

Spring/Summer 2020

**gUTS
UK!**



**75 years young -
William took on a
skydive inspired by
Guts UK's work in
diverticular disease!**



The charity for the digestive system

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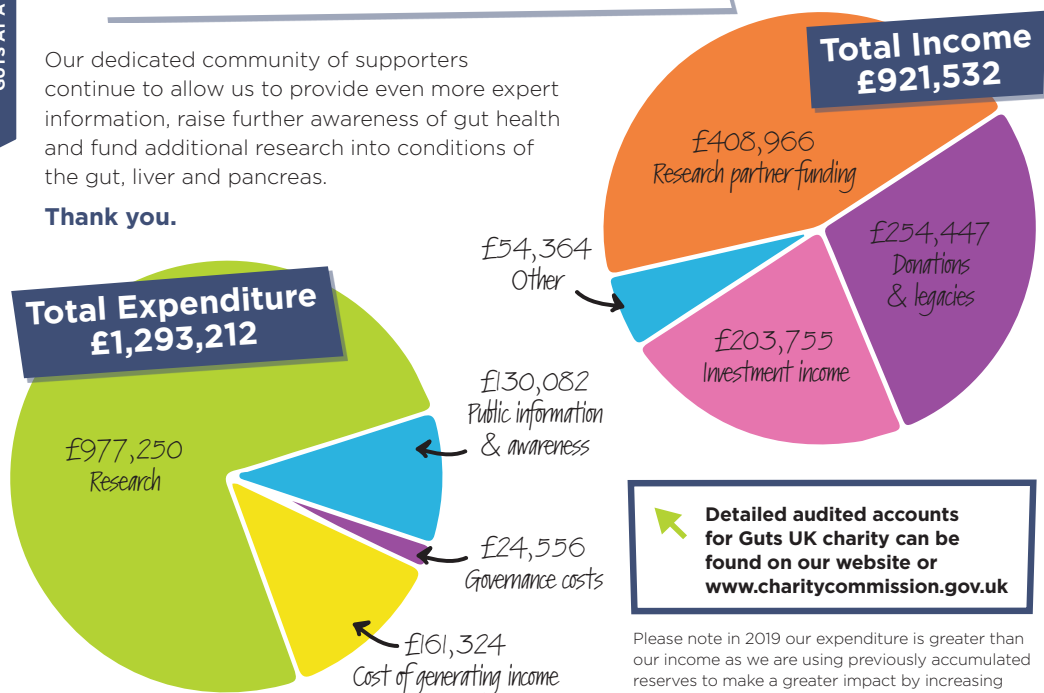
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The difference YOU make:

Guts UK Income & Expenditure 2019

Our dedicated community of supporters continue to allow us to provide even more expert information, raise further awareness of gut health and fund additional research into conditions of the gut, liver and pancreas.

Thank you.



Please note in 2019 our expenditure is greater than our income as we are using previously accumulated reserves to make a greater impact by increasing research expenditure, building capacity and expanding our public awareness programme.

When the guts work, life works

Welcome to our Spring / Summer 2020 magazine

In 2019 the Guts UK community helped us reach heights we didn't think were possible. You ran, cycled, baked, climbed, danced, walked, tackled, raffled, shaved and more! This continuing support allows us to fund research, research that improves and ultimately saves lives.

2019 was a year of true growth for Guts UK. Our dedicated supporters have lifted and presented our cause beautifully. Last year, over 500,000 people visited our website to access our expert patient information, discover our crucial research and learn about gut health. Discover just how empowering it is for patients to get the right information and where you can find it for yourself on page 11.

Earlier diagnosis. A better treatment. A cure.

Help us make 2020 the year that our guts get the attention they deserve. We hope you share our fascination about the inner-workings of our digestive system and feel inspired to support our work at Guts UK.

Until next time, *Team Guts UK*



Don't be a stranger!

We **love** to hear from you; it's the best part of our job. Whether you have a story to share, a fundraising mission we can help you with or just need to speak with someone, get in touch with us today:



@GutsCharityUK



@GutsCharityUK



@gutscharityuk



London: 020 7486 0341

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info@gutscharity.org.uk



www.gutscharity.org.uk

Could bags of breath detect oesophageal cancer earlier?

