

Health Sector In Yemen

Health Services: Trade, Or A Professional And Humanitarian Duty?

People With Chronic Diseases... Endless Story!

195 Out Of Every 1,000 Yemeni, Suffer From Mental Disorders!

Health in

Yemen: Is

There Any

Hope?



By : Manal Ameen

It goes without saying that the health sector in Yemen is going through its worst conditions in the current period due to the exceptional circumstances that the country is experiencing in general and in various fields and sectors.

The health sector in our country was not better than before, that is, before 2014, but the current distressing circumstances has worsened its situation in various Yemeni governorates, and most of its facilities are on the verge of collapse, according to reports of international organizations and UN agencies.

In this file, we wanted to clarify the extent of the challenges facing the health sector in Yemen, despite the scarcity of resources, the disruption of nearly 50% of medical facilities throughout Yemen, and the expiration of a large number of necessary medical equipment and supplies for chronic diseases, which has become an obstacle in the face of citizens' access to the simplest rights of basic health care, contributing, directly and indirectly, to exposing citizens to the risk of death.

In the folds of this issue of "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) newspaper, we raised issues that mainly affect the life of the Yemeni citizen and explain the extent to which he is affected by the current health situation, and the search for remedies or a glimmer of hope that restores the lost trust between the citizen and health by highlighting the suffering of people in bearing the burdens of traveling abroad to search for appropriate treatments that alleviate their pain, while our country's hospitals were unable to provide them with appropriate care.

We also discussed the persistent challenges that women face, in relation to reproductive health in conflict-affected areas, in addition to mental illnesses and malnutrition diseases.

Perhaps one of the causes of the health situation collapse in Yemen is the unqualified education outputs that are matched by an increase in the number of medicinal items that have been buried in the pharmaceutical market in light of the weak regulatory role, not only with regard to their compliance with international pharmaceutical standards, but even in terms of their expiration date!

In a related context, the spread of pandemics and emerging diseases that have killed many Yemenis contributed to the worsening of the health situation in the country, with the ongoing deterioration of the economic and security situation, and addressing the role of international organizations in light of these exceptional circumstances to meet the needs of citizens and mitigate the spread of pandemics.

In conclusion, it can be said that health in the Happy Yemen suffers from a very difficult situation after the country has turned into uneven centers of pandemics, even those that had ended a long time ago. They also returned to burden the citizen, and add to his suffering.



Medical Errors, Negligence, and High Cost: A Terrifying Tripartite that Threatens the Citizen's Life

🔄 Women and Reproductive Health in Yemen

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Health Education: Between The Devil And The Deep Sea Regarding Ambitions And Lack Of Resources!

By : Nada Al-Bakari
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Education has always been the gateway to the renaissance of any country in the world, and a priority that contributes to its development.

Health education, in Yemen, is one of the most important sectors, which suffers from many problems, related to the lack of application of advanced standards in medical curricula in all specialties, and the lack of medical capabilities in the faculties, the high fees for special education, and the emigration of most of the academic medical personnel. Despite this, a large number of students are still accepted in medical schools.

Education: Between the Suffering of the Past and the Lack of Capabilities in the Present

The paradoxes in health education between the past and the present appear profound: the changes that occurred in education, especially the health component, included many details despite the interest of government and private agencies in health education and its quality; it still lacks the required capabilities that keep pace with the progress in the medical field in the world.

Raising awareness of the importance of developing health education among students of medical colleges has become the focus of wide concern of the society, which resulted in a high turnout of students in the field of medicine.

Amani Saeed, a medical student at Sana'a University, says, "The demand for health education has become very large, and perhaps it is both positive and negative at the same time. The number has become large which has contributed to reducing our abilities in the practical application in the teaching hospitals.

She adds, "If we compare the pattern of study previously and what we are currently studying,

we will notice that there is deterioration in the educational curricula, and in the practical application process. For example, now we find congestion in laboratories, although the education is all theoretical, and there is no practical application. In fact, medicine needs education and practical training, as well as to be largely practiced in teaching hospitals. In addition to that, there is a shortage of educational materials and medical supplies".

We Guess the Results

In the context, Hadi Abdullah, a laboratory Student at Sana'a University, adds: "There is

we find that what we have studied is much less. Rather, we sometimes use devices that need maintenance. This is the results are like to be inaccurate. Thus, they may be wrong, and more often, the results are guessed".

