

AUBMC hosts the first MENA Region Conference of “Association of Academic Health Centers International”

Titled ‘Transformation of Medical Education in the New Era: Humanism, Technology, and the Physician of Tomorrow’, the conference follows selecting AUBMC as the regional office for AAHCI in MENA

Beirut, 28 September 2018:- American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC), in collaboration with the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC), will host the first MENA region conference of the Association of Academic Health Centers International (AAHCI) titled ‘Transformation of Medical Education in the New Era: Humanism, Technology, and the Physician of Tomorrow’. Held between September 27 and 29 at the Issam Fares Lecture Hall, the conference will address the impending impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI), technology and big data informatics on medical education and patient care and will discuss the role of humanism and narrative medicine in the formation of the future physicians in the coming era.

Aiming to encourage collaborations and discussions of key issues related to academic health centers in the MENA region, the Conference is organized by AUBMC as the host of the AAHCI MENA regional office in collaboration with Columbia University, Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC), University of Balamand, Lebanese American University (LAU) and in partnership with Cleveland Clinic.

H.E. Ghassan Hasbani, Lebanese Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Health, said: “Remote medicine has become an important element in diagnosis, treatment and medical education. Today, we have to deal with more specialists in the technology field, and as a result, we have to work more and more in a collaborative environment with multidisciplinary people.”

“With the introduction of new advanced technologies such as AI, robotics, I believe there is a mindset that needs to be changed, to be able to work with different people from different backgrounds to which we need to be prepared,” added Hasbani.

Marking the official opening, Dr Fadlo R. Khuri, President of AUB said: “We are glad to gather today to announce this collaboration between AUB and AAHCI, amid an explosive era of technological innovation during which it is vital to preserve the humane side of medicine. This symposium draws on pioneers and collaborators from American, European, British, regional and local medical schools to bring together the importance of integrating narrative approaches to medicine with modern technological innovations. We look forward to ensure that the best and brightest young medical students and healthcare leaders emerge as compassionate, scientifically-based care providers and scholars.”

“Launching the first MENA AAHCI conference is set to reflect the leadership role of AUBMC in shaping medical education and practice on regional and global levels, now and in the future,” said the Regional Ambassador of AAHC MENA and President of the first AAHCI MENA regional conference Dr. Mohamed H. Sayegh, Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Vice President of Medical Affairs at the

American University of Beirut (AUB). “The conference comes at a time when Vision 2020 of AUBMC is coming into its fullness and foreshadows the emerging health science campus which reaches among other areas into bioengineering, bioinformatics and biotechnology. It is also an important milestone preceding the implementation of Electronic Health Records (HER) at AUBMC later this year,” added Dr. Sayegh.

Cementing Lebanon’s leadership in medical education and healthcare, AAHCI Conference provides AUBMC with a platform to engage with peer institutions, share knowledge and expertise, address challenges facing academic medical centers and promote corresponding regional activities. World experts, regional and local leaders, keynote speakers as well as students and trainees will gather in Beirut to analyze, debate and make recommendations on the future of healthcare and how the physicians of tomorrow can master new clinical skills and technologies required in the new era.

The AAHCI Conference will feature 6 panels discussing a vast array of topics: Pre-medical Requirements in Medical Humanities; Teaching the Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine; Required Skills in The Era of AI; AI, Simulation, Technology and Clinical Training; Advancing Care Through Decentralization; and Devices, Robotics, and the Future of Surgery. A special session will address issues of concern for medical schools and academic medical centers in the MENA region.

From his side, Dr. Kamal Badr, Associate Dean for Medical Education at AUBFM and Chair of the scientific and international advisory committees of the conference, commented: “While aiming to transform medical education in the new era, the AAHCI conference will highlight the importance of individualization of healthcare services through building up skills of medical practitioners. Future doctors need to be capable of eliciting and empathizing with the unique life story of every patient and to be prepared to leverage technology and artificial intelligence to identify specific personal pathologies and utilize customized personalized therapies.”

“In line with the global theme of AAHCI, the regional conference will focus on ways academic health centers are planning for the future, including structural shifts at academic health centers and the evolving tripartite mission from research, education to clinical care,” said Noha Hachach, the Regional Office Administrator of the AAHCI MENA. “AUB constantly strives to drive the regional conversation in the education field, actively contributing to its growth and development. The meetings during the 3-day conference are an excellent opportunity for peer-to-peer networking, exchanging ideas, and sharing best practices,” ended Hachach.

It is important to note that AUBMC was recently designated as the AAHCI Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Office, responsible for organizing regional events and conferences, fostering the discussion on key issues for MENA academic health centers and systems, contributing to the development of AAHCI programs, and strengthening collaborations between current and perspective AAHC and AAHCI members, especially but not only in MENA.

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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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