Dr Sara Jamel – Oesophageal cancer / Barrett's oesophagus

Olympus/Guts UK's research fellow Dr Sara Jamel was awarded £210,000 for a 3-year project starting in 2019. Dr Jamel's innovative project will explore the use of breath-testing for pre-cancerous cell changes in patients with Barrett's oesophagus. **If successful, this breath test could save lives by diagnosing oesophageal cancer early, when it is far more treatable.**

Barrett's oesophagus is a condition where cells in the oesophagus are damaged by acid travelling back up the oesophagus from the stomach (acid reflux). It is thought that 10% of persistent heartburn sufferers who have longstanding reflux problems may develop Barrett's oesophagus. Heartburn is a common problem that occurs after eating, lying down or bending over and is usually described as a 'burning' sensation.

Dr Jamel has been very busy over the last few months, so we visited her at Imperial College London.

What have been your first steps in beginning the study?

We have a new device to collect the breath for the study, so I'm doing a lot of experiments validating the device. Currently we are also working on our data analysis protocol, collaborating with experts in the field to ensure our data is accurate and robust.

How have you been transporting breath samples from various locations?

Collecting breath using bags across multiple sites is not ideal, because you'll lose the breath within the bag or risk changing the breath volatiles within the bag. We're currently using breath collecting tubes. These are a more efficient way to transfer breath. To analyse these tubes, we heat them up to high temperatures, which releases the volatile gases that allow for detection of the compounds we're looking for (ones that could show us cancerous changes).

How do you approach patients to ask for a sample of their breath?

I'll just say, we want to use a breath test to diagnose problems of the oesophagus and stomach, mainly cancer, and then all you need to do is breathe into a bag – it's like a balloon. So far, all the patients approached have said yes!



Only 12% of people survive oesophageal cancer for longer than 10 years, **yet 59% of oesophageal cancer cases are preventable.** Our research has the capacity to change these facts and save more lives.

Help us continue life-saving research by donating today



Malcolm's Story

Oesophageal cancer

This is Malcolm's Story, as told by his daughter Gemma.



When did you discover Malcolm had oesophageal cancer?

Dad was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer in June 2017. He was a very quiet and stoic man, he would never complain or go see a doctor about anything. I don't remember him ever being poorly at all. It was mum and I that noticed he wasn't eating as much and had lost weight. He used to lie and say he had eaten when he hadn't, so we urged him to see a doctor. Tests were done by the hospital and they confirmed the cancer.

Talk us through the time after Malcolm's diagnosis

Dad began with a couple of rounds of chemotherapy pretty much the week after diagnosis, then it was decided that he would need an operation to remove lower part of oesophagus and a section of his stomach. Dad seemed to be coping well with it all, he changed his diet and stopped drinking alcohol. He recovered well and in November 2017 he turned 70, just after he got the all clear from the consultants - we were elated!

Unfortunately a few months later, dad began to gradually lose his voice so we urged him to see the doctor. We were told that this was now advanced cancer. Dad was so strong and calm about everything and I tried to be the same around him. I wanted to remain hopeful, but looking at the statistics for advanced oesophageal cancer I expected we wouldn't have long.

Dad would sleep a lot. He'd lost a lot of weight (around 3 stone at this point). Just 15 months after diagnosis, Dad passed away.

Why do you fight against oesophageal cancer by supporting Guts UK?

I've never experienced cancer first-hand before dad had oesophageal cancer. It's horrifying watching it literally take over someone's body in such a way. I just want to do everything I can to support others in this situation, that's why I want to help fundraise for Guts UK.

The Less Survivable Cancers Taskforce

World Cancer Day 2020

Guts UK is a proud founding member of the Less Survivable Cancers Taskforce (LSCT), a partnership aiming to double survival rates for the six least survivable cancers by 2029. Alongside brain and lung cancer, the other four of these six cancers are digestive; stomach, pancreatic, oesophageal and liver.

