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NKBCI NEWSLETTER



Our lives are dedicated to yours



THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT MEDICAL CENTER (AUBMC) LAUNCHES THE FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND CANCER SUPPORT FUND IN LEBANON

A charitable initiative that benefits adult patients diagnosed with cancer

On March 20, 2018, Beirut, Lebanon- The American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) organized a press conference to launch the first-of-its-kind Cancer Support Fund in Lebanon, a charitable initiative that supports adult needy patients diagnosed with cancer.

The launching conference was held in the presence of H.E. Ghassan Hasbani, the Lebanese Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health and Zahi El Haiby, Director of the Minister's Office representing H.E. Pierre Bou Assi, the Lebanese Minister of Social Affairs, along with Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, AUB President, Dr. Ziyad Ghazzal, Deputy Executive Vice President/Dean Interim Medical Center Director and Chief Medical Officer representing Dr. Mohamed H. Sayegh, Executive Vice President for Medicine and Global Strategy, Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at AUB, Mrs. Hala Dahdah Abou Jaber, President and Founder of the Cancer Support Fund, Dr. Ali Taher, Director of the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute and co- founder of the Cancer Support Fund.

In presence were more than 150 dignitaries and community members in addition to senior AUB and AUBMC faculty and staff. In their speeches, HE Ghassan Hasbani and Mr. Zahi El Haiby stressed on the rising incidence of cancer as well as on the importance of the initiation of this fund and the support it will provide to adult needy cancer patients during their treatment to safeguard all aspects of people's life.

Mrs. Abou Jaber noted: "We will work hand in hand with those in need to save a large segment of society that is suffering from this disease. It is our mission at the Cancer Support Fund to work, and under the umbrella and care of the American University of Beirut (AUB) and its futuristic vision, to bridge the gap and engulf cancer adult patients with the right treatment options."





Dr. Taher concluded: "There is no doubt that there are negative environmental and genetic factors that cause cancer. Statistics show that cancer is increasing while human life expectancy is rising, and therefore covering the entire cost of cancer is a burden on the budgets of governments and countries that face economic difficulties. Hence, the importance of giving, donating, and connecting with solidarity."

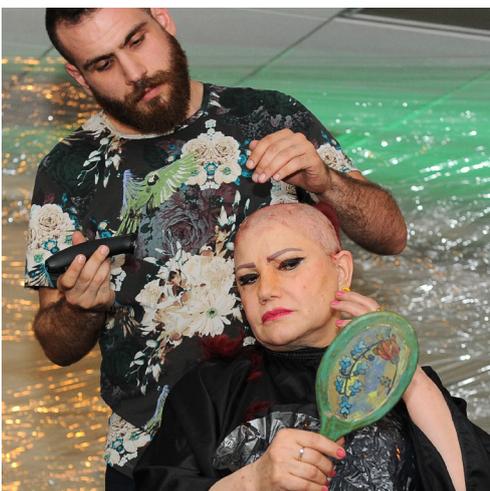
Hosted by Ms. Rima Karaki, the event was covered by numerous TV channels as well as newspapers and news websites. A reception followed the event during which the attendees welcomed this initiative and showed their support to help this humanitarian cause.

THEATER AND MEDICINE COME TOGETHER TO RAISE AWARENESS ON CANCER

Held on the occasion of World Cancer Day, the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) of the AUB Medical Center hosted a performance of Wasafuli el-Sabr at AUB's Saab Medical Library, presenting stories of real women in the Arab world grappling with cancer. This special theatrical event aimed at breaking the stigma on speaking about cancer, raising public awareness, and highlighting the importance of caring for cancer patients in the Arab world.

World Cancer Day is an annual awareness-raising day meant to show solidarity with and give courage to the millions of people around the world who are struggling with cancer, as well as to encourage the prevention, detection, and treatment of this widespread disease. Diverse initiatives are undertaken around the globe to mark this day with the ultimate goal of significantly reducing cancer caused illness by 2020.

Wasafuli el-Sabr event at AUB was attended by more than 200 people, including cancer patients and their families, local and international physicians—many of whom were attending the Beirut Breast Cancer Conference organized by NKBCI—as well as nurses, administrators, students, and members of prominent NGOs working in the field of cancer awareness.





