

# YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS



## George's & Proud

For more than 250 years, St George's has remained at the forefront of innovation in health research. As alumni of St George's, you have first-hand experience of the benefits of developing personally and professionally in such a specialist and integrated research and teaching environment. We've always been focussed on tackling the biggest healthcare issues facing the modern world – and this year has been no exception.

In response to the pandemic, we have worked valiantly to move much of our teaching and assessment online, as well as pivoting our research portfolio to tackle Covid-19. From the very beginning, our track record in vaccine development positioned St George's at the forefront of the response from the scientific community. During the first wave, St George's contributed to more studies approved by the National Institute for Health Research than any other centre in the UK and operated as a testing site for all three of the first candidate vaccines to combat Covid-19 that were trialled in the UK.

For our undergraduate and postgraduate students, whilst we have continued to teach and offer support throughout this time, there is no doubt that the past year has been a challenging one and the impact on their studies and research has been significant.

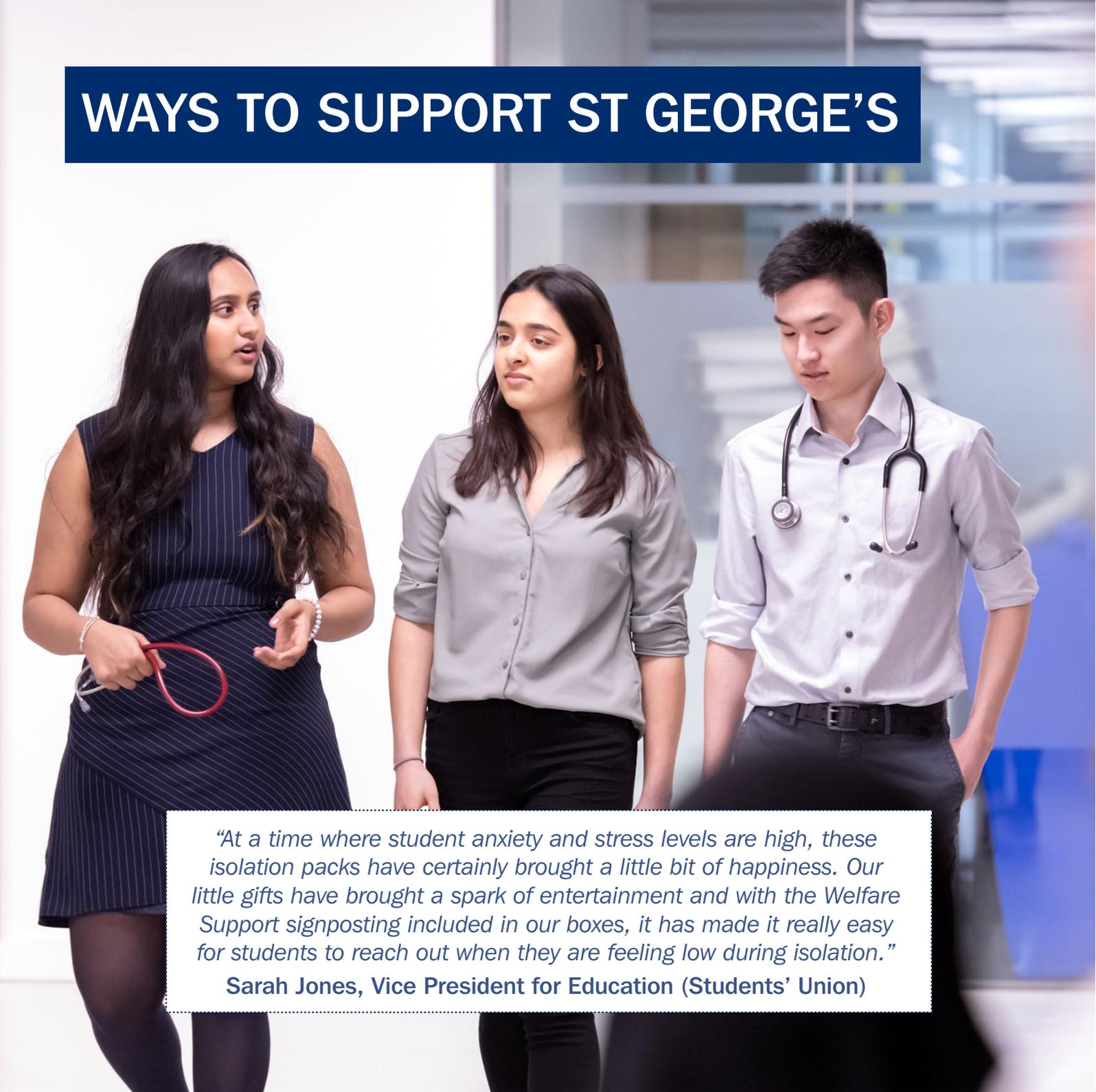
## Why your support matters

"The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been felt by all of our students, and demand for emergency funding, and mental health and well-being support, is higher than ever. Thanks to the generosity of our alumni community, we have been able to make a tangible difference to students in the past year, providing additional support where it has been needed most.

"As we continue to navigate our way through this pandemic, it is clear that the disruption to studies caused by Covid-19 will have long-lasting effects on our current and future students. As an alumni community, we hope that you will join with us to help our students to continue to thrive this year, and in years to come, by contributing to a fund supporting activities which matter to you."

Nike Alesbury,  
Associate Director of Development & Alumni