On World Cancer Day 2020, we attended Portcullis House in Westminster. We highlighted the discrepancy in survival rates for these cancers to MPs, and the importance of more research to double the survival rates to 28% by 2029.

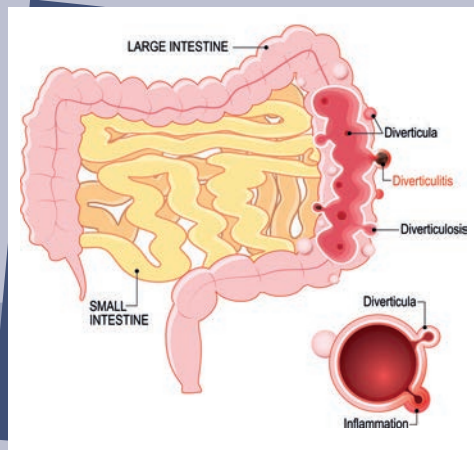
We can't do this alone. With your support we can start to close the deadly cancer gap. Please support our work today.



What is Diverticular Disease?

Diverticular disease occurs when diverticulosis results in symptoms. Diverticulosis is a condition where pouches develop in the muscle wall of the large bowel (colon), mostly in the left-hand side, less frequently they occur elsewhere in the digestive tract. The bowel wall contains two muscle layers, a tougher outer layer and a softer inner layer. If a weakness develops in the outer layer, the inner layer pushes through the outer layer, which forms a pouch called a diverticulum.

Diverticular disease commonly develops in the Western world. Between 30-50% of people will develop it. The number of people diagnosed increases as people grow older. Generally, we eat far less fibre in our Western diet than people who live in developing countries, where diverticular disease is less common. This fact is suspected to be a cause.



What are the symptoms?

3 in 4 people with diverticulosis never experience symptoms. For the 1 in 4 who do, symptoms include lower abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhoea or constipation and mucus or blood in the stool. The symptom pattern varies from one person to the next. Pain is often crampy, comes and goes and is commonly felt in the left side of the abdomen which is where most diverticula occur.

Can diverticular disease cause complications?

Remember that most people with diverticular disease will never have complications. However, in some people complications can occur. Signs of diverticulitis (infection) include worsening abdominal pain, high temperature, feeling or being sick. If these symptoms occur medical help should be sought immediately. Diverticulitis is normally treated with antibiotics and fluids.

What treatment is available?

Keeping stools soft and bulky may reduce the chance of diverticular disease worsening and hard faecal pellets lodging within the pouches. Aim to include fibre containing starchy food with each meal, plus 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily. Try to drink at least eight to ten cups of fluid daily, which helps the fibre pass through the bowel. If you currently don't eat much fibre, be sure to slowly increase your intake to avoid bloating symptoms.

Busting the Myths

You may have heard that for diverticulosis, you need to avoid sources of tough fibre such as skins, seeds and pips. It was previously felt that these foods were likely to lodge in the diverticula and cause diverticular disease and diverticulitis. This is not the case, so these foods can be consumed as part of a healthy balanced diet.

Validity Big Half Marathon 2020

Team Guts UK came & conquered!

On Sunday 1st March we saw our largest ever Gut Army in the Validity Big Half take their positions. The 13.1-mile-long course that weaves through London landmarks was no match for Guts UK!

Our brave and bold runners represented our cause brilliantly. This year we saw patients running alongside professors of gastroenterology and families of those affected by digestive disorders. The famous 'Merchy's Stryders' captained by Ian Merchill, ran in memory of his mother Pat, who passed away from pancreatitis.



Prof. Matthew Brookes

This year, our runners have already raised nearly £6,500 – and many are still fundraising!