Wasafuli el-Sabr, written by Dr. Abir Hamdar and directed by Dr. Lina Abyad, debuted this past summer at Masrah al Madina and featured a cast composed of Lebanese, Syrian, and Iraqi actors. It explored how Arab women with cancer feel, and how it impacts their relationship with themselves and with others, including doctors, husbands, lovers, children, and fellow sufferers. Hamdar spoke before the performance at AUB on behalf of the director, cast, and crew.

The performance itself held many poignant moments, including when one of the actors—herself a breast cancer survivor—had her head shaved live on stage. After the play, a segment was allotted to questions-and-answers; members of the audience shared their own experiences struggling with cancer and voiced their gratitude to the doctors and nurses who gave them so much support throughout their ordeal. Many people also expressed their hope that more such events combining arts and medicine will be held in the future.

In addition, the audience was encouraged to write their thoughts and feelings on sticky notes after the performance.

CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY LEBANESE BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION (LBCF) AND NAEF K. BASILE CANCER INSTITUTE (NKBCI-AUBMC) ORGANIZE THEIR ANNUAL AWARENESS AND FUNDRAISING BRUNCH

Beirut, March 17, 2018: Marking Mother's Day, LBCF in collaboration with Breast Cancer of Excellence at NKBCI at AUBMC, organized a fundraising brunch held at the Four Seasons Hotel to celebrate and honor the most influential women in life, Moms. The event was a great opportunity to collect donations to support patients with breast cancer financially and psychologically and bring a widespread attention to breast cancer issue throughout the year.





Representing Lebanese Prime Minister, Saad El Din Al Hariri was HE Deputy Basem El Shab. In attendance were also Vice President of Al-Waleed Bin Talal Humanitarian Foundation, HE Former Minister Leila El Solh, Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation Ambassador and Former Miss Lebanon and Actress, Nadine Nassib Njeim, Associate Dean of the American University of Beirut, Professor Samia Khoury, President of the Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation, Director of the Breast Center of Excellence, and Head of Hematology-Oncology, Professor Nagi El Saghir, Director of NKBCI at AUBMC, Professor Ali Taher, representatives from LBCF, NKBCI and AUBMC, along with women from our community, doctors, and donors.

After the presentation given by Mr. Mohamed Kaiss and the brief description of LBCF given by the Master of Ceremony, the journalist, Roula Mouawad, Professor Nagi El Saghir stated the tremendous strides in spreading awareness about breast cancer in the past years; he noted that this occasion has become known as “The Anniversary of Mothers’ Health” and has been held to emphasize that women should put their fears aside as recovery can reach over 90% when the disease is detected at early stages.” In his speech, Dr. Saghir also thanked Mrs. Mirna Al-Sabah, all volunteers, and donors.

“It is the right of every woman to get access to screening programs regardless of her financial status,” said Nadine Nassib Njeim, LBCF Ambassador.

From his side, Professor Ali Taher stated: “NKBCI is the only comprehensive institute in Lebanon for cancer prevention and treatment.” He also thanked LBCF and other patient support groups that help cancer patients who need it most”.

LBCF already managed with more than a total amount of \$580,000 to help hundreds of patients. 52% of these patients were young mothers below the age of 50 with low income less than LBP 750,000 per month. In conclusion, Tumbula draws followed by the distribution of prizes.

TIES with NKBCI

TIES, in collaboration with NBKCI, are launching a series of workshops aiming to create a healing environment for AUBMC patients. These workshops include musical performances, meditation sessions with breathing techniques, as well as storytelling.

The ultimate benefit of this program is to provide emotional support services and opportunities to meet other adults receiving treatment through artistic, musical, recreational, and psychological activities.

A musical performance was held by Mr. Ghassan Sahhab, a Qanun player, composer, musicology researcher, and teacher, on March 20, 2018, in the Medical Center. The performance was attended by more than 30 patients and family members from 7 and 8 North.

A meditation session, led by the Meditation instructor, Mrs. Nawal Fleihan, a Reiki and Karuna Master, healing therapist, meditation instructor and breath coach, was held on March 28, 2018. The session started with a group discussion, where patients from 8 north were encouraged to express their inner fears and dreams, and it ended with breathing techniques' exercises.

More stories about this exceptional experience will follow!!!



