

*Reconstruction at  
the Medical School  
Islamic University  
Gaza*



**Al-Quds University Medical School**  
*Dr Hani Abdeen, Dean*



“Up till now the school at Abu Dies has graduated nine cohorts of Palestinian MDs- no less than 360 doctors. The majority have stayed in the country and although a few have been lost – at least for the present - through the brain drain to the greener pastures of the West. A traditional curriculum where the disciplinary approach predominates was updated

in 2007, in line with the modern paradigms with more emphasis was put on behavioural sciences, medical ethics, professionalism, health economics and global health. The pressing need is for a University Teaching Hospital to unify and take better control of the clinical clerkships. We rely on the affiliated teaching hospital model which necessitated contracting clinical teachers as full time clinical faculty members with the all the financial burden that entails. The tradition of voluntary clinical teaching free charge is now no longer available. In the last few years three Institutes have been invested in - the Medical Research Institute where basic medical science research; Al-Quds Nutrition and Health Research Institute and Neurosciences Research Institute, a joint venture with Rutgers University in the USA. The majority of the research programs are funded through the awarding of competitive research grants such as the German Research Foundation, European Union, MERC-USAID which provide valuable infrastructure funding. However, additional support is still needed by our valued corporate partners.

Supported by FQMS funds, e-learning has advanced - a growing force in the delivery of modern medical education. A number of syllabuses can now downloaded on the faculty’s website, allowing students a more user- friendly method of teaching. The majority of our exams are done using the Moodle e-class tool. The success of this idea has permeated through to other university faculties resulting in capacity overload of the available servers in the IT department which, in turn,

led to many technical hiccoughs. This is an area that FQMS might consider to help, in the procurement of additional servers, to accommodate the increased demand.

The construction of the separation wall has isolated the Medical School and the locality of Abu Dies from East Jerusalem clinical services, leaving many residents in the area deprived of necessary medical specialty care - in accordance with the mission of the School to support the upgrading of medical services for the local community, a number of medical specialty clinics were established in the nearby tower blocks. The clinicians’ pay remain one of the thorny issues that the University is still finding it hard to grapple with. FQMS in the past, kindly helped in partially meeting this need which 2 years ago stopped, to the detriment of the quality of clinical teaching.

FQMS continues assistance to the two student societies and their projects; paying for student accommodation in the various sites that they are sent to for their clinical rotations; providing a generous bursary for the elective period to the fifth year medical students; kindly supporting the needy student fund; responding to the purchase of books, computers, LCDs and items of equipment needed for the smooth running of the academic process and help in the procurement and expenses of external examiners for the final year students’ exams. My hope is that this support will expand in view of the gruelling financial circumstances all find themselves engulfed with, as a result of the global economic downturn.”



**Islamic University Gaza School of Medicine**  
*Dr Mofeed Mokhallalati, Dean*

“Our school of medicine is going on in steady, confident steps with many ambitious projects. We have started building a new floor for the school of medicine and this floor in addition to teaching classes will include a smart room equipped with video-conferencing tool and two large halls for workshops and clinical skill lab. Additionally it will

contain a microbiology lab for medical students and a proper place for the telepathology lab which will be run by cooperation between our school of medicine and Cairo University in Egypt.

The first batch of our students are takes their clinical practice in the European Gaza Hospital (EGH) under strict supervision of our staff and the staff of the EGH.

Two of our candidates will start training in pathology department – Cairo University this year by support and sponsorship of FQMS.'

### An Najah University School of Medicine

Dr Anwar Dudin, Dean



"The Faculty of medicine is now a thriving independent institution for medical education, graduating our

first batch in June 2009.

