EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE CORNER

The need to develop a national evidence-based medicine center: for tomorrow better health

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It is well documented that physicians have difficulty keeping up with the huge amount of medical information they are faced with and managing it effectively to help optimize the care they deliver to their patients.

Evidence-based medicine is being recognized worldwide as an important skill that aim at improving the way physicians practice medicine, teach medicine, and do scientific research. There is a real need to develop a national evidence based medicine center in every country in the Middle East. Till now there are individual activities here and there, e.g the author of this article has coordinated four EBM workshops and this has resulted in increased awareness of the importance in EBM. However, there are other people doing the same and may be more. In the same time, dissemination of information and acquiring the skills of EBM requires more than workshops. It required establishing an EBM center.

The center should be an independent body whose aim is to promote evidence-based medicine in a national perspective. The main objective of the Center is to promote the teaching, learning, practice and evaluation of Evidence-Based Medicine.

Distinguished scholars will be assembled and should work with a group of recognized experts in EBM and Healthcare policy. They will be required to develop and teach structured courses and informal seminars for program trainees. In addition, a monthly Journal Club will be initiated. Healthcare decision-making will be informed by high quality, timely research evidence.

Building on the enthusiasm of individuals should be spirit of the future center by involving and supporting people of different skills and backgrounds as Faculty, trainees and local healthcare professionals interested in developing their clinical research and analysis skills may participate in the educational activities of the center. In addition, authorized bodies together with pharmaceutical and industrial companies should support and assist in recruitment and training as well as in development of a data analysis and clinical research consultation service for the Center.

One basic mission for the national EBM center is to develop a curriculum for at least a couple of years. The curriculum of the EBM Center for Training and Clinical Research should be of high quality, dynamic and problem focused. It will develop training modules, which optimize its ability to access information globally. It will include seminars, discussion groups and periodic Journal Club.

The different items that should be included in the curriculum for health professionals are:

- Computer skills and search methodologies
- Biostatistics related to clinical trial design and analysis Bioethics
- Clinical trial design, including RCT, Case-control and Cohort studies
- Research Design with focus on individual research projects
- Quality of evidence and Meta analysis
- Decision analysis
- Cost-effectiveness analysis

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- Quality of evidence and Meta analysis
- Decision analysis
- Cost-effectiveness analysis
• Health service research and the analysis of secondary databases
• Presentation and publication skills
• Medical / Legal issues in health delivery
• Health economics and finance
• Setting up an evidence-based clinical practice

It is very clear that there will be many obstacles, but the reward for establishing EBM center is much more and deserves all the efforts and time: for tomorrow better health.