

World Cancer Day: AUBMC to combine arts and medicine in treating cancer patients

Beirut, February 04, 2020: On the occasion of World Cancer Day, the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) of the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) and the Cancer Support Fund (CSF) held an awareness day under the international theme of “I Am and I Will”. The event aimed to make the whole community recognize and advocate the role of imagination and creativity in developing and maintaining health for all patients, especially cancer patients. It also pledged the strong commitment of both NKBCI and CSF to continually assist and support cancer patients especially through creative engagement and expression that would lead to better health and well-being.

The event hosted by News Anchor Rola Safa took place at the Halim and Aida Daniel Academic and Clinical Center (Daniel ACC) lobby. Attendees included cancer patients and their families, local and international physicians, health professionals from different backgrounds including medicine, nursing, public health, and members of prominent NGOs from TIES, AMALOUNA, Cancer Support Fund, Balsam, Palliative and Supportive Care Program, Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation, Revive Association, and Children Cancer Center of Lebanon.

Dr. Ali Taher, NKBCI Director said: “One of my initiatives is to enhance our hospital environment and patient experience through exhibitions and performances. While arts and science may sometimes be viewed at two opposite ends of a spectrum, we at NKBCI are trying to converge these fields. The international arts in medicine movement represents a rediscovery of the links between body, mind, and the spirit, and the unity between the creative and medical arts.”

It is important to note that Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute offers state-of-the-art medical services and aims to alleviate patient suffering during their recovery journey; to that end, and with the vision that NKBCI Director, Dr. Ali Taher, has put forward, the Center aims to combine arts and medicine as a new approach to lead the move in Lebanon through bringing art and music as key elements in treating cancer patients.

Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB President, said: “For the patients, this is an intimate, personal, and frightening voyage. People undergo this voyage every day, and it’s difficult that this voyage is at a time of uncertainty in this country. But, I will say that in this country there’s tremendous quality in-depth at this university and elsewhere in cancer care and in compassion. Michael Douglas said ‘cancer did not bring me to my knees, it brought me to my feet’, and on this World Cancer Day, it’s important that each and every one of us participates in a society and in a family that helps bring cancer patients to their feet.”

Director of AUB Medical Center, Dr. Ziyad Ghazzal, said: “Cancer continues to touch every single house across the globe despite the gigantic milestones that have been reached in cancer research and treatment. Our role as healthcare professionals is instrumental, crucial, and should be combined with key stakeholders in all public and private sectors as this is a global responsibility across our communities. The more we understand the causes of cancer the more we realize that we need to get ahead of this disease and take action to impact the future.”

Hala Dahdah Abou Jaber, President and Founder of the Cancer Support Fund, said: “I will never let down the people I committed to help. I will not surrender, and I will not let despair get to any of our patients.” The mission of this charitable initiative is to offer financial and psychosocial support to financially disadvantaged adult cancer patients in need, assuring that they have equal opportunity to receive appropriate healthcare services. The fund also aims to raise awareness on cancer prevention and support advanced research.

Dr. Rihab Nasr said: “This event is not a celebration of cancer, but a celebration of the day we were all united against cancer.”

The event was organized with Durham University (DU), the Lebanese American University (LAU), and Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music (LNHCM), several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working in this field who adopted the “I Am and I Will” campaign of the International Union for Cancer Control (UICC) on the 4th of February, 2020. It held an overview of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program (CPCP) and the achievements they have accomplished in the past two years, and a series of trivia questions to the public that helped in increasing the community knowledge in relation to cancer occurrences. The trivia questions were followed by Video Installation in the Daniel ACC lobby, created and directed by Dr. Lina Abiad and Ms. Dima Al Ansari. A Musical Show performed by the President of the National Conservatory, Mr. Bassam Saba and the Tenor Ms. Ghada Ghanem followed.

This cancer awareness day is one of many outreach activities organized by the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) of the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC).

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About AUBMC

Since 1902, AUBMC has been providing the highest standards of care to patients across Lebanon and the region. It is also the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine at AUB (established in 1867), which has trained generations of medical students and physicians, and whose graduates can be found at leading institutions around the world. AUBMC is the only medical institution in the Middle East to have earned the five international accreditations of JCI, Magnet, CAP, ACGME-I and JACIE attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, pathology/laboratory services and graduate medical education.

The Faculty of Medicine has graduated over 4,000 medical students and physicians; the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing provides excellent education for the nursing staff, and the Medical Center meets the healthcare needs of over 360,000 patient visits annually.

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