villagers to start thinking about health as being just as important as milking the buffalo or harvesting crops. Things had been tough, but along with fellow George's MBBS student Mateen Jiwani, and visiting local medic Dr Thapa (a George's alumnus), our services – including a new antenatal clinic – were proving popular.

But this day was to bring further challenges. As usual, I woke early to the sound of children reciting their times tables out loud and the commotion of getting ready for their journey to school – an hour's walk away. After arriving at the clinic, an exhausting four hours seeing more than 35 patients followed, with cases ranging from ear infections to parents wanting advice on dealing with their child's learning difficulties. Many patients had spent several days travelling to the clinic, so it was with a heavy heart that I referred those we couldn't treat to the nearest hospital – a four-hour journey by foot and an additional three-hour bus journey away.

“We set out in the failing light across the hills – one wrong step could have sent us tumbling hundreds of feet”

Having done my day's work, I returned to our accommodation to await the local children's return from school, for our daily game of football. But it wasn't to be, as just then, a young boy cradling his left arm in extreme pain, was climbing the steep hill up to the clinic, helped by his father. I carefully examined him – concluding it was probably a fracture. We got to work applying a temporary plaster and giving some pain relief, sending him on his way to the hospital.

With barely time to catch my breath, a small group of men appeared in a state of panic, speaking hurriedly in local dialect, Tamang. Understanding that there was an emergency in the village, myself and Mateen set out. Clutching basic supplies and equipment, we followed

the men across the hilly terrain in the failing dusk light – knowing that one wrong step could send us tumbling hundreds of feet.

Arriving at the scene, the casualty was surrounded by many villagers, there due to a mixture of helpfulness and curiosity. By then night had fallen, and with a power cut having taken out the village's electricity supply, our assessment was carried out under the beam of one torch and three candles. The man had sliced through his foot with an axe. Gently exploring the wound and stemming the bleeding, we had to explain to the local health care assistant that on this occasion a few simple sutures would not suffice. Having given him pain relief, and being acutely aware of the falling temperature (which reached -2°C at night), we packed and dressed the wound, gave him some strong painkillers and kept him warm and hydrated. Then, all we could do was advise the patient to make his way to the hospital at first light, and hope for the best.

Making our way back to the clinic, we ate supper chatting about the day's unexpected events and feeling very fortunate for our food, heat and light. Feeling elated but tired, we encountered the feeling familiar to many elective students before us – gratitude for the high standards of healthcare we take for granted at home, mixed with wonder that people with so little, can remain so content.

Right then, we vowed to go back after our studies were finished to help build on the work we'd started with the people of Dolakha. With our skills, and their needs doing nothing simply didn't feel like an option any more.

■ For more information about electives, contact Kerren Churcher on extension 1981 or email kchurcher@sgul.ac.uk.



Yusuf's one sharp shooter



GEP course administrator Yusuf Ozkizil captures the quirkier side of London life in his candid shots of people and places on the London Underground

Yusuf Ozkizil blames his lack of Turkish for his blossoming sideline in 'guerrilla photography'. The Graduate Entry Programme course administrator took a career break two years ago, visiting relatives in Turkey – only to find that his translator [Dad Unal] let him down. 'My dad was like, 'I'll translate for you, it'll be all right'. Then he'd forget – or maybe he was talking about me! So because I couldn't understand what anyone was saying, I spent all my time taking pictures.'

One of those photographs featured in a magazine a year later – German glossy Max – leading to four exhibitions in galleries around London. "When the editor used my picture, 'I thought, 'I'll see if my photographs are good enough to hang somewhere'. I was looking for someone to say no – and no one has!"

Starting out with a show at Freud's bar in Covent Garden, his pictures have since been hung in the St George's Hospital foyer and the first floor Gallery, and most recently at the trendy Flaxon Ptootch Gallery in Kentish Town. His work has also featured in Time Out, The Guardian and thelondonpaper. Not bad for a

photographer who admits he took up snapping because "he couldn't draw or paint".

Inspiration comes from different places, including messy flatmates. He explains: "I used to live with a girl who had dozens of pairs of shoes – they'd be all over, in the living room, in the hallway. I started to wonder – just how

"I spent two hours rearranging my flatmate's shoes in colour and size order, then took a photograph of them"

many pairs of shoes has she got? So I lined them up, and they went all the way to the back of the garden! I then spent two hours rearranging them in colour and size and making a pattern so I could take a photograph of them...and then I thought, 'Geez! I should really get back into full time work'." (You can see the resulting photographs on his website, www.ozkizil.com).