The family of 'Merchy's Stryders'

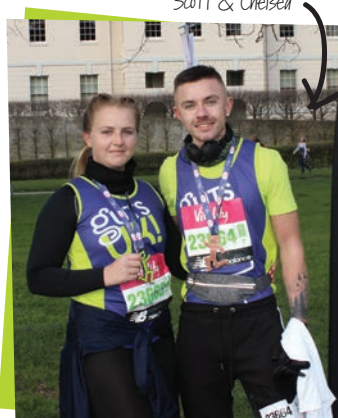
Our gastroenterologists (or Guardians of the Gut as we prefer to call them) were Prof. Matthew Brookes and Prof. Chris Probert. Both are recipients of Guts UK's research grants and both displayed their passion to give back to Guts UK on the day. Power couple Chelsea and Scott also rose to the challenge on the day, a pair determined to fight stomach cancer in memory of Chelsea's grandmother Carole.



Prof. Chris Probert



'Merchy's Stryders'



Scott & Chelsea

A huge thank you to all our runners. Together, we can fund vital research that means the world to millions of families. If you'd like to fundraise for Guts UK, please get in touch – hearing from you is the best part of our job.



Meet the amazing community that surrounds St Georges Tavern in Camberwell. The team have dedicated months to fundraising in honour of their regular customer and dear friend Tony, who passed away from oesophageal cancer. From a bungee jump to a glittering 70's disco party, the community have inspired us all – raising an incredible £2,572!



The Guts UK The Oesophageal Cancer Charity

Thank you

We could not be prouder of our bold, fundraising Gut Army.

Everyone who champions our cause creates a lasting impact in the fight against digestive diseases.

**Take action in
Together we can lead
research into diges**

**Get in touch with
events@gutscha**

01484 483



Superstar supporter Samantha will be taking on the Jurassic Coast Challenge in 2020 for Guts UK after seeing the impact that acute pancreatitis had on her family.

“I want to do all I can to fund research into this horrific disease, so other families won't have to go through what we have. Bring on those hills!”

Samantha has raised over £610 already.



Guts and
Glory:
You!

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arity.org.uk

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Let the good times roll with the In - Event Glasgow Caledonian Students. Tara, Stephanie and the team are throwing a roaring 1920's themed evening to fundraise and raise awareness for Guts UK's work.

They know how debilitating digestive disorders can be on everyday life and are answering the call to fight back.

Inspiration struck Graham as two important life-anniversaries fell together.

"In 2002 18 years ago, my wife Helène was diagnosed with colon cancer, our daughter Megan was born & Helène was cured of cancer as surgeons removed the offending section. 18 years on, I have decided to run the Brighton Marathon. To celebrate these 18 wonderful years, I'm asking 100 people to donate £18, so we can raise an incredible £1,800 for Guts UK to allow them to continue their important research & education"



Did you say

'poo transplant'?!

You may have come across the abbreviation FMT – it stands for Faecal Microbiota Transplantation, or in other words – stool or poo transplants! This is the transplantation of poo from a healthy donor to someone who has serious gut infection. Before you stop reading at the thought of having a transplant of someone else's poo, let's explain why this is a very good treatment for some people.



There is a very severe gut infection caused by a bacterium called *Clostridium Difficile* (C Difficile or C Diff). C Diff is normally found in the bowel in very small numbers, but the infection cause is thought to be overgrowth of this bacteria, which is an alteration of the population of gut microbes, caused by taking certain antibiotics. It is usually treated with antibiotics quite successfully. However, the infection can reoccur for 1 in 5 people, causing severe symptoms and serious bowel problems for some individuals. The treatment in the case of severe repeated infections is a transplant of poo from a healthy individual to the person with C Diff and there is a success rate of 8 to 9 people in 10 resolving the infection, which is very impressive indeed.

The treatment is very much like treatment for an organ transplant – the donor needs to be carefully screened and healthy (no gut disorders should be present), a healthy weight, a medical questionnaire is completed and the stool should be tested for pathogens (bad bacteria or microbes), they also have a blood test. Relatives are not generally considered as donors as they can be carriers of C Diff. Despite some social media sites advocating home FMT treatment, it is certainly not something to try at home! There has been reported a death of an individual where the stool was not tested properly, which is why screening is so vital. The sample is then prepared and used either with an enema, applied with a colonoscope, oral capsule or feeding tubes.