AMALOUNA IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CANCER PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAM – NAEF K. BASILE CANCER INSTITUTE (NKBCI) AND THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER UNITED TOGETHER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE GLOBAL CANCER EPIDEMIC ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD CANCER DAY (WCD)

For the second year, through several events that were organized during the month of February, AMALOUNA, and NKBCI members contributed to the WCD international campaign: "We can. I can." by posting pictures with messages on social media on how they can be active in reducing the global burden of cancer. More importantly, AMALOUNA, the Cancer Prevention and Control Program, and NKBCI activities were posted on the map of impact on the WCD, UICC website.

On February 10, an awareness stand occurred in one of Beirut's busiest malls, Citymall, in order to engage the surrounding people in a fun and informative manner and educate them about cancer prevention and detection methods.

Another wide-scope cancer awareness event was held on February 24 in the Spot, Choueifat Mall, in support of the WCD campaign. This was done in order to change people's perceptions about cancer, educate them about cancer risk factors, raise awareness about the importance of screening and early detection, and promote a healthy lifestyle.

In the month of February, the main aim was to be able to reach out to the Lebanese community and spread awareness and hope to the society!



6TH ANNUAL BEIRUT BREAST CANCER CONFERENCE: EXCELLENT PATIENTS' SURVIVAL RESULTS AT AUBMC

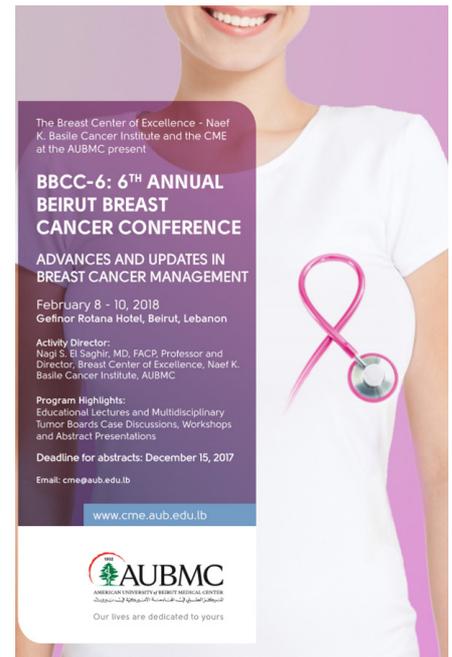
The Breast Center of Excellence at the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) organized its 6th Annual Beirut Breast Cancer Conference (BBCC6) at the Gefinor, Rotana-Beirut. The conference, which was held on February 8 to 10, 2018, included several didactic and research sessions in addition to three multidisciplinary tumor board sessions with case presentations and discussions. BBCC6 also offered three major sessions in Oncology Nursing, Oncology Pharmacy, Breast Imaging and an NGO workshop.

The opening ceremony was held with the participation of the president of the Lebanese Order of Physicians in Beirut, Dr. Raymond Sayegh, President of the Lebanese Order of Physicians in Tripoli, Dr. Omar Ayyach, and the President of the Order of Nurses, Dr. Nouhad Doumit, as well as journalists Roula Mouawad from Annahar and Rolla Safa from MTV.

Over 350 attendees including medical oncologists, surgeons, radiologists, pathologists, faculty, fellows, residents, pharmacists and nurses came from all over Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, as well as Belgium, Switzerland, and the United States. The conference focused on Modern Medicine and Advanced Treatments for Breast Cancer, breast reconstruction, expensive drugs, and multidisciplinary tumor board enforcement at all hospitals. They also stressed on the importance of early detection of breast cancer, and the start of treatment for recovery.

Dr. Nagi El Saghir said, "Cancer cases are on the rise and breast cancer is increasing, yet diagnosis and treatment, prevention, and detection are in progress. Cancer cure has become possible in 90% of early breast cancer cases. Smoking and lung cancer are on the increase in both men and women.

The conference also included presentation of research posters and abstracts by fellows and residents in training from the American University of Beirut and Saint Joseph University of Beirut. Awards were given for Best Abstracts of which one study led by Dr. El-Saghir showing long term 10-year survival of 92% and cure of patients with early stage breast cancer at AUBMC.