By day you can find Yusuf behind the glass of the Student Centre, creating order out of the busy clinical sciences schedules for the GEP MBBS course. Unlike his previous role on the five-year MBBS, this involves a lot of student

contact. "On the other course I didn't used to see the students. No one came in to say hello, or, 'Great timetable there – I liked the way you did the font!'" he laughs.

But after work, he takes to the streets, or more often the Tube, just one man and his handy compact camera. With no fancy

equipment, he uses guerrilla tactics, and a DIY approach to take his characteristic shots: "Mostly people don't realise I've taken their photos. And no, no-one's threatened to hit me... yet!

"When I take pictures, I'm not looking for something in particular...more, you just see something. The Tube's been good for that. I've had lots of long Tube journeys for work. You'll see a guy opposite with blue shirt and big belly and the guy who's sitting next to him will have the same shirt and same belly. I just notice strange things. I'm curious about people." ■

People

My day... My Hobby... My Job...

At the peak of fitness

"I just love the challenge of getting from A to B," says Dr Chris Owen. It's something of an understatement, for the St George's epidemiologist who likes to climb mountains in his spare time, with not just the peaks of East Africa and the Alps under his safety belt, but also having been to the summit of Everest in 2006.

It is an interest that stretches back nearly 20 years, to the time when Chris was in the Army Reserves. "I started getting interested in mountaineering in the late 1980s while doing some trekking, and climbing when training to be an Officer," says Chris.

Most of Chris's climbing experiences has been in the Alps rather than the Himalayas, including peaks such as the Matterhorn, Dente Blanche, Mont Blanc and Mont Rosa. Though part of his research looks into exercise and obesity levels, especially in children, Chris insists it's the challenge, rather than a drive to get fit, that motivates him. "I would say I'm more of a mountaineer, than a rock climber because I just love the challenge of getting from A to B, rather than the sheer drops you get on vertical faces – they still make me shudder!"

After a friend from University approached him to join the Everestmax expedition in 2006, he sensed a new challenge. "I had climbed in the Alps, but nothing of this height. Peaks in the Alps are just over 4,000m whereas the top of Everest is 8,850m, I had no idea how I would perform at that sort of height."

Joining 16 others and a team of

Nepalese and Tibetan guides and porters, Chris followed the 1920s route take by Mallory and Irvine, keeping in touch with home via satellite for two months. Surviving on dahl (a lentil-based Nepalese meal), yak meat and rice.

However, as he reached higher altitudes complications with his oxygen mask could have proved fatal for him. "My climbing partner, Seb Bullock, and I were the first team in our party to make an ascent. We had never

"There is no chance of being rescued up there. You just have to get yourself down"

climbed this high before and we left too early, climbing through the night. My mask froze up while we climbed so I was without oxygen for a while – this makes climbing more difficult as there is only a third of the oxygen levels up there compared to sea level.

"Things improved when the sun came up, as the mask began to thaw and oxygen began to flow,

but it was hard work for a while."

He says: "There is no realistic chance of being rescued up there, unless you pay to go with a big outfit, even then nothing is certain. As yet helicopter rescue is not an option. So if you get into trouble you have to get yourself down."

Chris and Seb left Base Camp at 9pm on 19 May, reached the summit at 5am the next morning and were back down below the death zone (8000m) by 10am. "We knew we were safe once we

passed the step where legendary English mountaineer Mallory fell back in the 1920s" he enthuses. "I remember having a Coke once we arrived back at Base Camp and it tasted good – I could feel it in pumping into my veins, I am not a fan of Coke usually."

Originally trained as an optometrist, Chris switched to epidemiology, studying at the

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine before joining the Community Health Sciences division at St George's in 2001. His medical interests currently lie in ethnic differences in cardiovascular risk factors in childhood, and how physical activity patterns relate to cardiovascular risk and levels of obesity in early life.

On his Everest expedition (in association with Dr Andrew Sutherland, University of Oxford), he was able to study the potential causes of acute mountain sickness. The results were published in the March issue of the British Journal of Sports Medicine.

Chris is off on another adventure at the end of this month, heading to Anchorage to the Kitchatna Spires in Alaska as part of a six man team, to see how many virgin peaks they can climb. "It would be difficult to square away disappearing to the Himalayas for two months again. This is a lot more manageable." And with Chris's ambition, that may just turn out to be a record understatement. ■



People

Honours and achievements

Medical student Jean-Yves Kanyambwa has made it into the Guinness Book of Records by bouncing a basketball around this year's London Marathon course in four hours 30 minutes and 29 seconds. Jean-Yves, who raised money for a charity that helps blind children, practised by bouncing a ball around the Kingston Breakfast Run 16-mile course in March.

