

Medical News

Dalal Al Hasan, MD*

Saudi Board Team Visited KHUH



On 11 June 2013, Saudi Board visited King Hamad University Hospital. The Saudi Board team (Dr. Safwan Zaatari, Dr. Abdulaziz Al Mowaser and Dr. Abdulla Al Howaish) met Dr. Dalal Al Hassan, Dr. Jaffar Al Bareeq and Dr. Aasem Mohamed Saif Eldin. The purpose of the visit was to examine and verify the structure of Internal Medicine Department for recognition in Saudi Board training and qualification.



On 20 June 2013, Saudi Board visited the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department. The Saudi Board team (Dr. Mohammed Al Dar and Dr. Turki Qassim) met Dr. Dalal Al Hassan, Dr. Jaffar Al Bareeq and Dr. Hosni Malas. The purpose of the visit was to examine and

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verify the structure of Obstetrics and Gynecology Department for recognition in Saudi Board Training and qualification.



On 28 May 2013, Saudi Board visited Pathology Department. The Saudi Board team (Dr. Hesham Al Khalidi and Dr. Dalal Al Tamime) met Dr. Suhail Baithun, Dr. Jaffar Al Bareeq, Lt. Colonel (Dr) Khalid AL Sindi and Ms. Suha Hejres. The purpose of the visit was to examine and verify the structure of Pathology Department for recognition in Saudi Board training and qualification.

Arab Board Visited KHUH



On 12 June 2013, the Arab Board team (Dr. Abdulla Ahmed Abdulla and Dr. Abdulla Essa) visited King Hamad University Hospital and met Dr. Jaffar Al Bareeq and Professor Martin Corbally. The purpose of the visit was to examine and verify the structure of various departments in King Hamad University Hospital for recognition in Arab Board training and qualification.

King Hamad University Hospital Electronic CME Program Was Adopted by the Supreme Council of Health

The Minister of State for Defense Affairs, Lt. General Dr. Shaikh Mohammed Bin Abdulla Al Khalifa presided over a meeting of the Supreme Council of Health. The general

consensus was to adopt the KHUH electronic CME program for the government and private health establishments in Bahrain. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Health, H.E. Mr. Sadiq Al-Shehabi. The CME Electronic Program has been patented in the Ministry of Information on 29 January 2013, patent number 80120000.

On 16, 23 and 30 July 2013, representatives from the Ministry of Health and Supreme Council of Health (Dr. Mohamed Al Sowaidi, Mr. Hassan Ahmed, Dr. Baheya Alassomi, Dr. Mona Hejres, Dr. Mariam Hamza, Ms. Manal Ahmed and Ms. Fatima Almahmeed) attended the CME Program Training in KHUH. The training was conducted by Dr. Jaffar Albareeq, Major Sheikh Khalid Al Khalifa, Mr. Muhammed Rizwan and Mr. Rohit Arora.

At the end of the training, Brig. Gen. Hassaan Al Mohanna and Dr. Jaffar Albareeq handed certificates, CME booklet and CD for the implementation of the CME program to representatives.



Free of Deadly Virus

Bahrain is still free of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (Mers-CoV); no single case was reported so far. Authorities did random testing on suspected cases and samples were negative of Mers-Cov. If any confirmed case is detected, a protocol will be followed in the hospital and an official spokesman from the ministry of health will brief the media regarding any developments on regular basis. The Ministry of Health is conducting awareness campaign against the virus and distributing English and Arabic brochure targeting different groups.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said that 64 laboratory-confirmed cases of the disease had surfaced worldwide to date, including 38 deaths.

The virus is a member of the coronavirus family, which includes the pathogen that causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Sars). Similar to Sars, Mers appears to cause lung infection, fever, coughing and breathing difficulties. It could lead to rapid kidney failure.

While most of the cases have been concentrated in Saudi Arabia, the virus has also spread to neighbouring Jordan, Qatar and the UAE.

Nutrition Clinics ‘Helping Bahrain Win Obesity Battle’

Bahrain was ranked fifth among the fattest Gulf States in the 2013. Kuwaitis were ranked the fattest GCC inhabitants with 42.8% obese adults, followed by Saudis 35.2%, UAE 33.7% and Qatar 33.1%. Bahrain had 32.6% and Oman 22% obese adults.

Bahrain is waging war against obesity by setting-up nutrition and health clinics in all five governorates. Thirty randomly selected obese or overweight people were briefed by experts on the issue and given tips to lead healthy lifestyle which they followed religiously. Men, women and children who were given tips in these groups have lost weight and reduced their cholesterol levels while maintaining proper blood pressure and sugar level. More than 90 percent of health risks in adults and children have been tackled as a result of increased awareness and nationwide programs.

Health conscious people who regularly exercise at gyms or outdoors have contributed to Bahraini becoming healthier. Participants engaging in “small-scale exercises” in the clinics have shown significant health improvements.

Neonatal Resuscitation Program

King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH) has launched the Neonatal Resuscitation Program for newborns. David Fletcher, Chief Practical Training of KHUH said this is the first of its kind to be held in the kingdom. The first program was conducted on 16 May, which followed the American Academy of Pediatricians guidelines as set-out in the 6th edition of the Neonatal Resuscitation handbook. He said the program provides greater opportunity for successful resuscitation of newborns, noting that 90% of babies are born healthy, but 10% require further intervention.

“I was very impressed with the NRP course held in KHUH as the course was practical with very experienced and professional group of clinical teachers. The course would greatly improve the clinical care and safety of the newborns delivered in KHUH as it was made compulsory for all medical staff in Pediatrics,” said Prof. Kevin Patrick Dunne, Head of Department of Pediatrics.

