

Medical News

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Forensic Lab to Relocate

Plans for major expansion of the Public Prosecution's forensic division are well underway. The General Directorate of Forensic Science Evidence, which is temporarily based in a residential building in Mahooz, will move to a dedicated centre in Hamad Town within the next two years. The government figures released yesterday revealed that the Public Prosecution referred 1,764 cases to the forensics team in 2009 compared to 1,137 in 2008. The centre will further improve the handling of cases presented to the department. Since the forensic laboratory launch in 2007, BD1.6 million worth of equipment has been purchased and utilized in Bahrain's fight against crime. These include state-of-the-art ultra-violet detectors, which can identify semen and other substances invisible to the naked eye, gypsum used to collect footprints and tire imprints as well as a technology that can be used to detect counterfeit documents and currency. More than 35 scientists are employed at the laboratory in fields ranging from narcotics and poison identification to sexual abuse cases. The majority of the staff are Bahrainis, who have been trained by the government in forensics at universities across the world.

Nutritional Values of Fast-Food Chain Restaurants

On January 25, 2010, Nutrition Section had launched a ceremony of the "Nutritional Values of meals from the Fast-food Chain Restaurants". The project was in coordination with Food Control and Hygiene Section of Public Health Directorate. Dr. K Moosa indicated in her speech that the prevalence of obesity and overweight among the population led to a higher percentage of non-communicable chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus and an increased mortality from cardiovascular diseases, which is considered as the leading cause of death in Bahrain. In addition, increasing health and nutrition awareness among consumers led to the necessity of providing the nutritional values of different meals provided by fast food chain restaurants. Therefore, the Ministry of Health had encouraged the restaurants to display the nutritional facts of the meals offered, the total calories and the amount of fat (saturated and transitional fat), sugar, salt and other information according to the international recommendations. The launching ceremony included a simple exhibition of nutrition information to be presented by the fast food restaurants in addition to some educational leaflets about fast food.

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Health Bus

A 'HEALTH BUS' will soon start roaming the villages and remote areas to spread awareness, thanks to the initiative of a Bahraini health expert. The Ministry health education director for this project Dr. Amal Al Jowder is using the \$30,000 (BD11,340) cash prize she received from the World Health Organization's Sasakawa Prize for 2009. Dr. Al Jowder was the first Arab woman to receive the coveted award. The bus would promote health education among the people and encourage healthy practices. A launching ceremony was held at the Bahrain Red Crescent Society and was attended by ministry training and planning assistant under-secretary Dr. Fawzi Amin and other officials. The bus contains hand scooters for children, ropes and skateboards, among other things that could be used for children and adults to exercise and carry out physical activities. Dr. Al Jowder said that the private sector had also expressed an interest in the 'health bus' project and pledged to expand it in the near future. The bus will have a driver and three volunteers to conduct the activities. The Japan-based Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation awarded Dr Al Jowder the prize last April for "outstanding innovative work in health development" for the last 25 years.

Ophthalmologists from SMC Participated in A'ali Annual Eye Check Camp

On 27 February 2010, the second eye check camp held in A'ali health center, a joint effort of Bahrain ophthalmic association and A'ali educational center. Participated in the project ophthalmologists and refractionists from SMC and staff from A'ali health center. The people were examined by A'ali health center staff to evaluate their general condition. People were referred to ophthalmic expert for the following reasons: vision, refraction, intraocular pressure check and slit lamp examination. Appointments were given to SMC eye clinic, or to fundus camera for those requiring further evaluation.

Ophthalmology Teaching Session in the Health Centers (Regional Activities) 2010

As part of the continuous cooperation between the ophthalmology department in SMC and primary health, eight meetings were scheduled to discuss patient referrals to SMC eye clinic and emergency clinics. The following were discussed: Diabetics eye screening for diabetic retinopathy with fundus camera, glaucoma screening by pneumatonometer and fundus camera, and how to utilize the system for better and more efficient way to treat patients and screen the public for chronic blinding silent diseases. The meetings were conducted by Dr. Leyla Ali Aljasim and Dr. Mohamed Naim from eye department SMC.

REFERENCES

1. GDN and MOH intranet webpage.