Whilst the treatment has a good success rate for severe cases of C Diff, guidelines from gastroenterologists do not advocate using FMT to treat inflammatory bowel disease or any other digestive disease at the moment, as there is not enough evidence as to whether it is an effective treatment. We also recommend that you discuss antibiotic use with your doctor if you have concerns, because antibiotics are needed to treat some bacterial infections. Research continues into whether FMT is successful for other conditions.



We're still in the early stages of discovering just how influential our gut bacteria are and their potential to treat digestive diseases in the future. We must do more research to solve this mystery. Together, we can help scientists turn curiosity into life-changing discovery. Please donate to our work today.

Information is Power

“My name is Natalie and I came across Guts UK after I had my gallbladder removed 3 years ago, due to gallstones. Since, I have been diagnosed with Bile Acid Malabsorption (also known as Bile Acid Diarrhoea, which can occur post-gallbladder removal).

It was such a relief to find Guts UK's information online. For a long time, I thought that my symptoms were just life post-gallbladder surgery. It was a relief to read other people's stories online and I realised I wasn't alone. I really felt I was getting little help from any of my doctors, until I decided to print out Guts UK's information and approach them with it.

I highlighted how my symptoms were very similar to Bile Acid Malabsorption and was then referred to my nearest gastroenterology department. I'm now taking medication which has helped to ease my symptoms massively.



Life has changed so much over the past few months, I'm even starting a new job for a company that specialises in stoma bags!

Throughout 2020, I pledge to take on 12 runs over 12 months, with Guts UK as one of my chosen charities. The team at Guts UK were so friendly and supportive since I first made contact, so I'm delighted to run for a cause so close to my heart!

INFORMATION

Our guts have been overlooked and underfunded for decades. Information truly is power and Guts UK is passionate about providing expert, evidence-based information to patients. With this information, patients can make informed decisions and take control.

We can only continue to help people like Natalie with your support. Together we can do more.

**Text GUTS £10 (or your chosen amount) to 70085.
Thank you.**

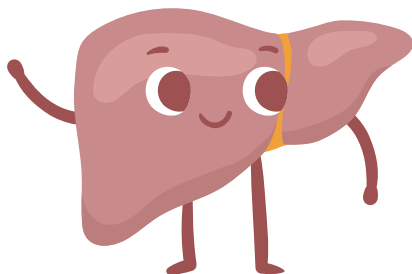
Guts UK funded research could lead to new treatments for liver disease

Professor Neil Henderson and the team at the University of Edinburgh have managed to identify new sub-types of cells that, when they interact, speed-up the scarring process in diseased livers.

1 in 5 people in the UK are at risk of developing liver disease. Liver disease is predicted to become the most common cause of premature death in the UK, and can occur due to obesity, excessive alcohol, viral infections, autoimmune diseases or genetic disorders.

Long-term damage leads to scarring of the liver, which eventually causes liver failure. There are currently no treatments available to prevent or reverse this.

The Guts UK funded researchers at the University of Edinburgh have used a new technology to study liver scarring in ultra-high definition. The researchers then discovered sub-types of 3 cells, and now have an in-depth understanding of how cells behave and talk to each other in diseased livers. More importantly, discussions can now begin as to how we may block this activity between cells, as a future treatment for liver scarring.



Professor Henderson was awarded a research grant from Guts UK and the Children's Liver Disease Foundation to conduct research into liver disease and biliary atresia (a condition causing inflammation and destruction of children's bile ducts). Childhood gut, liver and pancreatic disease is a priority area for Guts UK. These exciting results will bring hope to so many families facing devastating, life threatening liver conditions.