Bahrain Pledges to Join Worldwide Battle against Aids

Bahrain has pledged to battle Aids and prevent HIV infections in the Gulf and Arab states. Health Minister Sadiq Al Shehabi highlighted this during a meeting with Unaid Executive Director, Michel Sidibé on Thursday, 23 May 2013 in Geneva.

The UN official commended the leadership in responding to the Aids epidemic. National and regional initiatives to prevent new HIV infections among children by 2015 and to accelerate HIV treatment were advised. Arab countries have a great opportunity to end the Aids epidemic. HIV prevalence is still low and the resources are available.

Campaign on “Go Red for Women”

Bahrain City Center in association with King Hamad University Hospital, hosted “Go Red for Women” at Central Galleria on 23 and 24 May 2013. The global awareness campaign was for prevention of heart diseases among women.

The campaign featured complimentary heart health check-ups for women conducted by KHUH medical professionals. Blood pressure, full blood count, random blood sugar, cholesterol test and Body Mass Index (BMI) were performed onsite, in addition to quick health tips service provided by the hospital.

“Go Red for Women” was founded by the American Heart Association in 2004. It is supported annually by more than 30 countries worldwide and aims to raise awareness about the importance of prevention, diagnosis and control of cardiovascular disease (CVD) for women.

Medical Research in Royal Medical Services

Royal Medical Services commander Major General Professor Khalid Bin Ali Al Khalifa and Canadian University of Calgary’s director for medical education programs Claudio Violato signed a cooperation agreement. They plan to conduct medical research and create opportunities for Bahraini Medical staff to obtain valuable skills and academic qualifications, including masters’ and doctoral degrees.

Bahrain against Counterfeit Medicine

Bahrain is free of counterfeit medicine due to the rigid monitoring and control of medicine imported to the country.

The new policy of National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) is not to allow medicine of suspicious origin into the country.

One of the NHRA’s key goals is to prevent medicine bought online from entering the country and only allow those imported with an unequivocal prescription. Bahrain’s annual budget for medicine is around BD 40 million according to the minister of health, Mr. Sadiq Alshehabi.

The ministry has taken precautions to ensure all medicine entering the country is safe and effective. Strict regulations to monitor and test medicines are present, where random samples are taken to be tested to ensure they are effective and safe.

Narcotics Probe

A committee will soon be established to probe the overuse of sedatives in the hospitals. This follows directives by His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa to Interior Minister Lieutenant-General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah al Khalifa.

An initial investigation by a security team revealed the import and consumption of large quantities of sedatives by the health sector over the last few years - especially those

containing morphine, pethidine and codeine. It also revealed a lack of control over storage and prescription. Contradictions were found in the data relating to their purchase and prescription of these drugs.

The committee will be chaired by the Director General of Crime Detection and Forensic Science; it will probe all administrative and criminal irregularities. It will look into the recommendations to restrict import, purchase and prescription of those drugs.

New Therapy for Joint Ailments

A new treatment for painful joint conditions is now available in Bahrain. Platelet-rich Plasma (PrP) therapy has been introduced in King Hamad University Hospital; it treats conditions such as arthritis, muscle strains, diseased tendons and ligament injuries. “It involves drawing 10 to 15cc of patient’s blood and placing it in a centrifuge machine where it is spun, then re-injecting concentrated platelets into the injured area using a sterile technique to minimize the risk of infection. It is an elective treatment, and currently is used when conservative measures have failed,” said Dr. Ahsan Butt, Consultant Trauma and Orthopedic surgeon. Acute tendon or ligament injuries, chronic tendinopathies (groin and ankle sprains), shoulder rotator cuff inflammation and tears, plantar fasciitis, tennis elbow and knee and ankle osteoarthritis are the medical conditions that can be treated with PrP.

Sickle Cell Death Toll Rises

Mr. Zakariya Al Khadem, President of Sickle Cell Anemia Patient Care, feared the death toll among sickle cell patients could rise during summer as a new protocol was implemented for doctors to wait a minimum of eight hours between each dose of morphine. Authorities were restricting access to prescription of pain killers to combat addiction after excessive amounts were being dispensed.

“Between June and August 2012, we registered 22 deaths among sickle cell patients and this time – with the new protocol – my biggest fear is that the members will increase,” he said.

Mr. Al Khadem reiterated that he had ceased all communication with the Ministry of Health since the start of the month, in protest at the decision and due to the concern that sickle cell patients were being branded “morphine addicts”. “For addicts, there are special programs to deal with their problem, but sickle cell patients need proper treatment on time. Everyone keeps talking about addiction but what about the patients who genuinely are not receiving treatment,” he said.

Health officials earlier revealed that 28,350 morphine doses were dispensed monthly by public and private hospitals about 900 units a day.

How to Combat Heat

During the summer months, from April to October, the combination of intense heat and high humidity makes the season uncomfortable. The seasonal rise in temperature peaks in August with a mean daily maximum of 38°C.

In order to beat the heat, few tips to follow are advised.

- Wear cotton clothes
- Drink lots of water and avoid soft drinks
- Add salt to water if you don't have a blood pressure problem
- Keep your head covered
- Get in the shade for at least five minutes every 45 minutes
- Be thorough with personal hygiene
- Avoid fatty and oily food
- Take rest if you are exhausted
- Seek medical advice if you feel nauseous
- Visit the hospital if you experience severe cramps

Hand Washing Day Marked

Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) decontamination section organized a ceremony to mark "Global Hand Washing Day" observed yearly on May 5. The event was celebrated under the slogan "Save Human Lives by Washing Hands". Officials from the Ministry of Health, Physicians and nurses were present. People were advised to wash hands properly in order to prevent contagious diseases.

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