# WAYS TO SUPPORT ST GEORGE'S



*“At a time where student anxiety and stress levels are high, these isolation packs have certainly brought a little bit of happiness. Our little gifts have brought a spark of entertainment and with the Welfare Support signposting included in our boxes, it has made it really easy for students to reach out when they are feeling low during isolation.”*

**Sarah Jones, Vice President for Education (Students' Union)**

## GENERAL SUPPORT TO WHERE THE NEED IS MOST GREAT

**Our Annual Fund exists to offer flexible financial support where it is needed most. Each year, our donors entrust their money to the University through this fund to respond to the needs of our students, and this year we've needed this more than ever.**

Recently, contributions to our Annual Fund have enabled us to loan 25 new laptops to students who would otherwise struggle to access online resources, as well as funding over 100 Care Packages to be sent to students in isolation.

These Care Packages have made great strides towards helping students feel a part of the St George's community and reminding them that we are thinking of them as they enter isolation.

During these ongoing, uncertain times, we need this flexible funding to continue to respond quickly to new challenges, while supporting our students so they can thrive. We hope you will consider donating to our Annual Fund, so that we can continue to care for the students who are following in your footsteps.

# HELPING STUDENTS FACING HARDSHIP

As ever, our Hardship Fund continues to support students across the University who are facing financial difficulties, for whatever reason. The rising costs of attending university in London, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, has meant that more and more of our students are finding themselves with financial challenges caused by circumstances beyond their control.

From 2019-20, 80 hardship fund awards were made to students from a range of courses. Due to the impact of the pandemic on students' financial circumstances, we saw an increase of more than 50% in the total amount spent on hardship support compared to the previous academic year.

Help us to achieve our target of donating **£20,000** from our alumni community to the Hardship Fund by the next academic year, so that we can support the increasing number of students facing financial difficulties.



