



AL-TAJ
For Health and Heritage

Annual Report 2009



Executive Summary

Al-Taj is celebrating its 5th Anniversary

Thanks to our donors' continued generosity and compassion, our future is full of promise to build and sustain a healthy community. Last year, Al-Taj achieved a number of vital milestones in health promotion and education to fight cancer and diabetes at the Arab sector in Israel.

Our projects have had a promising impact on trends and awareness of the importance of self-responsibility for prevention and early detection of cancer and diabetes and their complications.

Al-Taj Board members, staff and volunteers are grateful to our local and international partners for believing in our mission and supporting our efforts in making significant changes in the life of our society. Your partnership is vital to keep us committed to fostering quality projects and ensuring a sustainable improvement on the lives of so many people.



Al-Taj Organization was established in 2005 with lack of intervention by the various institutions, to respond to the major increase of cancer and diabetes prevalence in the Arab people. Both of these chronic illnesses had weakened our community financially and socially, and had a significant negative effect on quality of life. Given the fact that cancer and diabetes are two of the leading causes of death in our sector, preventive interventions and screening procedures are crucial measures that will continue to be a particular focus of the Al-Taj partnerships.

Executive Summary

Our Vision: to strengthen and improve the quality of life of our people through planning and implementing health promotion projects and empowerment of our community.

Our Mission: to improve awareness for prevention, early detection and to improve management and outcome of cancer and diabetes for the Arab minority in Israel.

Our Culture: to be patient-centered, and to recognize diversity by treating individuals with dignity and respect for their culture and ethics.

Our Values: to use teamwork in implementing innovative projects in our commitment to cancer and diabetic patients in our community, with respect to their needs and expectations.



Diabetes

Arabs in Israel are struggling with an epidemic of type-2 diabetes, where the prevalence is three-fold in women and two-fold in men compared to the national average. The Al-Taj diabetes awareness project is unique and culturally suited to the Arab life style. We create a synergy and use highly effective education on diabetes prevention, early detection and improvement of glucose balance to prevent or delay complications. We focus on self-managed strategies and educate patients by addressing their individual health needs. This enables them to develop responsibility of their own health and future.

During the year, we run meetings to raise awareness and change attitudes and decision-making among the public. Our projects are planned and implemented to address the health professionals and public from school-aged children to the elderly, including diabetic patients and their families.

The outcome of our activities is well-received by empowering and encouraging a healthy life style, the importance of physical activities and early detection, and improvement of average blood glucose and HbA_{1c}. Our Arabic book "Diabetes Mellitus – the Era plague" continues to be the only reference literature for diabetic patients and their families.



D iabetes



Cancer

The epidemiological transition of Arab community over the last 40 years caused an escalating increase of 100% in cancer prevalence, compared to 25% in the Jewish population. Breast cancer in Arab women increased 400% compared to 24% in Jewish women. Cancer in Arabs is usually detected in advanced stages, resulting in lower survival rates 5 years after diagnosis.

Our strategy is to assist our people and address this issue by: educating them on risk factors to prevent occurrence, symptoms awareness and screening procedures for early detection, and home visits to patients to implement palliative care and improve the quality of life of the terminally-ill cancer patients.

In 2009, we continued to fulfill our objectives by increasing public awareness and offer professional knowledge about cancer and palliative care. We distribute our Arabic book "Palliative Care Manual" free of charge to health professionals in the Arab sector. This reference guide greatly increased knowledge and improved training in the community-based care areas.

We collaborate with the Middle East Cancer Consortium – MECC. During May 8-10, 2009, we participated at the Larnaca - Cyprus Palliative Care Workshop on "Alleviation of fear, frustration and sense of loss through non-pharmacological treatment modalities". We also participated at the Palestinian-Israeli Palliative Care Workshop in Jerusalem, November 2-5, 2009.

Over 16% of Israel's population are Muslims. Health care staff lack basic knowledge of Islamic beliefs and ethics. Ethical aspects are very important while caring for any patient, especially when planning spiritual care to the terminally-ill.

Al-Taj conducted a study about Arab representation on the Israeli Bioethics Committees which was presented at the "International Conference on Bioethics Committees in Hospital" Safad, May 17-20, 2009. This study entitled "Ethical challenges and minority concerns" found poor sharing of 3.9% Arab members (Arabs are 20% of Israel's population), and 0.97% of Muslim (Muslims are 16.5% of population). A parliamentary question was introduced to the Deputy Minister of Health by Mr. Masud Ganayim, an Israel parliament (Knesset) member, advocating fair representation of the Arab minorities (Muslims, Christians and Druze).

