

NKBCI NEWSLETTER

JANUARY - MARCH 2022



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CLOSING THE CARE GAP



THE WORLD CANCER DAY- LIGHTING SAAB MEDICAL LIBRARY

On the occasion of the World Cancer Day, The Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) organized the Lighting Ceremony of Saab Medical Library (SML) Building on Thursday February 3, 2022 at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC). The Ceremony was attended by AUB and AUBMC leadership, oncology administration, Cancer Support Fund (CSF) team, collaborators, health care professionals and students.

Mrs. Celine Abou Karam, the Clinical Department Administrator at NKBCI, opened the ceremony with this year's moto "Close the Care Gap" set by the International Union for Cancer Control (UICC). Following, Dr. Ali Taher, The Director of NKBCI agreed on how they were united in partnership with the CSF and the Global Health Institute to emphasize the relentless work put to reduce the care gap by treating patients equally. The floor was then given to Dr. Fadlo Khuri, President of AUB, who reflected on Solzhenitsyn's Cancer Ward book occurring during conditions even worse than those we are experiencing in Lebanon, infusing a message of hope that goes hand in hand with a perseverant spirit. As such, AUB has a role to instil such hope by providing kindness, support, and giving back to those less fortunate.

Participants then moved together outside to light the SML, while medical professionals recorded their "Close the Care Gap" statements.



Dr. Ali Taher, Director of NKBCI

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Cancer does not differentiate between one human and another, neither does it look into bank accounts nor the magnitude of one's income nor wealth”.



Dr. Fadlo Khuri, President of AUB reflecting on his 30 years of treating cancer diseases.



"We have seen that persistence leads to hope. But persistence requires humility. None of us is more important than the cancer patient".

A call to close the care gap and keep hope shining on World Cancer Day

Under the patronage of Prime Minister Najib Mikati, the Cancer Support Fund (CSF) - AUBMC held a National Stand for Adult Cancer Patients at the Grand Serail to pledge the strong commitment of the American University of Beirut and its Medical Center to continually assist and support cancer patients.

The event, which took place on February 4 on World Cancer Day, was attended by the Prime Minister and several other Ministers, AUB President, NKBCI Director, CSF Founder and President, National Commission for Women's Affairs President, Ambassadors of the US, Jordan, Canada, and Norway, along with head of physicians' syndicate, doctors, and healthcare workers.

During the ceremony, Prime Minister Mikati flagged the "humanitarian challenge" related to cancer in Lebanon amidst the socio-economic collapse, as access to healthcare and medicines becomes increasingly difficult. He acknowledged the perseverance of Dr. Taher and Ms. Dahdah Abou Jaber in supporting cancer patients and thanked Dr. Khuri for always putting AUB's capabilities at the service of this noble mission.

Ms. Dahdah Abou Jaber, President of the CSF, in turn appreciated Prime Minister Mikati for being one of the first supporters since the fund's establishment in 2018 which aided so far more than 750 patients and 2,500 hospital encounters. Later, Dr. Khuri expressed how their gathering that day was a statement in support of hope, noting the return of the most important cancer surgeons, Dr. Raymond Sawaya, to Lebanon as the Dean for the Faculty of Medicine and VP for medical affairs at AUB.

The ceremony ended with lighting a hall at the Grand Serail to keep hope shining, shed light on cancer patients' struggle, and find sustainable solutions for them.





Lebanon Prime Minister Najib Mikati

“

[...]We appeal to all officials, the private sector, the local community, the institutions and international donors: Help us face the current precarious conditions because the sick cannot wait for the state budget and until a recovery plan is adopted.”



Ms. Dahdah Abou Jaber, President of the CSF

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“We will not let anyone extinguish the flame, and we will not stand idly in the face of the daunting challenges, so we call on everyone to extend a helping hand to continue supporting cancer patients.”

NKBCI involved in UICC regional dialogues as Country Champion

UICC announced the Cancer Prevention and Control Program (CPCP) at NKBCI among the selection of a new cohort of 20 "Country Champions" in 2021. As such, NKBCI is acting as a significant representation to Lebanon and the Eastern Mediterranean Region in regional dialogues. This is part of the Country Champions' roles to improve access to cancer care in countries that are witnessing unprecedented crises, design modalities to finance and strengthen national health policies, and advocate for developing national cancer control plans and cancer registries.