Congratulations to two more SGUL students, Menna Rafiq and Oliver Lyons, who received awards from the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) for their Intercalated BSc research projects. Both were sponsored by the Jean Shanks Foundation. Each presented their research at the biannual meeting of ESC on Developmental Anatomy & Pathology, which was held in Bari, Italy in March.

Students Eve Thacker and Shwetha Nathan have had their Special Study Module paper on the use of opt-out in a trial of chlamydia screening accepted as a letter in the International Journal of STD and AIDS. They also presented their findings at the Society for Academic Primary Care in Cambridge.



Hitting the headlines

• Salt in the wound

Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine Graham MacGregor hit the headlines when he attacked Delia Smith's salt-laden recipes, as featured in her new book *Cheat's Cooking*. ThisisLondon, Daily Mail, The Independent, Channel 4, News 24, The Scotsman, Metro and the BBC were among the media reporting his response, one quoting him as saying: "Delia Smith is very respected by the public and has great influence over what we cook. It is a real pity that she seems to be unaware of the dangers of eating too much salt."

• Survival of the fittest

Nature, Radio 4's Leading Edge and the BBC World Service were among the media featuring new research from St George's and the

University of Leicester identifying for the first time that the TB bug lays down body fat that may help it survive passing from one person to another and, in the process, the bacteria increase their resistance to the action of anti-TB drugs. Professor Philip Butcher, from St George's, said: "This work forms the foundation to develop a new drug that works effectively against these fat and lazy bacteria."

• Students love St George's

The Guardian and South London Press reported that while students are quitting college in their hundreds, and the drop-out rate across universities remains at 22%, St George's is the university with the best record for keeping its students – 98.8 percent come back for their second year.

• Warning on 'celebrity junkies'

Professor Hamid Ghodse hit the headlines last month as he called for tougher sentences on celebrities who abuse drugs, sending out the wrong message to young people. This story was picked up by global news networks.

• Solvents 'cause more deaths than drugs' among kids

Statistics compiled by St George's show that legally obtainable volatile substances, such as butane gas, aerosol sprays, petrol, glue, correction fluids and paint thinners, are responsible for more deaths among 10 to 16 year olds than "conventional" illegal drugs, Suffolk and Essex online reported.

For the full stories, and other news from St George's, see the Communications Portal page.

Grants

British Heart Foundation

Role of endogenous cannabinoids in the regulation of vascular tone. Wing Sze Vanessa Ho (principal investigator), Michael Randell and Sheila Gardiner (co-applicants) – **£7,453,61**

Cancer Research UK

In vitro modeling and imaging in oncology and drug discovery. Professor Dorothy C Bennett – **£100,957**

The Stroke Association

Stenting for Symptomatic Vertebral Artery Stenosis Trial : feasibility phase. Prof Hugh Markus, Dr Andrew Clifton, Prof Peter

Rothwell (University of Oxford) and Dr Wilhelm Kuker (University of Glasgow) – **£178,337**

The BUPA Foundation

Differences between Hospital Death Rates following Elective Repair of Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (ERA) with allowance for risk factors

Dr Jan Poloniecki, Prof Matt Thompson and Peter Holt – **£179,400**

Neurosciences Research Foundation and London Deanery

Two year McKissock Research Fellowship – Vascular endothelial growth factors in gliomas. Professor B Anthony Bell and Mr

Marios C Papadopoulos – **£153,552**

Commission of the European Communities

International Medical Educators Exchange. Centre for Medical and Healthcare Education – **£6,161**

Janssen-Cilag Ltd

Therapeutic drug monitoring service (TDM) for antiretrovirals. Dr Syed Tariq Sadiq, Prof David Holt and Ms Denise Mckeown – **£10,000**

BO Holmstedt Memorial Fund

BO Holmstedt Memorial travelling lectureship award. Professor David Holt – **10,000**

People

Welcome



Dr Wing Sze (Vanessa) Ho joins us as a Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences in Basic Medical Sciences. Vanessa was

previously an Anne McLaren Research Fellow at the University of Nottingham. As well as lecturing, Vanessa will be setting up a new laboratory. She can be contacted at vho@sgul.ac.uk or on 2838.



Dr John Tregoning is Cellular and Molecular Medicine's new Lecturer in Infection and Immunity.