Al-Taj has trained hundreds of physicians, nurses and social workers in Israeli hospitals about death and dying from the viewpoints of Islam and the Islamic laws (Shariah) on medical interventions. Today, Al-Taj is considered a primary source of information for medical and nursing students, health professionals and for bioethical committees in hospitals concerning Islamic medical ethics.

We published the first Hebrew reference "Medical ethics and the Muslim patient", and free copies were distributed to all hospitals in Israel.



Our project manager had presented the issue of Islamic medical ethics at many staff meetings in hospitals such as Carmel – Haifa, Hill Yafeh – Hadera, Hadassah – Jerusalem and more.

In addition, this issue was presented at:

- Spiritual care to the terminally-ill Muslim patient. 14th Conference of the Israeli Association of Palliative Care (Tmicha): Palliative Care at the Third Millennium, Airport City, February 4, 2009.
- Decision on continuity/termination of pregnancy in view of Islam. Conference on "Pregnancy – Technique, Genetics and Ethics" the International Center for Health, Law and Ethics, Haifa, March 11, 2009.
- Islamic medical ethics on life and death. 19th Israeli Medical Association World Fellowship International Conference, Hilton Hotel, Tel Aviv, April 24, 2009.
- Islamic views on death and dying (Abstract). 11th Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC), Vienna, Austria, May 8, 2009.
- Medical ethics and spiritual care to the Muslim patient. Workshop on Psycho-Oncology, Larnaca - Cyprus, May 8-10, 2009. Published at the Journal of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology, January 2, 2010.
- Islamic medical ethics at the Palliative Care Network website (PPT Presentation, English): <http://www.pcn-e.com>
- Nursing the oncology Muslim patient. (PPT presentation, Hebrew) at the Israeli Oncology Nursing Society: <http://www.ions.org.il>
- Islamic ethics according to Islam, a lecture presented at a staff meeting of Rambam Medical Center, Haifa (Hebrew video).
<http://actv.haifa.ac.il/programs/Item.aspx?it=1382>

Al-Taj project manager was appointed by the local Municipality to two positions:

Swine influenza coordinator: lecturing to school children and adults about H1N1 at Arab cities in Galilee, and to coordinate the different educational and health institutions.

Youth at risk committee: as a public representative at Shmed Committee, our project manager was an active member in introducing new initiatives and projects for the health and social well-being of our future generations.

Volunteer of the Year: in an effort to promote volunteering in our community, we selected Sheikh Kaid Najar as "Volunteer of 2009" and published a book about his life and contributions to our society over 70 years of his life's work. We organized a ceremony with the collaboration of our Municipality attended by hundreds of people from Galilee and NGO's representatives.



Future Projects

During 2010 we plan to implement more projects to achieve our vision which includes:

Cancer Disease book: early in 2010, we plan to publish the first comprehensive book in Arabic about cancer: risk factors, signs and symptoms, screening tests and therapy options for all cancer types. This publication will be distributed to schools and the public to raise awareness about cancer. The book was medically edited and forwarded by Dr. Ahmed Khatib, palliative care specialist at the King Hussein Medical Centre, Amman, Jordan.

Home Hospice: recruitment and professional development of a physician, a nurse and a social worker for the hospice team. We believe that a multi-disciplinary hospice team visiting terminal cancer patients at their homes will improve their quality of life and support the families before and after the patient's death.

Website: to be the key success in health promotion engaging a wider section of the population and responding to their health queries and feedbacks. The public needs accurate and accessible information to help make healthier decisions and choices.



Health Promotion: we will continue to undertake activities and lectures, preparing, publishing and distributing relevant material on cancer and diabetes, for public and professional development. We hope that our work on these initiatives will expand extensively during 2010.

Islamic Medical Ethics: conducting sessions and lectures to health professionals in Israel and overseas. Our project manager is planned to lecture at the 16th International Conference on Cancer Nursing, Atlanta, USA, March 7-11, 2010, on two subjects: "Uniqueness of breast cancer affecting Arab women in Israel" and "Spiritual nursing and the Muslim terminal patient". We were invited by MECC to present at the Asian Pacific Organization for Cancer Prevention – APOCP, Istanbul – Turkey, April 3-7, 2010, presenting "Ethical dilemmas and the dying Muslim patient".



