

Medical News

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Breast Cancer Awareness among Women

Think Pink Bahrain is launching their annual breast cancer awareness drive with a unique “icheck” campaign that highlights the importance of “hands play” in detecting cancer through monthly self examinations. The idea of the “icheck” campaign is to break the barriers and stigma, breast cancer has in Arab cultures, through education and awareness. The “icheck” drive is a year-long nationwide campaign and Think Pink's main focus is creating awareness. Think Pink is using “Henna” stamp to imprint the “icheck” icon on every woman's hand who will take part in the campaign. The charity is planning to visit villages, schools and organizations and will demonstrate self examination techniques conducted by certified volunteer nurses. Think Pink Bahrain is a home-grown non-profit organization that was founded in 2004 by Jules Sprakel, a qualified nurse from Australia. To date, Think Pink has raised more than BD100, 000. The money raised has been directed through Bahrain Cancer Society to help Bahraini breast cancer victims.

Free Eye Check-up

The National Committee for Prevention of Blindness had held a free eye check-up at the Bahrain City Center last October. The event was held under the patronage of the Minister of Health, Dr Faisal Al Hamer, to mark World Sight Day. The international day of awareness, held annually on the second Thursday of October, focuses the attention on the global issue of avoidable blindness and visual impairment. It has featured blood pressure and sugar check-ups. Brochures on eye care were distributed and competition for children took place.

Companies Step Up the Fight against the Deadly Virus

Major companies in Bahrain are stepping up efforts to combat the threat of the potentially deadly swine flu virus. Lectures on the nature of the bug and its symptoms are being held for employees and regular medical check-ups conducted at in-house medical centers. Workers showing flu-like symptoms are being examined or sent to health centers for treatment.

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Some companies have also taken the precautionary measure of reducing business trips to countries, which have reported high incidence of swine flu cases. Bapco has held swine flu lectures, and has issued prevention guidelines for more than 3,000 workers, as well as 50 employees based at the Sitra port.

Batelco is urging any of its 1,550 workers displaying swine flu symptoms to stay away and seek medical attention. Workers diagnosed with the virus were told to inform their supervisor and follow the instructions of their doctors.

Gulf Air has formed a swine flu task force to monitor the health of its cabin crew and staff. It follows guidelines and instructions issued by World Health Organization, Ministry of Health and International Air Transport Association (IATA). Gulf Air has a four-stage contingency plan with detailed triggers and responses to deal effectively with the public health emergency.

Zain Bahrain shops and offices had increased its hygienic measures in recent weeks. The company's communications department has launched an awareness campaign for staff on the symptoms of the H1N1 virus and precautions to be taken to minimize the risk of being infected.

In Alba, protective clothing had been distributed to workers based at its port in Sitra as well as to medical staff, totaling 60.

Free Medical Checks for 300 at Camp

A free medical camp for more than 300 workers was held at the Gulf City Cleaning Company's labor accommodation in Salmabad last September. The event was organized by the Indian Community Relief Fund (ICRF). Senior medical consultants conducted examinations for workers and an ICRF-sponsored buffet dinner was served to participants. Employees were given health awareness and safety tips and Labor Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) guidelines. The ICRF, functioning under the sponsorship of the Indian Embassy, has been holding regular medical camps for many years. It has already conducted 68 free medical camps, benefiting more than 15,700 workers. ICRF also provides financial assistance to critically ill people for travel to India for further treatment.

Drugs Addiction Center

A new center is being set up to combat drug addiction, particularly among schoolchildren. It is being built for the Ministry of Interior in Sanad, to help rehabilitate addicts rather than prosecute them. The center will use the latest treatment methods for addicts and provide them with all kinds of assistance. Construction is expected to begin by the end of the year and will be completed in about a year. The plan was formally announced by Minister of Interior, Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, as he launched Bahrain's International Anti-Drugs Day celebrations, which was on June 26. Land for the project had already been allocated. The ministry is planning to organize a permanent anti-

drugs exhibition for school and university students, which could be updated with the latest studies and research.

REFERENCES

1. GDN and MOH intranet webpage.