Dr. Rihab Nasr, Director of CPCP at NKBCI, during SML lighting on World Cancer Day.



"Cancer is a disease that can affect anyone, but the reality is that it doesn't affect everyone equally [...] we will shine the Saab Medical Library as a sign of commitment of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program to the global challenge of cancer".





THE WORLD CANCER
DAY- LIGHTING AT THE
GRAND SERAIL

KEEP HOPE SHINING

AWARENESS GOING DIGITAL IN 2022



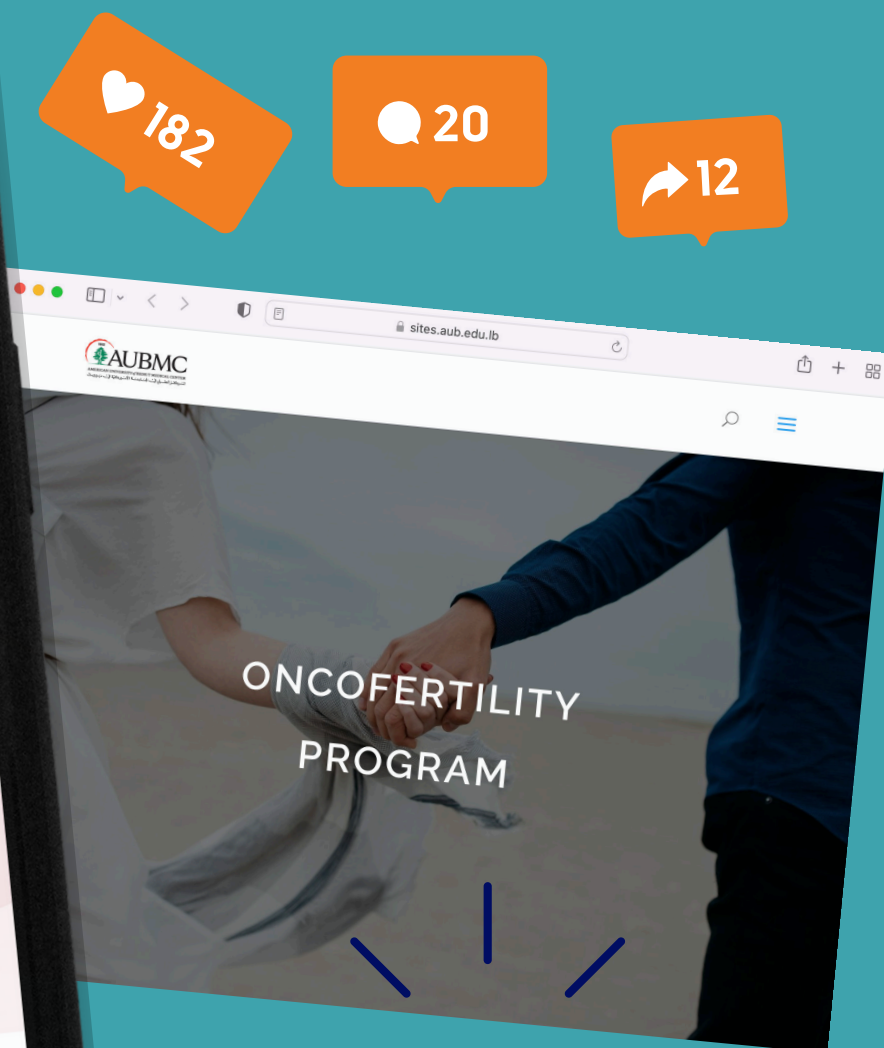
Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Giving my womanhood some screen time!

Year 2022 kicked off with the month of January, the cervical cancer awareness month. AUB-MC streamed two live broadcasts on January 26 and 28: "Giving my womanhood some screen time!" with Dr. Ghina Ghazeeri and "Safe Intimacy and Cervical cancer" with Dr. Faysal El Kak, which discussed causes, prevention, early detection, and routine testing of cervical cancer.