*"I was incredibly stressed at the start of this year - trying to make ends meet in London is an expensive task, and my student loan and bursary didn't cover much more than my rent. I had to pick up extra shifts, which was really starting to impact my time spent studying and I was headed towards burnout. Receiving support from the Hardship Fund felt like a huge burden was lifted from me. It removed a huge and tangible financial pressure and allowed me to focus more on my studies. Since receiving the grant, I have started to feel more confident in my abilities as a medical student, something I was struggling with before due to the considerable time I spent focusing on earning money."*

**3rd year medical student and recipient of the  
2020-21 Hardship Fund**

## FUNDING FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS IMPACTED BY THE PANDEMIC

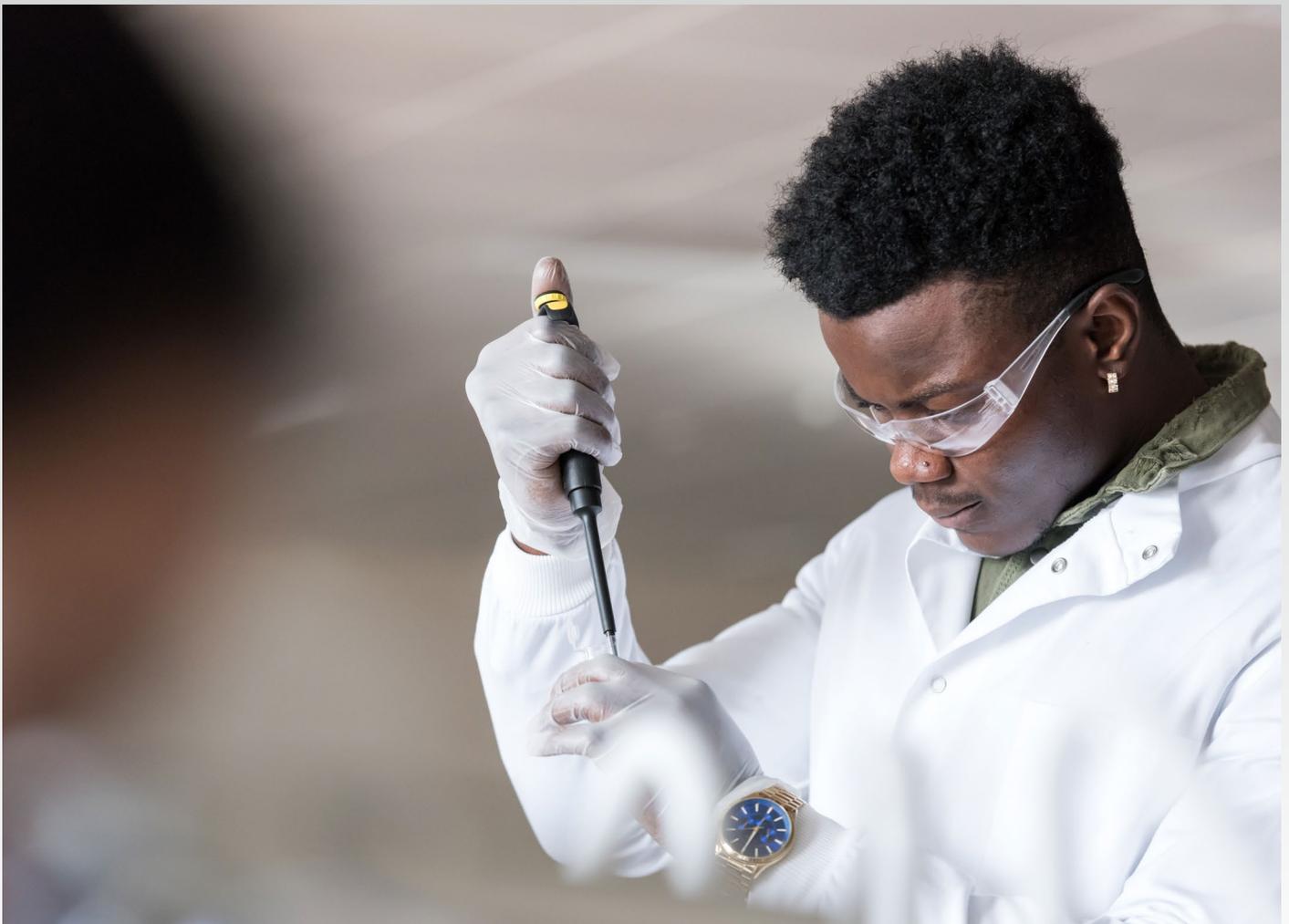
To increase our Hardship Fund, so we can focus support where it is particularly needed, we are launching a new Doctoral Support Appeal to offer funding to postgraduate students who are facing specific financial challenges as a result of the pandemic.