Work is advanced on the

university hospital project. We also managed to add a good number of highly qualified faculty members both at the basic medical science level and the clinical sciences. The total of enrolled students in the six years of study is 265. FQMS continues to play a very important role in supporting various educational activities of the faculty of Medicine, with financial and advisory support always available and responsive to our specific needs. The students

are very active in projects relevant for the local community, besides having strong relations with other medical students around the world through An-Najah branch of IFMSA. All 31 of the 5th year students benefited from elective grants by FQMS. Students went to UK, Malaysia, AUB Medical Centre in Beirut/ Lebanon), Jordan, Egypt, Germany, in addition to local

From students' elective reports: Mosab Maree wrote - "Regarding the application process, really it was easy, and I was more than welcomed to do my elective course at York hospital in UK". Mohammad Al Murr: - "I want to be exposed to a new culture and new people. I want to see how do different people think and how they do practice medicine in a place where all facilities are supposed to be available". Abdelkareem Tahnat. - "I know the type of cooperation of medical team in Germany. They work as one soul, one hand and one team". Tareq Hammad - "Now, after I completed my study about the available opportunities for post graduate studies I am able to put my plans to be an excellent doctor who will help in our country building in". Faris Abu Shamma - "The British people are very educated and know a lot about their diseases, the health system provides great medical services for them especially the GPs who have a large role in the health system in UK".

FQMS continues to participate in selected students' tuition fees. Twelve students from the third year benefited this academic year from this fund.

In October 2009, the Second International Faculty of Medicine Conference 'Advances in Womens' healthcare' in Nablus. About 250 physicians and senior medical students from all over the West Bank attended. A group of distinguished professors from several places around the world (USA, UK, Italy, Jordan, and UAE) about 30 well known Palestinian physicians and researchers presented their work. The third international conference to concentrate on adolescent

Medicine is now announced for October of 2010 .

Sixteen faculty members attended and gained a very positive input from a 'Teaching the Teachers' course FQMS funded in October 2009. E-learning: helped by FQMS funds and working with university resources and infrastructure, the project enables us to set computer-based exams for the clinical sciences. Also 10 teaching courses at different levels have been put online after the teachers received an extensive 12 session course. The courses now are all uploaded on a university source OCC (on line course content) and can be accessed by all medical students at the college registered for the course. Graduate Training in Family Medicine is scheduled to start in two months. Faculty projects: The most important is the university hospital, now moving to the final

phase, needing a strong support in training the future specialists needed to provide specialized services needed in Palestine. In this context we have requested FQMS support for a fellowship in Cardiac Electrophysiology and selected a candidate who is now working on specific requirements (IELTS training and GMC registration) for the fellowship. International visitors: FQMS has sponsored teaching visits for well known medical teachers in UK to help in the un-

#### FQMS treasurer, Anthony Leonard reports

how FQMS spent your money -	2009
<b>Direct Charitable Expenditure</b>	£
Payments for - faculty salary support & clinical teachers	11,576
Postgraduate fellowship training programme in sub-specialities	79,547
Teachers & examiners to the Occupied Territories	6,411
e-learning & internet links	3,390
Student clinical elective attachments & Student Associations	54,621
Student emergency accommodation	6,507
Grants to Najah, Islamic, Azhar & Quds Universities	26,208
<b>Total direct expenditure</b>	<b>£188,260</b>

dergraduate medical education programme: for the final year clinical exam in June, Dr Jill Donnelly(surgery), Dr Ahmed Abdul Al-Haq and Dr John Moinahan (Obsterics and Gynecology). Report by Dr Samar Musmar, Vice Dean of Graduate Studies



Dr Yasin Tayem, leading the e-learning programme at Abu Dies writes: "I believe that with the physical separation between West Bank and Gaza, the logical way to connect medical students at the different campuses of Palestine Medical Schools is by creating an efficient e-Learning system. This can bring together students and teachers from all over Palestine through an internet-based software, enabling teachers to prepare teaching materials such as quizzes, interactive clinical cases, forums and chat sessions and upload them for students. With generous support from the FQMS, we have been able to develop e-enabled courses in various medical disciplines through a joint project that went parallel in West Bank and Gaza. However, our priority in the coming few years, will be to make these courses student-interactive and more clinically-oriented. This will be achieved by supporting them with interactive case scenarios in which students would be challenged with questions related to a clinical case and will allow feedback of their answers for their teachers."