Support for Screening

In recognition of the World Cancer Day and the Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, the Lebanese Oncology Interest Group (LOIG) partnered up with HEAL and the OBGYN Interest Group for a free screening day on Saturday, January 29 at AUBMC. LOIG also organized a fundraiser day to help support cancer patients at NKBCI. People passed by Jafet Library-AUB, got their pins and enjoyed a tasty hot chocolate.



Keep your gut feeling alright

During the Colorectal Cancer Awareness month, the public tuned in for a live session on March 24 entitled "Keeping Your Gut feeling alright!" where Dr. Sally Temraz, haematologist and oncologist at NKBCI, elaborated on colorectal screening, diagnosis, and treatment. In another session "Good things come to those who eat well!", Ms. Diana Wazne Baydoun, clinical dietitian and Quality Coordinator at NKBCI, provided tips about healthy diets for colorectal cancer prevention.





LOIG'S CERVICAL
CANCER AWARENESS
CAMPAIGN

PATIENTS ACTIVITIES

RECONNECT WITH HOPE



Reconnect with Hope

Combining Art and Medicine has always proven to be an additional element of therapy to any patient, especially cancer patients.

The Cancer Support Fund in collaboration with Al Bustan Music Festival organized a walk-in musical concert called "Reconnect with Hope" at the AUB- Halim and Aida Daniel Academic and Clinical Center- lobby. The renowned pianist Boris Berezovsky of dazzling virtuosity performed on the "Sing for Hope" Yamaha baby grand piano generously gifted to the Cancer Support Fund by Samir Abou Samra.

Listening to the sound of music had such a mesmerizing effect on all attendees be it patients, physicians, healthcare workers or the vibrant crowd of music lovers.

Piano Story

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The piano was painted by the late Billy The Artist, a painter volunteering his time to paint pianos with the New York based NGO Sing for Hope whose mission is to spread music and art to those needing it the most in healthcare facilities and schools. Other than being a special piece of art, the piano is also signed by music icons like Andrea Bocelli, Placido Domingo, Monica Yunus and Camille Zamora, manifesting its uniqueness even further.



Happy Mother's Day

I do it with her

The Lebanese Breast Cancer foundation celebrated Mother's day by organizing a special three days free photoshoot booth at ABC branches on March 18,19 & 20. Visitors honoured their moms by booking their session which reminded them of how special this day was and how blessed they were for having their moms always by their side.

Two letters mantra we never stop repeating: MAMA

On occasion of Mother's day, the NKBCI staff made sure to mark the occasion by touring the wards of patients with Dr. Hazem Assi, Director for Specialty Clinics and Clinical Services, honouring mothers for their strength and endurance.





MOTHER'S DAY
2022, LEBANESE
BREAST CANCER
FOUNDATION

FUNDRAISING EVENTS



Heartfelt Thank You for Medications Donations

King Hussein Cancer Center donation

King Hussein Cancer Center has been continuously supporting and saving cancer patients lives through generous donations made by Her Royal Highness Princess Ghida Talal of Jordan.

In March 2022, HRH Princess Ghida Talal generously donated to adult needy cancer patients at the Naef K Basile Cancer Institute a medication shipment with a value of 106,805.973 JD

This donation contained lifesaving medications crucial to numerous patients that were undergoing Bone Marrow Transplants, chemotherapy as well as other conditions.

We appreciate and acknowledge the important role HRH has had towards our cancer patients as well as towards our NKBCI institute and remain thankful on behalf of our patients to her act of generosity and kindness portraying her humanitarian support towards underprivileged cancer patients.

The donation was received with the help of the High Rescue Commission and the Ministry of Public Health in Lebanon as well as with the support of the Prime minister office in Lebanon.

People to People Aid NGO donation

Special thanks to People to People Aid NGO and Lebanon Relief Project who gathered to bring to adult cancer patients much needed medications and support our cause.



Run for Cancer Fighters

Sports enthusiasts ran for a cause with the CSF who participated in the 5 km women race in the Beirut Marathon. Ticket proceeds went to the aid of cancer patients, in a year where cancer reached its highest burden in the country. It was a great joy to have the Canadian ambassador, President of the National commission for Lebanese Women, Women League and fellow friends and families join in the run. A special beat pulsed as College Notre Dame de Jamhour students embraced the cause with us, marking the event with a dabke dance.