Barriers and Obstacles

While progress was made in achieving objectives last year, Al-Taj faced a number of challenges to program implementation, the most significant of which was obtaining the necessary funds to establish the Home Hospice, partly because of the global economic crisis. We plan to seek a solution to overcome the financial difficulty by local and international fundraising, and hopefully by some diminishing of the world-wide financial crisis. Otherwise, our activities were cost-effective, and we reduced our expenses without affecting our strive for quality of sustainable care to the target population.



We will continue to play an important role in maintaining, improving and promoting good health in our society, with your combined efforts and support. We applaud your drive and determination in supporting this community-based initiative.

All projects and programs were carried out according to the agreements with donor organizations.

Donors to Al-Taj in 2009: MAP – UK, the Sobell Foundation – UK, Ministry of Health – Israel, Pfizer Community Fund – Israel and Help the Hospices – UK.

Other donors in previous years: the Kathryn Ames Foundation – USA, the Sparkplug Foundation - USA, The Wolfson Family Charitable Trust – UK, and Marvell Semiconductor - Israel.

On behalf of our community, thank you all for your kind support and partnership.



Board and Staff

For five years, thanks to the dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of its Board members, staff and volunteers, the Al-Taj rose to the challenge of making cancer and diabetes a top priority issue for so many in the Arab sector, with notable achievements for the benefit and well-being of our people.

Board of Director: Kamal Moad – Chairman (Teacher), Nahla Naamneh (Oncology Nurse), Monder Shamshoum (Lawyer), Ribhi Rabah (Teacher), Abed Najjar (Engineer).

Audit Committee: Khaled Shalash (Social Worker), Hatim Badarneh (Paramedic).

Finance: Mohammad Darawshi (CPA).

General Director: Kassim Baddarni (Health Promotion Nurse).



Summary of the Audited Report

For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

Sums in NIS, (currently \$ 1 = 3.7 NIS)

| Income | Sum | Expenditure | Sum |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Net Cash 31.12.08 | 32,055 | Salaries: | |
| Funding: | | Project Manager | 65,238 |
| MAP-UK | 77,770 | Secretary (Partial) | 13,800 |
| Sobell Foundation | 68,644 | Income Tax | 2,609 |
| Ministry of Health | 41,000 | National Insurance | 7,586 |
| Pfizer Community Fund | 29,516 | Office Expenses: | |
| Help the Hospices | 15,222 | Stationary & Furniture | 12,750 |
| Local Funding: | | Mail | 635 |
| Conference Exhibition | 4,400 | Communication & Internet | 2,800 |
| Fundraising | 14,200 | Others: | |
| | | NGO Fee | 1,180 |
| | | Courses & Conferences | 10,829 |
| | | Bank Fees | 616 |
| | | Ads and Distribution | 2,700 |
| | | Printing: | |
| | | Medical Ethics Book | 16,500 |
| | | Leaflets | 4,250 |
| Net Cash 31.12.2009 | | | 141,314 |
| Balance | 282,807 | | 282,807 |

Total of 126,000 NIS, are allocated for early 2010.

Transparency, Accountability and Credibility are our Values

Al-Taj depends on the financial support of individuals and institutions around the world. Please support our crucial work of safeguarding the basic human right, the need for good health care, promoting the willingness of our community, and the quality of life of cancer and diabetic patients at the Arab sector, Israel.

Direct Donation: please send Check payable to Al-Taj Organization to our office.

Tax-Exempt Donations: can be marked as "donor-advised to Al-Taj" and sent to the NIF, P.O. Box 91588, Washington, D.C. 20077-7503, USA, or alternatively to the European branch at: 26 Enford Street, London W1H 1DW, United Kingdom.

Direct Bank Transfer:

Please inform us of your donation at: altaj@o13.net

Account Name: Al-Taj for Health and Heritage

Bank Name: Mercantile (No' 17) Arraba branch (No' 626)

SWIFT Code: BARDILTXXX

Bank Address: Main Street, Arraba 30812, Israel.

Yours faithfully,

Kamal Moed
Chair of the Board of Directors



Kassim Baddarni
General Director

Al-Taj Organization, P.O. Box 85, Arraba 30812, Israel
T/F: +972-4-6747737, Cell: +972-52-4594490, altaj@o13.net