Improving health education outcomes requires qualified academic cadres that contribute to qualifying students for the labor market, in a manner that serves the citizen. In this context, Dr. Mohammed Al-Anesi, an academic in several private and state universities, says: "The health education situation in Yemen is currently deteriorating, especially in the recent years, due to the increase in the number of private universities, the limited availability of the medical capabilities needed by the colleges, in addition to the scarcity of the teaching staff who possess high competence. This is why colleges have become heavily dependent on assistant professors because they are recent graduates. This is reflected in the students, and the extent of their acceptance of the curriculum, and, in most cases, the output of education is poor and is reflected in the health service provided to patients".

Shaima Abdul Hakim, a professor doctor in a private college says, "The position of the teaching staff is somewhat bad not because of the lack of competencies but because of the scarcity of educational means and capabilities. Through my experience in the field of teaching, I found that many students lack sufficient skills that qualify them to complete their journey in the field of medicine. With regard to the prescribed curricula, there is great disdain in some private colleges to facilitate them for students, thus this negatively affects the health education outcomes in Yemen".

Difficulties: Between Ambition and the Recklessness of Universities

In light of the difficult situation which medical

students are experiencing, and the pressures they are facing from all sides, many of them face difficulties: a turning point between them and the realization of their ambitions and dreams, which is a hindrance to their educational excellence.

Israa Shams Al-Din, a student at the College of Medicine at Taiz University, says, "The difficulties we face lie in the density of medical courses, and time pressure. Also, the availability of scholarships abroad, as well as the very difficult conditions in the state hospitals, as well as the lack of resources, and commitment to laws and regulations, in addition to the leniency and negligence represented by the weak oversight of the health sector, health colleges, and hospitals in the governorates outside the capital".

In the same context, Afnan Al-Mahya, a medical student at Taiz University, says, "We suffer from a lack of medical staff and sufficiently qualified expertise, and the lack of medical materials, which gives the student the opportunity to practice and learn sufficiently with an intensive practical application system".

Medical students, in all departments and specializations, also see that the difficulties are the results of the recklessness of several state and private agencies. There is also severe neglect by universities. As for the absent governmental role, there is no doubt that its impact is significantly bad.

In a special poll conducted by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) on the quality of health education in Yemen, the answers were disappointing: 49.4% said that health education is weak, while 38.2% said it is good, and 10.1% find it very good. While the lowest percentage in the poll, which is 2.2%, believed that it was «excellent», which is the lowest rate. This is an indication that health education in Yemen needs students, universities and experienced state agencies to combine and multiply their efforts.

Lab Student: We use Devices that Need Maintenance; the Results Are Inaccurate and May even be Wrong

a difference between education previously and now, for example: despite the great demand for the laboratory department, it is still lacking some solutions that were available in previous years is. And when we compare the number of examinations - which previous promotions used to learn through them - with the number of examinations that we currently learn through,

Medical Success Story: An Invention that Eases the Suffering of Patients with Kidney Failure!

with kidney failure through a medical jacket that the patient wears at home and outside with ease and comfort due to its light weight and low cost. It will also contribute to reducing the long waiting in hospitals and saving the time required for the dialysis process, and it reduces the rate of psychological effects experienced by the patient with kidney failure.

International Organization Support

The United Nations World Health Organization stated in a report in October of last year 2020 that, between September 2019 and May 2020, about 110,340 dialysis sessions were provided to

more than 4,300 patients suffering from chronic kidney failure in Yemen. In fact, the treatment facilities for patients with kidney failure in Yemen suffer from acute shortages of medicines and fuel.

"Al-Mukhtari" Is an Honorable Model

The Engineer Reham is considered a model in Yemeni society for her several scientific achievements, despite the difficulties and the modest capabilities. There is no doubt that the invention in general, and the medical one in particular, if sufficient support is found will contribute to improving the life conditions of the general public and alleviate the suffering of patients in particu-

lar. This is what the citizen Abeer Ahmed, from Sana'a Governorate, indicated.

As she explained that her father died of kidney failure, and he suffered many difficulties before his death due to the long wait in the dialysis centers for more than three years. She said, "The weekly hemodialysis sessions were considered one of the most difficult stages that my father went through during that period to try to survive despite the hardships and sickness".

And she stresses, "The importance of adopting this invention and expanding it to all patients as required, will contribute to alleviating their long suffering with disease, at the lowest costs".





