

First international nursing and healthcare informatics training course in region

Friday, May 07, 2010

The Hariri School of Nursing (HSN) at AUB, in collaboration with the Euro-Mediterranean Medical Informatics Association (EMMIT), the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and Medicine, USA, the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO – EMRO), and the Ain Wa Zein Hospital (AWZ) of Mount Lebanon, is organizing “The 1st International Nursing and Healthcare Informatics Training Course” in Lebanon, scheduled to take place from May 7 to 12.



This remarkable event was kicked off by an opening ceremony, which took place at the Hicham Jaroudi Auditorium at the Hariri School of Nursing on May 6 at 5:00 pm.

Among those attending were Dr. Jawad Khalifeh, representative of Prime Minister Saad El Hariri and the Health Minister, Professor Francesco Sicurello, the president of EMMIT, AUB President Peter Dorman and Provost Ahmad Dallal, and members of the AUB Board of Trustees. "Informatics has transformed nursing and health care at the policy, practice, and education levels and is here to stay," said Dr. Huda Abu Saad Huijer, director of the HSON, as part of her welcoming speech. "AUB HSON is proud to be the host of this course, which is the first of its kind in the region, and many more that will follow and as such will assume a leading role in developing this important field further for Lebanon and the region." she added.

Sicurello said that EMMIT and its partners hope to introduce and diffuse information technology in the region in an appropriate way, and not just for the profit of doing business. "Courses of this kind are important to teach people how to use the available technology properly," said Sicurello.

Dr. Patricia Abbott from Johns Hopkins spoke on behalf of the Dean of the School of Nursing and Medicine, Professor Martha Hill. "We know that information technology is fundamentally changing the world, and us being here now is an indication of more to come," said Abbott. "With all the available technology, we have all become next door neighbors," said Abbott.

Next to take the floor was Dr. Zouhair El Imad of Ain wa Zein Hospital who highlighted the field visit to AWZ Hospital. "We look forward to your comments and feedback about our information system," Al Imad told the audience.

"This workshop bears a special importance to me, be it through its timing, target, or topics," Dr. Alissar Radi of the WHO told the audience. Such a workshop is the first of its kind in the Middle East, the target population is nurses, which is a reflection of nurses as a cornerstone in healthcare, and the topic, nursing informatics, is an ever growing field. "WHO's participation in this workshop is a show of commitment and support to the nursing field," concluded Radi.

According to President Dorman, the training course was "a perfect example of how we can engage current and future health practitioners in a two-way street of knowledge transfer."

Finally, Dr. Khalifeh spoke of the Lebanese government's effort to upgrade its information technology. "We are not the best, but we are building the blocks." While Khalifeh said that the government has made many improvements so far, he added: "We need to progress more, and this needs the right infrastructure and continuity of efforts."

The ceremony ended with a buffet where participants, trainers, speakers, and organizers were able to meet and mingle.

The jam-packed six-day workshop will be filled with lectures on topics such as informatics in nursing, use of information technology, related legal and ethical issues, selecting a health care information system and factors for its success, health data exchange, technology and decision making, simulation in nursing education, global e-health and electronic communication, and even a professional site visit to the AWZ Hospital.

More information about the event can be found at <http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webson/Emmit/index.htm>