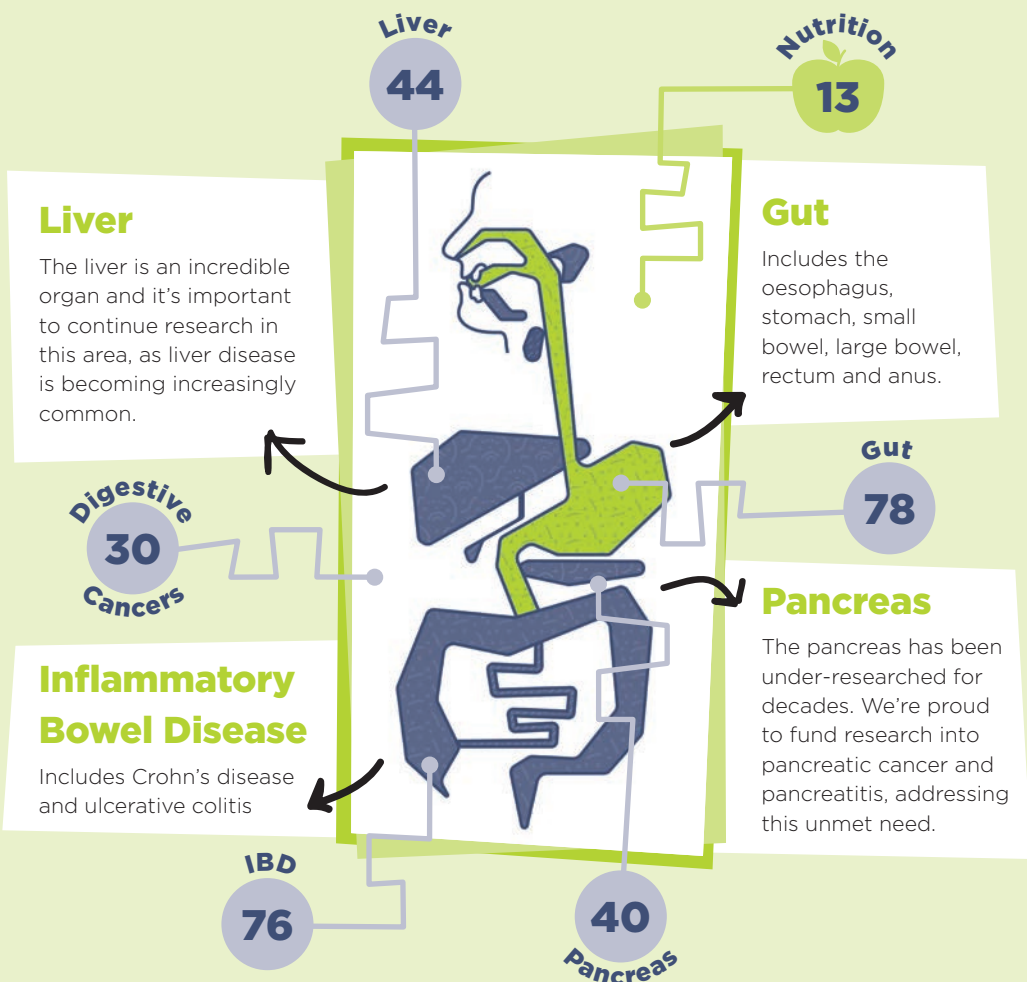
Research like Professor Henderson's is funded by Guts UK thanks to the generosity of our supporters. We're **committed** to fighting all childhood diseases of the gut, liver and pancreas but we can not do this without your support. **Be part of our next breakthrough at Guts UK, come on board.**

Our

Research

Guts UK is the only UK charity funding research into the digestive system from top to tail; the gut, liver and pancreas. Since we were founded in 1971, we have invested almost **£16,000,000** into 281 research projects.

We've broken down our **281** research projects



We are fascinated by the workings of our 'inner tube of life' and know how digestive conditions affect millions of people every day in the UK. The digestive system is an incredible but complex system and the better we understand how it works, the more we can look after it. Our research has the capacity to change and save lives.

Please support our research programme today.

Your pedal has power!

Do you know an avid cyclist who could join us for our biggest challenge this year? Starting at the Olympic Park in London and finishing on The Mall, Ride London 100 follows a grand 100-mile route, taking in all the beautiful sights that London and Surrey have to offer.



We need you to spread the word! Let's unite to fight diseases of the gut, liver and pancreas. Rally together your **friends, family** and **colleagues** and encourage them to take on a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as a team.