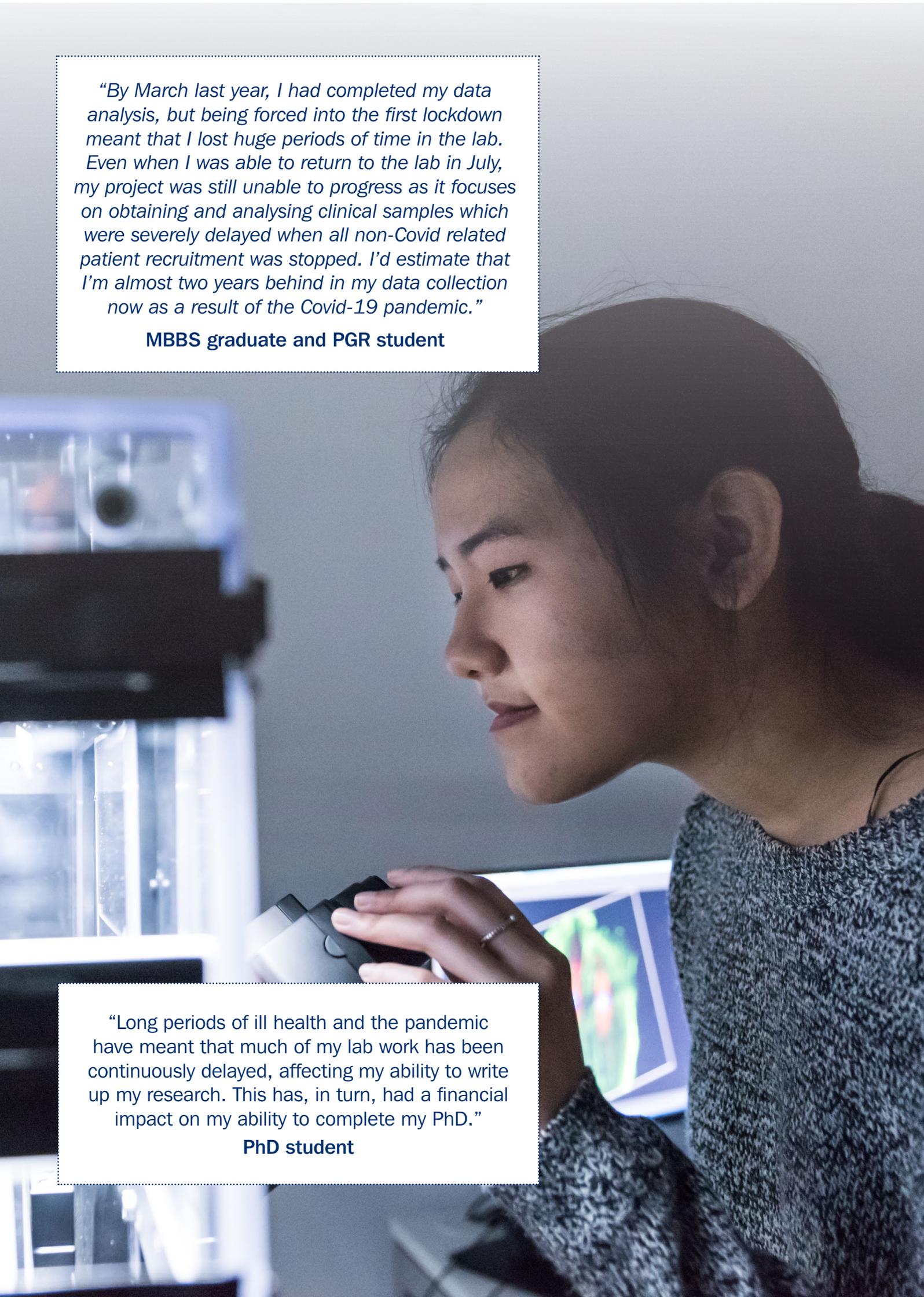
This year PhD students facing delays to their research due to Covid-19 have found themselves under immense emotional and financial pressure. Lockdown restrictions forced our students out of the labs and stopped patient recruitment to trials, leaving our doctoral research students struggling to gather data and complete their studies within their original timeframes.