NKBCI PHYSICIANS WRITE IN ANNAHAR FEBRUARY 8, 2018 SPECIAL EDITION: "EVERYONE IN A NEWSPAPER"

Dr. Fadlo Khuri, President of the American University of Beirut, Dr. Ali Taher, Director of Naef K. Basil Cancer Institute (NKBCI) and Dr. Nagi El Saghir, Director of Breast Center of Excellence in NKBCI and Head of Division of Hematology- Oncology division at AUBMC wrote in Annahar February 8, 2018 special edition that included 250 prominent figures in Lebanon writing about their different perspectives towards Lebanon and towards building a better country. Dr. Fadlo wrote about the need to invest in the young Lebanese graduates because they represent the only hope for Lebanon. Dr. Ali Taher spoke about the need for Education, Science, and Medicine to define a new country as well as a new citizenship concept. Dr. Nagi El Saghir addressed the need to provide and continuously seek education as this will allow us all together to build a better developed country.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DR. ARAFAT TFAYLI AS DIRECTOR FOR RESEARCH AT THE NAEF K. BASIL CANCER INSTITUTE

Dr. Arafat Tfayli, Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Division of Hematology and Oncology, at the Department of Internal Medicine has been appointed as the Director for Research at the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI), effective February 1, 2018.

Since joining AUBMC in 2009, Dr. Tfayli has had a very successful research track. In addition to a busy clinical service and excellence in teaching, he has designed, conducted, and published multiple clinical and correlative scientific studies in the fields of breast and lung cancer. He has secured funding from internal and external funding agencies, and most recently, he has received an 800K euros grant for an investigator-initiated, multinational study on lung cancer that will be initiated very soon.

In his capacity as Director of Research, Dr. Tfayli will be responsible for establishing the strategic priorities, planning, and restructuring research activities at NKBCI, while promoting intra and inter-departmental collaborative clinical research projects. He will also be responsible for collaboration at the national, regional, and international levels. In addition, he will identify sources of funding nationally, regionally, and internationally to support research at NKBCI.



NKBCI NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR, DR. ALI TAHER IN CEDAR WINGS



NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR FOR AUBMC ADULT CANCER INSTITUTE

Perfectly Positioned by the Region's Leading Center Headed by Dr. Ali Taher

"You are stronger than you think"! This is the brand new positive energetic slogan that the adult cancer center at American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) has been using to raise awareness about cancer to the Lebanese community. Professor of Medicine, Hematology & Oncology, Dr. Ali Taher, MD, PhD, FRCP – the newly appointed director of the adult cancer center – stresses the pivotal role that nurses, physicians, and loved ones have on a cancer patient.



Cedar wings, the reputable magazine of Middle East Airlines, interviewed Dr. Taher upon his new appointment as Director of the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute and issued an article in her February- March 2018 issue; the interview reflected on the strong record of scholarly achievement and leadership assets that Dr. Taher has, as well as the excellent combination of intellectual, academic research, collaboration, and public relations' skills.

Dr. Taher stressed on the pivotal role that the physicians, nurses as well as loved ones have on cancer patients and noted that the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute is uniquely positioned with its highly multidisciplinary sub- specialized groups of healthcare professionals to become the leading center for adult cancer treatment in the region.

DR. ALI BAZARBACHI CANCER JOURNAL'S "FIRST PERSON" RECOGNITION

The American Cancer Society's reputable journal, Cancer, featured AUB Dr. Ali Bazarbachi as its "first person" in its latest issue, in recognition of his trailblazing achievements in advancing the treatment of leukemia and cancer research in the Middle East and worldwide.

Dr. Bazarbachi proceeded to conduct groundbreaking research in Bone Marrow Transplant, including the treatment of adult T-cell leukemia (ATL), a disease that has had an extremely poor prognosis; leading an international research network that made key discoveries and published its findings, a worldwide meta-analysis, in the Journal of Clinical Oncology in 2010. The outlined treatment, now the standard of care for patients with ATL, increased five-year survival rates from 10% to nearly 50%.

Dr. Bazarbachi does not want to retire before ATL patients are cured of the disease. He told Cancer that he hopes to see worldwide targeted therapy and precision medicine applications for both leukemia and lymphoma. In the meantime, he continues to lead "a group of outstanding scientists who will continue on this mission."



TEAM EFFORT ALLOWS VISIBILITY OF BMT PROGRAM

In a joint effort of NKBCI oncologist and fellows, laboratory and pathology physicians, nutritionist as well as pulmonologist and gastroenterologist, 11 abstracts have been approved and presented in the 44th annual meeting of the European Society of Blood and Bone Marrow and transplantation conference that was held in Lisbon in Portugal on March 18-21, 2018. The abstracts included three oral presentations, and eight posters that were presented and acknowledged by the president of the EBMT and different chairs of different working parties. In addition, Dr. Jean El Cheikh chaired the infectious complications post Bone Marrow transplant oral session and Dr. Bazarbachi spoke about the salvage of AML patient in relapse after allogeneic hematopoietic bone marrow transplant.