Other Nations: A Journey Through Threatened Kingdoms

Marine Bougaran

With this exhibition, Michel Zoghzoghi, urges his visitor to examine the relationship between “man” and the animal world.

Since the beginning of his photographic journey, Michel Zoghzoghi chose to raise awareness by capturing the beauty of earth’s remaining wilderness. He shows us the perfect harmony and balance of nature to make us understand what is being lost. The unchecked development of modern civilizations has called everything into question. Man has become the alpha predator, but unlike other predators he doesn’t guard the balance, he threatens it.

This exhibition, to be experienced as a journey, calls our attention to the beauty of endangered species. Whether at dusk or dawn, solitary or with the pride, polar bears, tigers, lions, here lie majestic, masters of their own kingdoms.

With extreme generosity, Zoghzoghi contributed all sales proceed of the above exhibition to support the Cancer Support Fund at AUBMC.



Henry Beston, 1928 in his book 'The Outermost House'.
These words have become a statement to Michel Zoghzoghi



“They are not brethren, they are not underlings: they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth.”



MICHEL ZOGHZOGHI EXHIBITION



IN THE NEWS



"NOT TO GIVE UP RATHER
OVERCOME OBSTACLES
WITH NEW RIGOUR"



In the News

Dr. Ali Taher and Dr. Jean El-Cheikh in the news

Al Monitor and Annahar newspapers featured respectively Dr. Ali Taher, Associate Vice President for Medical Advancement and Communications at AUB-MC and Director of NKBCI, and Dr. Jean El-Cheikh, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine Division of Hematology at AUB-MC, who discussed threats that cancer patients are constantly facing. As Lebanon experiences the most extensive economic and financial crises in its history, cancer patients find themselves in an unbearable situation where lifesaving medicine is becoming too expensive or is not available on the market. The situation is also compounded by fears in reduction of government subsidies for an increasing number of medicines, including those treating chronic diseases.

To access the full articles:

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/lebanon-deterioration-health-system-endangers-cancer-patients-lives>

<https://www.annahar.com/arabic/%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9/30032022111515224>

Ms. Hala Dahdah Abou Jaber in the news

The President of the CSF was featured in Annahar Newspaper on March 8, in an article entitled "Hala Dahdah Abou Jaber... continuous battles side by side with cancer patients and nothing will stand in my way". The article reflected on how Ms. Dahdah Abou Jaber's life experiences and struggles had driven her, as a woman, not to give up rather overcome obstacles with new rigour, for the pain cancer patients experience is much higher than anyone's, thus she will not forsake them.

To access the full article:

<https://www.annahar.com/arabic/section/5-%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9/07032022072315550>





TOGETHER WE KEEP
HOPE SHINING



AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

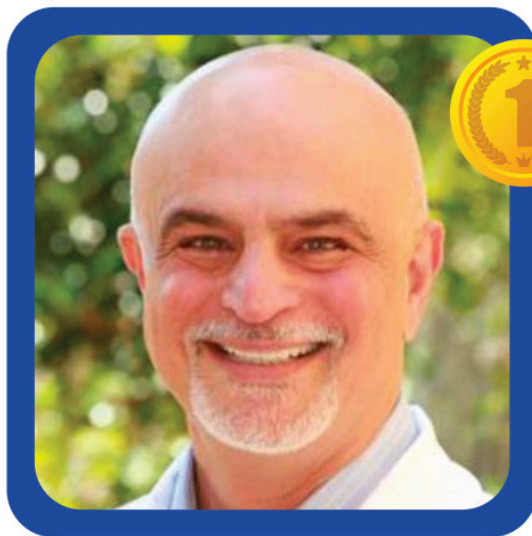


AD Scientific indexing

Alper-Doger Scientific Index 2022 ranked Dr. Naji el Saghir first in Lebanon in the field of Medical Oncology and Dr. Ali Taher first in Lebanon and Asia in the field of Hematology. Proud of you doctors!



