

AUBMC launches the state-of-art ECMO program during its first Neonatal, Pediatric and Adult ECMO meeting

Beirut, 11 December 2017: In line with its commitment to provide cutting-edge medical technologies, the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) announced the launching of the first Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) program in Lebanon during the first Neonatal, Pediatric, and Adult ECMO Meeting. ECMO, an advanced technology that functions as a replacement for a critically ill patient's heart and lungs, offers patients an additional chance for life, and gives the medical team a second chance to revive the diseased organs.

The meeting, designed to raise awareness and share knowledge among intensive care professionals in Lebanon, was organized by the Office of Continuing Medical Education (CME) and held at the Gefinor Rotana Hotel in Beirut on December 9, 2017. It was attended by a host of specialists involved in the care of the critically ill patients and co-chaired by Drs. Jana Assy, pediatric critical care unit (PICU) intensivist and Director of the ECMO program at AUBMC, and Issam El Rassi, cardiac surgeon at the Children's Heart Center, and member of the ECMO program.

Dr. Jana Assy stated: "This is tremendous news for the healthcare sector in Lebanon. With the ECMO program, we will be able to give hope to many patients suffering from severe respiratory and cardiac diseases."

Dr. Issam El-Rassi, said: "ECMO is now a recognized treatment for severe heart and lung failure, in adults and children. We are glad that this technology is now available at AUBMC, similar to the most advanced medical centers in Europe and North America." The availability of this state-of-the-art technology at AUBMC will aid doctors to better manage acute cardiac and respiratory disorders and improve clinical outcomes.

Guest speaker, Professor Robert Bartlett, an emeritus professor of surgery at the University of Michigan, and establisher of extracorporeal life support organization (ELSO), credited with developing the lifesaving heart-lung technology known as (ECMO) said: "This must be a great day for your country and for AUBMC, as you are now officially launching a well-structured program which is present only in the best medical centers in the world." Professor Bartlett commended the readiness and professionalism of AUBMC ECMO team.

It is important to acknowledge that AUBMC was occasionally utilizing assist devices to save lives before officially launching the ECMO program, thanks to the pioneering efforts of its cardiac surgeons, trauma surgeons, cardiologists, and perfusionists, supported by a dedicated and committed nursing team. With the joining of the pediatric and neonatal intensivists, pediatric cardiologists and anesthesiologists, the ECMO team was completed in 2015 and continues to serve the people of Lebanon and the region.

The ECMO program, housed within AUBMC's Intensive Care Units, allows doctors to offer lifesaving interventions for patients who require immediate admission to the Intensive Care Unit. The Program comes as an additional attestation to AUBMC's leading role in patient-centered care and the application of the latest advances in the field of medicine.

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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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