**Memorial plaque to honour healthcare workers in conflict and disaster zones commissioned by the Mary Seacole Trust**

In March 2017 work began on the commissioning to establish a memorial honouring all those healthcare workers who have put themselves at risk in order to care for people caught up in conflict and natural disasters. Commissioned by the Mary Seacole Trust (MST), the plaque formed part of the commitment to the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne. The plaque was unveiled in the Millennium Garden of St Thomas’ Hospital on London’s South Bank. The hospital, which enjoys an international reputation, is also famous as the site of the first nursing school, established by Florence Nightingale in 1859 and is the home of the statue of Crimean War nurse Mary Seacole.

The site was agreed by Sir Hugh Taylor, Chairman of Guys’ and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust who is a great supporter of the Mary Seacole Trust and previous Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal (MSMSA). Alastair Gourlay, Director of Asset Management, allocated Liz O’Sullivan, Arts Manager Essentia, to the project. Liz worked closely with Karen Bonner, MST Trustee and Head of Nursing at Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust. Each stage of the project was agreed and approved by the board of Trustees.

Once it was established that a plaque would be fitting for the memorial Liz O’Sullivan researched to identify a stone mason to undertake the project. Chichester Stonework, Restoration & Conservation Company was secured to create the plaque. Portland stone was used with hand-carved wording and the Mary Seacole Trust logo. The following words are etched into the plaque:

*‘This plaque is to honour those health care workers who have dedicated themselves to aiding others in times of war, conflict and catastrophe throughout history*

*8 December 2017’*

Following the completing of enabling work the GSTT ground team replanted the area in the garden where the plaque was laid.

The Mary Seacole Trust held an unveiling ceremony on Friday 8th December 2017 2pm-5pm at St Thomas’ Hospital, Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7EH. Over 100 guests were in attendance which included MPs and representatives from the military and the defence medical services. MST was privileged that the Deputy High Commissioner for Jamaican also attended. The plaque was unveiled in the Millennium Garden in the grounds of the hospital by Sir Hugh Taylor, Chair of Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust.

As the garden is frequented by staff, visitors and patients, the Mary Seacole Trust hope that the plaque will be a lasting memorial recognising the contribution of all healthcare workers who have dedicated themselves to aiding others in times of war, conflict and catastrophe.