We already have a growing number of inspirational cyclists in our team:

Chris Richardson is taking action, joining the fight against acute pancreatitis, as well as completing a huge personal challenge.



Also part of Team Guts UK this year are 'The Blazing Saddles', who answered our call for avid cyclists on behalf of a loved one diagnosed with oesophageal cancer.



Joshua Hitch is cycling on behalf of Jess his wife who has achalasia, a condition that affects the cells and nerves within the oesophagus (food-pipe).



Act now and secure your place in Team Guts UK.

Email Charlie at cdutton@gutscharity.org.uk or call us today on 01484 483123.

Meet the Researcher – Dr James O’Kelly

Pancreatitis

Dr James O’Kelly was recently awarded a 3-year research fellowship by Guts UK. Dr O’Kelly is investigating the inflammatory reaction that occurs during pancreatitis, which when severe, can kill 1 in 5 patients affected.



Tell us a little about your background

I graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 2013 and stayed on in South East Scotland for surgical training. After making the decision to pursue a career in general surgery, I moved to Glasgow to complete my higher surgical training. I have now taken time out of this programme to complete a 3 year PhD funded by Guts UK, and will have 4 years of specialty training left when I return.

Why did you want to pursue research into pancreatitis?

As a general surgeon we are responsible for patients who present to hospital with acute pancreatitis, and I have already had plenty of experience of just how devastating a condition it can be. I still find it surprising how sick young, otherwise healthy patients can become. A line I often repeat to new admissions is “there is nothing we can do to turn it off, we just have to let it burn itself out.” My research project will help us better understand why pancreatitis makes some people so sick and will hopefully help with development of new treatments in the future.

How is your research going to so far?

The main focus of my project is trying to understand how an enzyme (known as KMO) interacts with the immune system in acute severe pancreatitis. We know that KMO produces a chemical which directly damages organs. So far I have been conducting experiments to see how KMO stimulates immune cells and soon, I will be moving on to see what changes and manipulations are brought about by KMO.

What challenges have you encountered so far?

Before beginning my research I did not have any prior experience of working in a lab, so the main challenges for me have been technical. It has been a steep learning curve, but I have enjoyed it and can now confidently set up and run my own experiments.

What are your hopes for the future?

I hope to spend the next couple of years completing my PhD work, as well as contributing to other work within our research group – which is all aimed at improving our understanding of acute pancreatitis. From there, I would like to continue researching pancreatitis when I return to surgical training.

Guts UK’s research fellowship enables trainees like myself to not only study pancreatitis, but to develop our research skills and experience which we will continue to use throughout our careers. **The more highly trained researchers there are looking at pancreatitis, the sooner we will develop new effective treatments.**

Guts UK is the only UK charity funding a research fellowship into pancreatitis. We are dedicated to finding a treatment for this devastating condition, but we can’t do this without your support. Please donate today or contact us to see how else you can support our work.

Giving in celebration

Bring Guts UK to your party – whether it's a wedding, a birthday party or a retirement bash. Whatever your celebration, consider bringing Guts UK on the journey with you.



My Colon Retirement Party!

My name is Melanie and in October 2019, my colon officially retired and passed the baton on to the bag. It tried its best to function over my entire adult life to not much avail. I decided there was only one option... to throw a Colon Retirement Party for Guts UK!

I think it's great that Guts UK embrace the whole area of the digestive system. They understand that digestive health links with other conditions, which is an area that so many people are ignorant to. I've seen that Guts UK are a member of the Less Survivable Cancers Taskforce, which is an area very close to my heart as my mum passed away from pancreatic cancer.



Mel's retirement party was a true sight for sore eyes and the room was littered with poo headbands and balloons. You'll be pleased to hear that Mel is doing well following her operation and continues to inspire the team at Guts UK with her positive outlook, beaming smile and kindness.

We rely solely on the kindness of people like Mel to continue funding vital research. What could you do for Guts UK this year?

Honouring the life of someone special

A gift in memory of a loved one is a gift of hope, a lasting tribute that brings comfort to families at a difficult time.



