

## Medical News

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### Breast Cancer Campaign

An open day was held at World Beat Fitness Centre in support of breast cancer on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2007. More than 100 people attended various fitness classes and a breast cancer awareness lecture, which was held at the event. Funds were donated by corporate companies and individuals who sponsored the day; a total of BD 6,053 was raised.

Think Pink Bahrain is a non-profit initiative that operates under the umbrella of Bahrain Cancer Society and all the money is directed to them in support of breast cancer.

Breast cancer Awareness Month was also marked by the American Mission Hospital in co-operation with Al Rashid Group at Marina Mall. Nursing staff from the hospital were invited to meet shoppers at a special exhibition stand to explain the importance of early detection of breast cancer and distribute explanatory brochures.

### Skin Disease Awareness Campaign

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October, doctors in Bahrain marked the World Psoriasis Day with mass awareness campaigns on radio and television. Doctors have been talking live on air to victims of the painful and debilitating skin disease as part of a global campaign. The aim of the campaign is to give them voice and to raise public awareness. Discussions on radio and television in Bahrain have been focusing on solutions to improve the quality of life of those suffering from the disease. It is estimated that hundreds of people in Bahrain are affected by the disease and a rough worldwide estimate put it at 125 million, according Salmaniya Medical Complex consultant and head of dermatology department, Dr Nedhal Khalifa.

### The Third GCC Health Conference

The third Gulf health promotion conference was opened on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2007 by the Crown Prince and BDF Commander-in-Chief Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Bahrain conference and exhibition centre. The three-day event is organized by the Health Ministry. The conference is part of a strategic plan of the health ministries in the GCC, which strive to promote partnerships and improve the health standards in all activities related to health education and the prevention of diseases in general.

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Among the participants was the Canadian Health Minister Dr Gorden Hoge and World Health Organization GCC regional representative Dr Haifa Hussaini. More than 90 papers, including 36 from Bahrain and 19 from Saudi Arabia were presented at the conference.

The event is sponsored by the Bahrain Islamic Bank, Bank Muscat International, Petrochemical Company of Kuwait, Alba, Bapco and Al Wasat newspaper.

### **World Sight Day/Vision for Children Drive Launched**

As part of the "Vision 2020: The Right to Sight" campaign by the World Health Organization (WHO). The Ministry of health has organized an event which was held at Dana Mall, Sanabis, under the patronage of the Health Minister, Dr. Faisal Al Hamer on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. The day actually fell on October 11, but Bahrain's event was postponed because of Ramadan.

The activities were held between 4 pm and 8 pm and focused on promoting eye care. They included a drawing and painting competition for children, free eye check-ups and a poster competition, face painting and an exhibition. The event has been organized by the national committee for the prevention of blindness in collaboration with Standard Chartered Bank, Lions Club, and the Friendship Society for the Blind and the Bahraini Saudi Institute for the Blind. "Vision 2020: The Right to Sight" is a global initiative for the elimination of avoidable blindness, coordinated jointly by WHO and the international agency for the prevention of blindness. Bahrain became part of the initiative in 2000.

### **An Autonomous Body for the Ministry of Health**

Bahrain is to set up an autonomous body similar to the independent medical councils all over the world, to oversee health services and projects. This national authority is responsible for organizing health professions and services; it is under discussion and could be implemented in the very near future. The authority will implement the general policy of health professions and services in both public and private sectors, in addition to offering suggestions and advices about their development.

The Cabinet has agreed to the project in principle and it emphasized that the body would be an independent organization under the overall supervision of the Health Minister. It will also issue and renew health profession practice licences and health institutions licences, supervise clinical research and supervise all health institutions to monitor their commitment to license standards and provisions. The authority will have its own specific council, on which the Health and Defence Ministries will be represented, along with the private sector.

The draft law will soon be referred to the Parliament to integrate all the legal issues and procedures regarding this body.

## **Evidence-Based Medicine**

The GCC countries and Yemen Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) primary care committee had their fourth meeting on 6th of November 2007 in Bahrain. Bahrain was represented by Dr Fawzi Ameen, the AU for training and planning, Dr Jamal Al-Sayyad and Dr Khaldoon Al-Roomi. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the reports presented by GCC members. These reports included the implementation of the recommendations and the decisions advised by the executive committee, the technical reports issued by the GCC EBM centers and the recommendations advised by the EBM public health conference held in Kuwait on 3rd of June 2007. The meeting evaluated the current situation in the GCC and the obstacles for implementing the previous recommendations. The meeting recommended using a unified reference for the GCC in EBM, promoting the concept of EBM in Gulf States and sub specialization in EBM such as nursing care, pharmaceutical care and others.