#### News from FQMS specialist fellowship students training in the UK



Malik Zaben writes: "There is no doubt that FQMS funding for my PhD study at the University of Southampton has been of great help. In that period of time and under the supervision of Professor Grey, I have managed to generate an outstanding piece of research as evidenced by publications and a number of prizes."

In both 2008 & 9, I won the best prize at the British Neurosurgery Research Group. My last paper published in "Stem Cells" won the first prize across the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences for paper published in 2009. This research adds to the literature significant information on the control of stem cells in the brain, opening the door for the use of drugs to control stem cells and their use in repair after brain injury and or neurodegeneration. Regarding my neurosurgical training I have been working in the Neurosciences Intensive Care Unit at the Wessex Neurological Centre. I join Professor Gray in his operating theatre where I get the chance to watch the surgery and learn. I am enjoying my training and can not wait for the time when I complete it and go back home to exchange experience and knowledge with colleagues and help our patients in Palestine.'



Anan Shtaya writes: "In my work for

a PhD in Clinical Neurosciences, I looked at the role of stem cells in Epilepsy and ways of controlling seizure through manipulating these stem cells. This proved to be a very fruitful avenue of research and when I presented at the American Epilepsy Society Conference in Boston in December 2009, I received 'Young Investigator

Award' from the American Epilepsy Society. Now on my way to becoming a neurosurgeon, I'm doing my neurosciences intensive care clinical rotation at Wessex Neurological Centre in Southampton General Hospital. This is an essential stage in my neurosurgical training under Professor Liam Gray.

Palestine has a real need for neurosurgical unit or better still a neuroscience centre which will serve over 3m people in the West Bank and over 1.5m in Gaza Strip.

Along with other colleagues who are being trained in UK as well as those in Palestine we are aiming to make a major contribution to the treatment and diagnosis of traumatic brain injury, brain tumour, brain haemorrhage, and spinal disease. We plan to start neurosurgical training programme in Palestine for new graduates.

This is giving me a wonderful opportunity to get the best neurosurgical training all made possible with FQMS's help and sponsorship, Professor Gray's guidance, advice and supervision as well as the continuous encouragement Al-Quds University.



Rami Abadlah writes: 'Currently I am one of the Specialist Registrars working in the Neurology in East Kent, sharing the workload with two British colleagues and having full responsibility when it comes to dealing with patients. At the time being, I am committed to four supervised clinics a week where I see patients and have the opportunity to

discuss interesting cases with the consultants who usually run their own clinics next door. While on the word, I am usually in charge, supervising three SHOs( senior house officer) by caring for the inpatients. Almost once a week I have a session with the medical students

teaching them the basics of neurology.

From the first day after my arrival in the UK (December 09) I enjoyed limitless support, not only from my direct supervisors but also from most, if not all, the colleagues and consultants I work with, something which is certainly beyond my initial expectations.

Worthwhile to mention, I had the pleasure and the honor to get first hand training in the Neurophysiology by Professor Kerry Mills, the only professor in this field in the UK.

I feel lucky working with a unique group of high profile Neurologist, who, in addition to their distinguished knowledge, show genuine willingness to teach, one of the special manners I



Dr Samar Musmar supervising computer based examination of e-learning sponsored by FQMS



discovered in the people of this country.

Fadi Al Kufri writes: 'King's College hospital one of

the biggest teaching hospitals in the UK. The medical staff and paramedical teams are very helpful, supportive and socially active. I start my day at 8:30 in David Marsden Neurology Ward at King's College Hospital, joining other neurology registrars, senior house officers

and the on-call consultant. We discuss the neurology admissions made on the previous day and the current management plan

of those who are already in the hospital.

