

SEEDS OF CHANGE:

Growing the Network of Tobacco Dependence Treatment Specialists in Jordan and the MENA Region

Since the establishment of the smoking cessation clinic and the Cancer Control Office, the King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) remains committed to leading the change in building healthier and tobacco-free communities in Jordan and the MENA region.

Smoking cessation services are a critical element to achieving this change, yet the MENA region continues to lack healthcare practitioners trained in Tobacco Dependence Treatment. This longstanding need for a wider net of Tobacco Dependence Treatment specialists is the reason why KHCC established its internationally-accredited Tobacco Dependence Treatment Training program, which is now in its sixth year of operation. This evidence-based, up-to-date, and interactive program is designed to build the capacity, competence, and confidence of healthcare professionals to provide high-intensity tobacco dependence treatment to patients. The program also is uniquely designed to highlight cultural issues specific to the MENA region (such as waterpipes and the emergence of electronic and heat-not-burn products), and to discuss regional challenges related to the organization and availability of smoking cessation services.

During July 2023, KHCC conducted its 16th Tobacco Dependence Treatment (TDT) training course in Amman, Jordan.



Twenty-seven participants from Lebanon, Bahrain and the UAE as well as a number of healthcare professionals nominated by the Jordanian Ministry of Health (MoH) took part in the course and shared their perspectives about it.



The course covered evidence-backed treatment methods and gave participants the opportunity to master dependence assessment, counseling and behavioral change, medication prescribing, and the art of designing personalized treatment plans based on individual case evaluation. By honing their skills and experiences, they will emerge as true specialists in the field, championing healthier behaviors that contribute to holistic wellbeing.

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“This course helped with techniques related to initial assessment which will enhance the development of the patients’ treatment plans.”

Dr. Assem Alawi, General practitioner, MoH/Jordan

“I was really interested in knowing how to deal with withdrawal symptoms as results of quitting. This course gave the opportunity to apply certain techniques to tackle this issue within the treatment plan.”

Dr. Salah Thabit, Dubai Health Authority/UAE

“Our program aims to ensure that participants learn and engage in an interactive manner so that they feel more prepared to apply what they have learned. Across the key concepts of tobacco dependence treatment, hands-on approaches are used to enhance each trainee’s skills. The region suffers from unique tobacco-related challenges, and these are also discussed to further enrich the training experience. Our 2023 cohort was a vibrant and passionate one, committed to collaboration and knowledge exchange.”



Dr. Nour Obeidat
Director, Cancer Control Office
and TDT Training Program,
KHCC/Jordan

The program encourages participants from different medical backgrounds to participate, including young graduates who can begin applying TDT principles in their careers from the onset.

“I am glad that I participated in this course because it helped me comprehend and associate the role of motivational interviewing within the counseling dynamic as part of the treatment plan, and I think it will help in both my practice, and in my daily life.”

Dr. Nada Alkhatib, Family Medicine Specialist, MoH/Jordan

“This workshop was recommended by two of my colleagues and I’m happy that I participated in it. It offered hands-on case studies covering techniques to address the behavioral aspect of tobacco dependence, along with pharmacotherapies and their application in real situations that may arise with patients.”

-Ms. Jihan Khaywa, Clinical Research Coordinator, AUBMC/Lebanon



The Cancer Control Office at KHCC is eager to continue this journey and build a network of tobacco treatment specialists across the MENA region who will be the seeds of change for improving and advancing the landscape of tobacco dependence treatment.

“It was really encouraging to see many healthcare workers who are passionate to learn and eager to develop their skills to fight tobacco dependence. We hope that our comprehensive program will contribute to efforts in fighting tobacco dependence in Jordan and the region.”



Dr. Naser Mahmoud
Head of Pulmonary Medicine Section
and Tobacco Treatment Specialist,
KHCC/Jordan



“As a fresh graduate, I found this course valuable in that it put me on the right path, introduced me to new skills, and taught me how to interact with patients in order to treat tobacco dependence.”

Dr. Joud Gharaibe, Research Assistant, Faculty of Medicine/Jordan University of Science and Technology/Jordan

For more information about KHCC’s TDT training program, please [click here](#)