John will be setting up a group focused on paediatric vaccination. He can be contacted at jtregoni@sgul.ac.uk or 5439.

New Staff

Administration

Miss R Barreto – Staff Development Administrator
Miss K Johnson – Examiner Administrator
Mr K Kuan – Assistant Registrar (Information Systems)
Miss K Robben – HR Project Officer
Miss H White – WP Officer

Academic Services

Mr T Alred – AV Technician

Cardiac & Vascular Sciences

Dr O Dotsenko – Clinical Research Fellow
Mrs K Pandya – Academic Secretary
Miss Victoria Scott – Clinical Trials Coordinator
Miss Celia Brown – Stroke Trials Coordinator

Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences

Miss S Bhamra – Research Assistant
Ms J Greenwood – Research Assistant

New HR one-stop-shop website is just the job

THIS month saw the launch of Jobs at St George's, a new one-stop-shop website where job seekers can learn about the institution as a place to work, search and apply online for vacancies and register a profile online to apply for multiple roles.

Though jobseekers can also apply for positions the old-fashioned way through contacting HR, at the new website – <http://jobs.sgul.ac.uk> – they can also view profiles of current staff discussing their experiences at St George's, and use interactive features such as job email alerts, and an "email a friend" function.

The new site has added benefits for St George's staff, too – through it, recruiting managers and selection panel members can start shortlisting candidates online the moment applications are submitted. They can also view and process job information from any computer with internet access.



New HR website Jobs at St George's can be found at <http://jobs.sgul.ac.uk>

The new system aims to cut the cost of recruitment and time taken to fill vacancies, streamline the recruitment process and attract a greater number of high quality candidates to St George's.

Short training session on the new system will be available for anyone recruiting in the near future. Contact Kirsty Robben on ext. 6833 or krobben@sgul.ac.uk for more details. ■

New publications

Burke L., Heaton-Shrestha C., May S., Edirisingha P., Lindsay T. (2008) From face to face to e-Mentoring: does the 'e' add any value for mentors? *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. 20 (2).

Fergy S., Marks-Maran D., Ooms A. (2008) The evaluation of the academic, personal and professional learning model of student support. *Kingston University Research and Innovation Reports*. W1.

Fergy S., Heatly S., Morgan G., Hodgson D. (2008) The impact of pre-entry study skills training programmes on students' first year experience in health and social care programmes. *Nurse Education in Practice*. 8, 20-30.

Greenwood N., Mackenzie A., Cloud G., Wilson N. (2008) Informal carers of stroke survivors-factors influencing carers: a systematic review of quantitative studies. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. In press

Greenwood N., Mackenzie A., Cloud G., Wilson N. (2008) Informal primary carers of stroke survivors living at home - challenges, satisfactions and coping: A review of qualitative studies. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. In press.

Greenwood N., Mackenzie A., Harris R. (2008) New deal for carers or unfair deal: what is in it for informal carers of stroke survivors? *Policy and Politics*. 36 (1), 301-5.

Jones F., Partridge C., Reid F. (2008) The stroke self-efficacy questionnaire: measuring individual confidence in functional performance after stroke. *Journal of Nursing and Healthcare of Chronic Illness*. 17, 1-8.

Twycross A. (2008) Practice based research (Invited commentary). *Nurse Researcher*. 15 (2), 4-6.

Watt B., Ponto M. (2008) Empowering older people with type 2 diabetes: Dream or reality? *Journal of Diabetes Nursing*. In press.

Rapport F., Doel M. A., Wainwright P. (2008) The doctor's tale: enacted workspace and the General Practitioner. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. 9, (2)

Liu W. M. (2008) Enhancing the Cytotoxic Activity of Novel Targeted Therapies –

Is There a Role for a Combinatorial Approach? *Current Clinical Pharmacology*. 3, In press

Dalageorgou C., Dongliang G.E., Jamshidi Y., Nolte I.M., Riese H., Savelieva I., Carter N.D., Spector T.D., Snieder H. (2008) Heritability of QT Interval: How Much Is Explained by Genes for Resting Heart Rate? *Journal of Cardiovascular Electrophysiology*. 19(4): 286-391

The main event

Passion in fashion

A record-breaking cheque is so this season, thanks to the student Fashion Show raising a cool £12,600 for St George's Hospital Child Development Centre in Lanesborough Wing. The centre provides therapeutic care for children with special needs and is currently undergoing a major refurbishment.

The Fashion Show proceeds helped St George's RAG 2008 on its way to a bumper £70,000 total. This was the first year the Show was held in the Bar, attracting an audience of nearly 1,000 people over two nights.