AD SCIENTIFIC INDEX 2022 (Alper-Doger Scientific Index)



Dr. Ali Taher

Ranked

in Lebanon in the field of Hematology

Thalassemia | Sickle Cell Disease | Thrombosis | Bleeding | Anemia

in Asia in the field of Hematology

Thalassemia | Sickle Cell Disease | Thrombosis | Bleeding | Anemia



Dr. Naji El Saghir

Ranked

in Lebanon in the field of Medical Oncology

Groundbreaking Publications

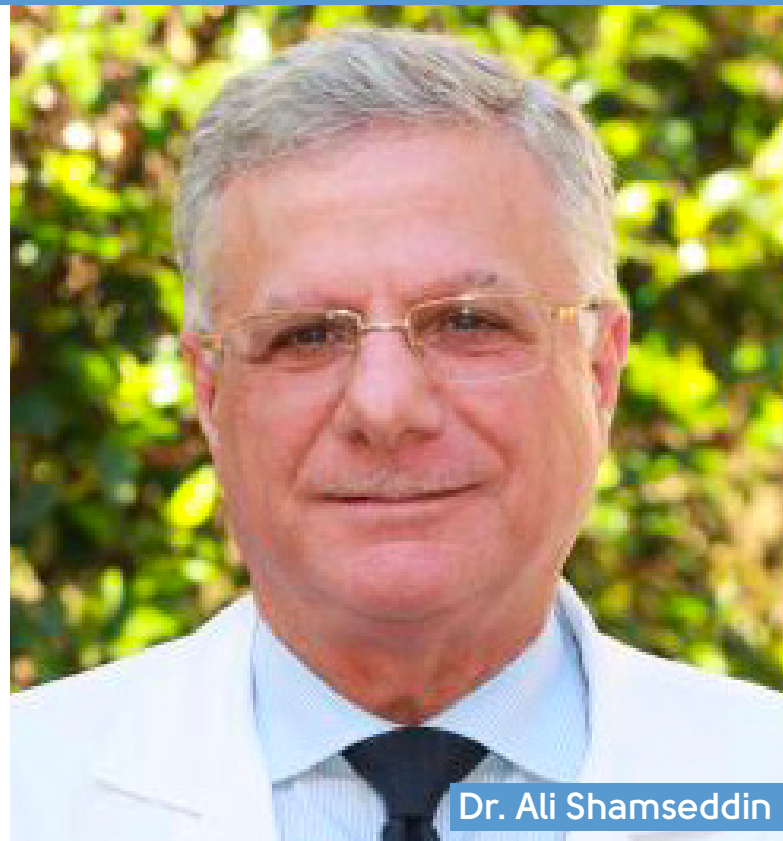
The American Association for Cancer Research publishes a new study by Dr. Ali Bazarbachi

The American Association for Cancer Research's reputable journal, *Clinical Cancer Research* published a new study by Dr. Ali Bazarbachi, Director of the bone marrow transplantation program at NKBCI, for patients with relapsed acute lymphoblastic leukemia after hematopoietic cell transplantation. The study reports progressive improvement in the outcomes of patients carrying the Philadelphia chromosome.

Study title: 20-Year Steady Increase in Survival of Adult Patients with Relapsed Philadelphia-Positive Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia Post Allogeneic Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation



Dr. Ali Bazarbachi



Dr. Ali Shamseddin

The Video Journal of Oncology features Dr. Ali Shamseddin's new Averectal study at ASCO GI 2022

Dr. Ali Shamseddine, Director of Gastrointestinal and Genitourinary Cancer Program at NKBCI, reported findings of Phase II Averectal study at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Gastrointestinal Cancer Symposium 2022. Growing evidence indicates the use of adjuvant chemotherapy in locally advanced rectal cancer is not improving outcomes for patients. The Averectal study investigated the use of total neoadjuvant therapy, incorporating short-course radiation plus chemotherapy antecedent to surgery, in addition to chemoimmunotherapy. Results from the trial have demonstrated an improvement in pathologic complete response (pCR), with 37.5% of patients achieving pCR.

Study title: SO-30 Efficacy and safety of neoadjuvant short-course radiation followed by mFOLFOX-6 plus avelumab for locally-advanced rectal adenocarcinoma: Averectal study

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