During the day time my duties include taking care of inpatients in the neurology wards and those in the other departments who need neurology input. Few neurological conditions can be cured with a 'quick fix' - careful observation and the input of competing and complementary diagnostic skills and treatments make each case of unique interest to me. For example

Working in the outpatient clinics is of particular interest especially neurology subspecialty clinics. King's College Hospital runs highly specialized clinics in motor neuron disease, epilepsy, movement disorders, muscle and peripheral nerve disorders in addition to the general and emergency neurology clinics.

Friday usually starts with neuroradiology meeting in the morning where we discuss various scans for patients in the hospitals and interesting scans from outpatient clinics. Then I join the clinico-pathological conference, in which rare and difficult cases are discussed in the presence of about 40 neurologists working in the department. Every 4 weeks I join the neurology Registrars in London in the Specialist registrars teaching day at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery at Queen's Square.



Ashraf Sandouka gained a PhD with FQMS support writes: 'This year I'm working in the Norwich Histopathology department, which is friendly, enthusiastic and organised. There are good facilities for training and plenty of opportunities to learn. I usually start my day doing cutup, which involves gross examination of organs and tissues taken from patient for definite diagnosis, during which representative sections are taken. Later, I do examination of tissue sections under the

microscope not only for determining the type of disease, but also for characterising its severity and extent in order to ensure that patients receive the appropriate treatment.

After finishing the cases, I have one to one teaching with a consultant to discuss the cases and finalize its reporting. A portion of the samples I also examine are cytology specimens and these include pleural and ascitic fluid, urine, cervical smears as well as breast, thyroid and lymph node aspiration cytology. Part of my day is centred on liaison with other clinicians mainly through multidisciplinary team meetings in which the diagnosis and clinical management of patients (especially cancer cases) are discussed in a multi-professional setting.

Histopathology is a key specialty which permeates all branches of medicine. It is a science hidden from publicity and the skills in this field are desperately needed in Palestine to improve the diagnosis and management of diseases - especially cancer.

## The Al-Quds Foundation for Medical Schools in Palestine

The Foundation is an independent UK registered charity formed with the purpose of advancing medical education in Palestine. Membership at £36 per year is open to all who support our objects. Visit our website [www.fqms.org](http://www.fqms.org) or write or call for a membership form or donate to:

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**the next FQMS Annual Dinner for Medical Education in Palestine will be held on  
2010 at the Landmark Hotel, 222 Marylebone Road, London NW1 6JQ**

*Fashion show at the  
FQMS Gala Dinner  
for Medical Education  
in Palestine*



**FQMS Fundraising Dinner 6 November 2009** More than 350 people came together at the Landmark Hotel in London to celebrate the annual Gala Dinner - this year was organised by trustee Mireille Masri, now Director of Fundraising, and included an amazing fashion show for children and young people, creating great interest and participation in circles previously outside the ambit of FQMS.

After a live auction and a call for pledges conducted by Nick Bonham, there followed a wonderful Laser light installation by light artist Chris Levine which dramatically introduced the breathtaking Fashion Show put on by young ladies and children of various backgrounds. It was organized by Reia's Events, among the sponsors: Missoni, Valentino and Damiani Jewellers, Asprey's, Ben's Boutique, Bobby Sager, Dinz, Enigma, Ginni Bogado Makeup, Hummingbird Bakery, Jimmy Choo, Linda Farrow Sunglasses, Maison Rabih Kayrouz, MCM, Nada Debs, Nyumba Hair Salon, Sali's Hair Salon, Sarah's Bag, Sofia Fiori and Tiddlywinks.

In her opening speech Mireille Masri argued that the humanitarian claims of Palestine were inescapably linked to the dispossession and violence of the continuing occupation. The heart surgeon Sir Magdi Yacoub, FRS, as Guest Speaker called for science to form the basis for regeneration in the Middle East. HE the Palestinian Ambassador Dr Manuel Hassassian spoke on the rôle of education in the liberation of Palestine, commending those Deans of the Medical Schools and the graduate students who were present on the part they played.