

## RCPsych VIPSIG ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

### "Engagement in Volunteering and Humanitarian Psychiatry: Initiatives in the Middle Eastern Division"

Yasser Saeed Khan MBBS, PGDip, DCP, FRCPsych, FRCP (Edin.)  
Vice-chair, RCPsych Middle Eastern International Division

Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist & Medical Lead  
Hamad Medical Corporation, Qatar

Associate Professor, College of Medicine, Qatar University, Qatar



Middle Eastern  
Division

# Conflict of Interest

- No conflict of interest to declare.

# Supporting Trainees in the Middle East

- Mentorship and coaching provided by current members and fellows of the RCPsych in the region.
- Focus on enhancing communication skills and exam preparation for trainees.
- Significant number of trainees successfully completed exams and became members of RCPsych in recent years.
- Middle Eastern Division supports trainees with practical issues, including visa challenges and eligibility extensions.
- Advocacy for considering exceptional circumstances to extend exam eligibility periods.
- RCPsych's ongoing efforts to establish the first CASC exam centre in the Middle East, addressing regional needs.

## Supporting Trainees in the Middle East – (2)

- Two psychiatry residents from Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital, West Bank, attended the RCPsych International Congress in Edinburgh (2024) as poster prize bursary winners from the Middle Eastern Division
- Research Poster: "Socio-demographic and Clinical Characteristics of First-Time Admitted Psychiatric Inpatients in Palestine".
- Plans are underway for a larger group of trainees to visit the Congress in Wales next year, enhancing international collaboration and learning opportunities.

# Middle Eastern Research Alliance & Dementia Alliance & Quality network

## ➤ **Regional Research Alliance**

- Collaboration among researchers in the Middle East.
- Provides a platform for exchange of ideas and joint projects.
- Goal to eventually link with the RCPsych Academic Faculty for broader academic collaboration.
- Discussions progressing with upcoming regional conferences to solidify efforts.

## ➤ **Dementia Alliance and Quality Network**

- Launched in the UAE, led by Professor George Tadros.
- Aims to enhance regional dementia care & establish quality standards
- Next meeting scheduled for autumn in Abu Dhabi.

# Addressing the mental health needs of Palestinian Families in Qatar

- Hundreds of Palestinian families, including many children with severe physical injuries, were transported to Qatar following the recent conflict.
- Mental health services in Qatar responded with the formation of a taskforce to address the unique needs of this population.
- On-site mental health clinics established at the residential compound, with psychiatrists providing clinical support.
- Psychologists offering therapeutic interventions to address trauma and emotional distress at the compounds.
- Research: Exploring elevated symptoms of depression, PTSD & anxiety in children.

# Women's Mental Health Services: RCPsych in Egypt

- New initiative with Egyptian General Secretariat of Mental Health and Addictions Treatment (GSMHAT).
- training and upskilling through a "training of the trainers" model.
- RCPsych Faculty of Perinatal Psychiatry supporting the project.
- UNICEF Egypt sponsoring the initiative.
- Project starting in October 2024, led by Dr Manal El-Maraghy and supported by a team of RCPsych volunteers.
- Five days of training followed by supervision.
- International team collaborating with local counterparts, ensuring continued coordination between GSMHAT, RCPsych, & UNICEF

# RCPsych in Palestine

- RCPsych delegation visited the West Bank in July 2022, supported by Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP).
- Team members included Dr Nadia Dabbagh, Dr Richard Braithwaite, and Ms. Agnes Raboczki.
- Objectives:
  - To finalise the ECT protocol with Dr Ibrahim Khmayyes at Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital
  - To collaborate on a mental health strategy for children and adolescents with Dr Samah Jabr, National Mental Health Lead.

## RCPsych in Palestine (2)

- A scoping exercise was conducted to identify the mental health needs of young people in the West Bank and Gaza.
- Stakeholders consulted included Halhul Community Mental Health Centre, Bethlehem Hospital, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Social Development.
- The outcome will be the development of a national strategy to enhance funding alignment and coordinate efforts in mental health service.



Thank you!