As a university, we can support these students by offering them extra time, access to site and teaching, but their living stipends, which enable them to afford to conduct their studies at St George's, are time-limited. We need extra funds to extend stipends to affected students and urgently need your support to ensure that their years of study to date are not wasted.

Whilst the easing of Covid-19 restrictions brings hope, the long-lasting effect of the pandemic on our postgraduate students could be the difference between them completing their PhD and giving up on their studies.

We estimate that we need to raise in excess of **£50,000** through this appeal to offer support to our doctoral students in need this year. By supporting this appeal, you will enable students facing significant financial struggles to complete their PhDs and go on to make an impact in their future careers. You will also be able to significantly increase the value of your gift, thanks to the generosity of one of our alumni, who will be match funding the first year of any new regular donations set up towards this appeal. Once our doctoral students in need have been fully supported through Covid-related delays, any regular gifts will continue to support the Hardship Fund.



A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a grey lab coat, is shown in profile, looking intently at a microscope. The background is a laboratory with various pieces of equipment and a computer monitor displaying a colorful image. The lighting is soft and focused on the woman and the microscope.

*“By March last year, I had completed my data analysis, but being forced into the first lockdown meant that I lost huge periods of time in the lab. Even when I was able to return to the lab in July, my project was still unable to progress as it focuses on obtaining and analysing clinical samples which were severely delayed when all non-Covid related patient recruitment was stopped. I’d estimate that I’m almost two years behind in my data collection now as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.”*

**MBBS graduate and PGR student**

*“Long periods of ill health and the pandemic have meant that much of my lab work has been continuously delayed, affecting my ability to write up my research. This has, in turn, had a financial impact on my ability to complete my PhD.”*

**PhD student**

# SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

In response to ever-increasing demands for personal and academic support, we rely on donations to our Mental Health and Well-being Fund to provide critical support to the Students' Union and Welfare Support Team.

For example, in 2019, alumni contributions to this fund enabled the establishment of a new Students' Union Education and Welfare Support Officer role.

By supporting this Fund, you will be offering practical well-being support to students at all stages of their studies at St George's. Every contribution counts. By raising **£10,000** towards Mental Health & Well-being, we could continue supporting the work of the SU Education and Welfare Support Officer. Raising **£5,000** would also enable us to continue funding Togetherall, a 24 hour online mental health support service for our students.

We've provided

**130**

support sessions  
to

**35 students**

in the last six months.

*"Moving our service online during the pandemic means that we are able to reach all of our students, whatever their current situation and wherever they are."*

**Lon Teija, Students' Union Education and Welfare Support Officer**



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

St George's continues to be at the forefront of health research and education. A broadening course portfolio, and a record number of undergraduate UCAS applications, mean that we have more students than ever who are keen to embark upon a career in healthcare by studying at St George's.

Your donation will make a difference not only to the students following in your footsteps, but also to the patients who will benefit from their care and expertise around the world. We hope you enjoy talking to our current students when they call and that you are inspired to offer your support to our students in need.

# KEEP IN TOUCH



We are always keen to hear from our alumni and hope we are able to welcome you back to St George's again soon. In the meantime, if you would like to speak to a member of the team about holding your own event or reunion, you can get in touch by email or connect with us on our alumni Facebook page.

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