Organiser Seiwaa Opare admits: "It was huge amounts of work – it nearly killed us! It was a year in the planning, and for the five weeks leading up to it myself and [co-organiser] Donna Lunn were in the SU office at 7am every morning, then back after clinics until midnight."

Their hard work paid off, though, as Fashion Show 2008 doubled the amount raised over previous years

(averaging £5,000), breaking all records. Donna explains the secret of their success: "We were very thorough – and very cheeky. We asked for everything either discounted or free, and got sponsorship wherever we could – on wristbands to programmes. It's amazing what companies gave us in return for having their names printed on the merchandise."

But, the medical students admit, they couldn't have done it alone. Seiwaa says: "A big thank you to Mike Dunne in the SU, who helped us with all the accounts, and the Estates and Facilities team – especially Vaughan Williams – who installed the power supply we needed to hold the show in the Bar for the first time."

"The fact that we were raising money for a cause so close to home gave us an extra boost. It's also great to know that students will witness how the money they raised will actually be used." ■



Fashion Show organisers Seiwaa Opare and Donna Lunn show style pays - but all for charity

What's on

Nurses League Conference

23/04/08, 2pm – 4pm, Lecture Theatre A, Hunter Wing

Carers, mental health specialists and a nurse consultants will talk about caring for people with dementia in the acute care setting.

Free for St George's staff showing ID, £5 at the door for all others.

Gray's Anatomy 150th Anniversary

24/04/08, 5.30pm, Michael Heron Lecture Theatre, Floor 1, Hunter Wing

The 150th anniversary of the publication of Gray's Anatomy will be marked by a joint lecture by Professor Susan Standing (the current editor – new edition due out in the autumn) and Dr Ruth Richardson, a historian researching the history of Gray's. Reception to follow immediately afterwards.

For more details, email cconneel@sgul.ac.uk

Health & Elite Sport Event: An Introduction to Sports Medicine

08/05/08, 10am - 2pm, Lecture Theatre F, Hunter Wing
Want to know what sports health professionals do in their day to day work? Interested to find out how they help elite performers to win

week after week? World-class experts featuring medics from the England and Juventus football teams, lawn tennis club and the Welsh Rugby team will answer questions and address career opportunities in sports medicine, science and physiotherapy.

For details or to register visit www.enterprise.sgul.ac.uk or email Jo Lawton on jlawton@sgul.ac.uk.

Inaugural Lecture

20/05/08, 5.30pm, Lecture Theatre G, Hunter Wing

Professor Thomas Harrison will present his Inaugural Lecture on his current research work and his path to becoming a Professor. Reception follows in the Boardrooms.

For details, email cconneel@sgul.ac.uk.

CMHE Education Forum

23/05/08, 12.30 - 13.30, Boardroom 2, Hunter Wing

Dr Michael Allen from Dalhousie University in Canada will talk about the International Medical Educators Exchange (IMEX), in which educators spend a week in five European medical and healthcare schools learning about and discussing medical education.

Tea and coffee will be available. To

book a place, email Jeremy Smith on jsmith@sgul.ac.uk

Meet The Presidents

27/05/08, 5.30pm

St George's is proud to number three Presidents of Royal Colleges – Professor Sheila Hollins,

Professor Sabaratnam

Arulkumaran and Dr Patricia

Hamilton – among its staff. At

this Forum chaired by Principal

Professor Peter Kopelman, the

Presidents will discuss the

Colleges' work, and answer

questions emailed to

cconneel@sgul.ac.uk by 19 May.

For more information, email

cconneel@sgul.ac.uk.

WestFocus Better Networks for Better Health Event

12/06/08, 10am - 6pm

Poster presentations,

demonstrations, exhibitions and

workshops and networking

sessions between research and

policy experts from primary and

secondary healthcare, industry

representatives, patient advocacy

groups and more.

To submit a poster or details, see

www.lifesciences.org.uk or contact

Jo Lawton on jlawton@sgul.ac.uk.



WIN a George's bear

Congratulations to St George's Hospital Clinical Coding Clerk Arati Patel, the winner of the March competition. She goes home with a George's bear!

To stand a chance of winning a bear in the April competition, just answer these questions based on stories in this month's George's News:

- What was the title of Professor Peter Kopelman's recent inaugural lecture?
- When did Jill Edwards first start work at St George's?
- What is the name of HR's new one-stop-shop website?

Email your answers marked a), b) or c) to tstarr@sgul.ac.uk with 'competition' in the subject line. **Good luck!**