“Since mum’s passing, we have tried to gather as much information about pancreatitis as we can and unfortunately it seems there isn’t an awful lot out there. Guts UK is at the forefront of supporting many of the issues we’ve faced and funding research. We can only hope that awareness of this disease is raised and other families can be better prepared than we were.”

The Merchill Family, remembering Pat Merchill

Thank you to all those who have honoured and celebrated the lives of their loved ones by donating to Guts UK

Remember your loved one by funding the research of tomorrow.



FUNDRAISING UPDATE

A Gift in your Will

Let your values live on

You can be a part of future life-changing research into digestive diseases by leaving a gift in your will to Guts UK.

A small gift in your will to Guts UK will make a very real difference to the lives of those affected by diseases of the gut, liver and pancreas. Your gift will ensure continuing research to enable earlier diagnosis, kinder treatments and the possibility of a cure for future generations.

It could be the single most effective gift you can give.

To discuss leaving a gift in your will to Guts UK, call us on 01484 483123 or email info@gutscharity.org.uk – we’d be delighted to hear from you.

Listen to your Gut

We're fascinated by the inner workings of the digestive system - if the guts work, life works. That's why we want to get more people talking about digestive health. When we open up about our guts, we can understand them better, take care of them and know when to seek medical advice. In September, we brought a Science of Digestion Event to Huddersfield, bringing members of the public together with digestive health experts to learn more about everything from Crohn's disease and coeliac disease, to gut bacteria and IBS.

We also had a great time visiting Huddersfield University in November to inspire the researchers of the future, along with our good friend Colin the Inflatable Colon.



Want to share the gut love? How about a workplace wellness session from Guts UK! We all have guts – let's learn how to take better care of them. Get in touch at 01484 483123, or email info@gutscharity.org.uk



Give a regular gift

Your regular donations allow us to plan ahead to fund life-changing research into diseases of the gut, liver and pancreas. With your support we can move important research over the finish line to help patients.

You can fill out our regular giving form or go online to donate. Call us to find out more about the research you could support.

Fundraise for us

Run, walk, cycle, dance – whatever challenge you want to set yourself, do it for Guts UK! From hiking, skydiving to a fun pub quiz, our team is here to support you as you make your fundraising ideas a reality. Feeling inspired? Get in touch with our team today.

Join Our Community



Host a Quiz Night

Put on a quiz night to raise money for Guts UK, or just have fun testing out your gut knowledge with family or friends! You can find the Gut Quiz on our website.



Tell a Friend

Did you know that 1 in 4 people experience digestive symptoms at any one time? Why not tell a friend about Guts UK, or raise the banner in your community or workplace for digestive health? You never know who might benefit!

We're just a phone call away

Yorkshire office:

(Fundraising)



Guts UK
The Media Centre
7 Northumberland St
Huddersfield
HD1 1RL



01484 483123

London office:

(Finance & Research)



Guts UK
3 St Andrew's Place
London
NW1 4LB



020 7486 0341

Want to get involved? Reach out to info@gutscharity.org.uk and find out more about how you can help us achieve our vision – a world where digestive diseases are better understood, better treated and everyone who lives with one gets the support they need.

THE CHARITY FOR THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

REQUEST YOUR FREE EXPERT PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET TODAY

- Barrett's Oesophagus
- Bowel Cancer
- Chronic Intestinal Pseudo-Obstruction
- Coeliac Disease
- Constipation
- Crohn's Disease
- Diarrhoea
- Diverticular Disease
- Gut Microbiome (Poo) Testing
- Healthy Eating & The Digestive System
- Heartburn & Reflux
- Helicobacter Pylori
- Indigestion
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Pelvic Radiation Disease
- Polyps in the Bowel
- The Role of Gut Bacteria in Health & Disease
- Ulcerative Colitis



NEW!

Gut Microbiome
(Poo) Testing



Much more information on conditions, health and lifestyle tips can all be found at gutscharity.org.uk

You can request your free of charge hardcopy in the post by emailing info@gutscharity.org.uk or calling 0207 486 0341.

© Charity Registration No. 1137029 – Guts UK Charity was formerly known as Core.