The EBMT annual meeting is the flagship event for Bone Marrow Transplantation in Europe and the world. Such contributions are giving more and more visibility and recognition to the BMT program at NKBCI - AUBMC not only in our region but on the international level as well.



DR. NAGI EL SAGHIR RECIPIENT OF AMAAC AWARD

Nagi S. El-Saghir, MD, FACP, FASCO is Professor and Head, Division of Hematology Oncology and Director of the Breast Center of Excellence, Naef K Basile Cancer Institute, American University of Beirut Medical Center, Beirut, Lebanon was given in recognition of his outstanding contributions to research and to the oncology profession, as well as services to the community the Arab American Association against Cancer (AMAAC)- Excellence in Cancer Research in the Arab World (ECRAW) Award during the last 18th Annual Pan Arab Cancer Congress PACC-2018 that was held in Tunis, Tunisia, April 19-21, 2018 ; Dr. Saghir is recognized for his work in many international societies such as American Society for clinical oncology (ASCO) , European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) as well as a leader of Cancer Awareness Campaigns and Patient Advocacy, Patient Support Groups, fundraising for support of needy breast cancer patients and has appeared in over 600 TV, cable and press interviews.

His research, teaching, patient care, professional and community activities are recognized to have led to significant regional and international impact, as well as down-staging of breast cancer in Lebanon and improvement of patient outcome. The AMAAC Award for Excellence in Cancer Research in the Arab World is given to a physician who was able to achieve the following: AMAAC Membership & Achievements, Significant Services to the Profession, Significant services to the community, Significant contributions to basic, translational and clinical cancer research.





DR. RANA SALEM

Q: When did you join the Naef K. Basil Cancer Institute?

A: I joined in June 2015.

Q: What is your job title?

A: I am a third-year hematology-oncology fellow.

Q: What are your main responsibilities?

A: I provide direct oncology care to patients with hematological and solid malignancies both on the inpatient wards and the outpatient chemotherapy and clinics.

Q: Prior to joining this department, where were you working?

A: I was an internal medicine resident in the Lebanese University.

Q: Where did you pursue your college studies?

A: I pursued my general medicine degree at the Lebanese University.

Q: What do you like most about your job?

A: Getting the opportunity to assist a patient in their fight against cancer; you get the chance to be part of something so much bigger than yourself. It's a privilege to be able to see them come out the other side of the tunnel. The genuine gratitude is extremely rewarding.

Q: What would you like to improve in your current job?

A: My job is extremely demanding; physically and emotionally. There are a number of administrative hurdles that we encounter while delivering patient care. I would love to be able to spend more time with my patients, at their bedside, listen to their concerns, and answer all their questions.

Q: Tell us about your ambition; in what terms would you like to develop your career?

A: My ultimate goal is to start my own hematology-oncology practice and provide the same compassionate and comprehensive care with the values I learned at AUBMC-Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute.

Q: Where is your best trip destination and why?

A: New York City is one of my favorite destinations, it is a very active city throughout the year, with a much diversified high-quality cuisines, and a blend of multiple cultures represented in the diversity of the city's neighborhoods.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I enjoy cooking and baking sweets, travelling, and exploring new cultures.

Q: What would be your best food choice?

A: Sushi is an all-time favorite.

Q: Tell us more about your character.

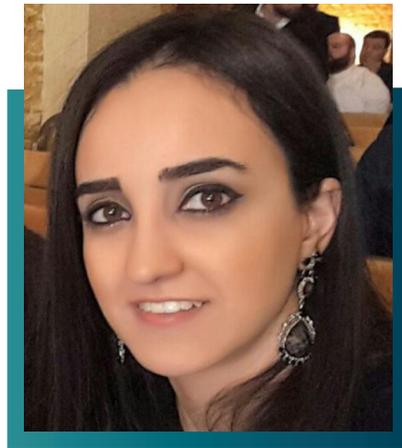
A: I am an active, energetic, and optimistic person; I am also very passionate about my work and the people I love.

Q: What is your advice to your peers?

A: Spend time with your patients, listen to them, and be available to them when they need you; they will surely appreciate it.

Q: What is your message to cancer patients?

A: We are your strongest advocates in this battle, and we will always be by your side!



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