By : Rajaa Mukred
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Ayesh Muhammed, who is a cleaner, goes to the Republican Hospital in Sana'a every day, and stands in rows, waiting for his mother's turn, Saida Hassan, who suffers from a fracture in her right arm and another in her left leg, and heart disease. The doctor prescribed metal pins (used to cast fractures). The price of the spike is 14,000 Yemeni Riyals. Ayesh sold his mobile phone, which was enough to buy sedatives to soothe his mother's pain. Muhammed says, «I have many obligations such as paying the house rent and expenses, thus my salary is not sufficient for my mother's treatment».



The Local Production Of Medicines Between The Citizens Confidence And The Stage Necessities

Muhammed Hassan is a 40-year-old father of 12 children who needs a lung surgery and suffers from heart disease. He tells "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that the cost of ensuring heart treatment is 28,000 Yemeni Riyals and because of the high prices of medicines, he could not afford the treatment continuously, and was also unable to perform the surgery.

While the citizens are suffering from poverty, high prices, and the deterioration of the health situation, with the outbreak of a number of pandemics recently, especially in hot regions, the prices of medicines have increased, and the citizens are finding it very difficult to provide these medicines, while some of them are not available in the market.

Umm Abdullah, a 40-year-old woman, says, "The prices of medicines have risen insanely (dramatically) and the citizens have been in poor financial conditions, and going to a state hospitals requires intermediaries (a known person in the hospital), in order to receive fast and more efficient services".

And she adds, "Cardiovascular medicines are very expensive. Therefore, they are provided in a limited quantity. Diabetes treatment is available in the Republican Hospital, but obtaining it requires a long procedure".

Numbers

The number of effective pharmaceutical factories in Yemen is about 10 factories, while the number of import companies is 1,400. And according to the Supreme Board of Drugs and Medical Appliances (SBDMA), the number of locally manufactured medicinal items and medical supplies registered with the Board is about 13 thousand items.

An economic report issued by the Supreme Board of Drugs and Medical Appliances in Sana'a, in late 2019, "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) obtained a copy, stating that they do not have statistics on the rate of drug consumption per person in Yemen. "It is possible to adopt similar statistics to the rate of consumption of drugs per capita in developing countries which is 94\$ (ninety-four dollars), and accordingly, the total consumption of medicines in Yemen will be 2.350.000.000\$ (two billion and three hundred fifty million dollars) annually.

According to official statistics obtained by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) from the Supreme Board of Drugs and Medical Appliances:

- In 2015 AD, the domestic production of medicines reached 12.28%, while the import rate was 87.72%.
- In 2016 AD, the domestic production of medicines reached 14.89%, while the import rate was 85.11%.
- In 2017 AD, the domestic production of medicines reached 23.38%, while the import rate was 76.62%.
- In 2018 AD, the domestic production of medicines reached 19.05%, while the import rate was 80.95%.
- In 2019 AD, the domestic production of medicines reached 21.70%, while the import rate was 78.30%.

Deficit and Price Increase

Karima Muhammed, a 24-year-old woman, says,

"Searching for medicine in pharmacies requires efforts. Some medicines are not available in all pharmacies, and the price varies from one pharmacy to another. Sometimes the price of the local medicine is more expensive than the foreign one, and some medicines are monopolized by the big dealers and are sent to the market at a high price, through distributors, not pharmacies".

In a field visit by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) to Biopharm factory, Dr. Fathi Al-Fotaih, a pharmacist working in Biopharm, explained that the unavailability of some drug items is due to obstructing the arrival of the goods. When companies ship goods via DHL, they need asset licenses.

He adds, "In the past, the materials used to arrive on time, but in recent years, the raw material have not, unless the local need and demand for it increased.

Al-Fatih indicates that the countries from which the import is made are: Australia, India and China: From India, effective materials are imported and added to some types of medicines, while medicines for colic and gastrointestinal tract are imported from Australia.

Regarding the annual production amount of the Biopharm factory, he says: "That this is subject to the specific plan that is presented to the General Investment Authority ... There is no fixed statistic: Sometimes the plan is not applied, and sometimes it is applied as a requirement for the local market at a rate of 55-60%, noting that the most obvious difficulties facing the factory are two things: Conduct of proceedings and congestion of companies.

Most pharmacy owners agree that the availability of treatment in a pharmacy - and the lack thereof in another is linked to the agent or company with which the pharmacy deals, and that the higher prices are caused by the high price of the dollar and the different exchange rates between Sana'a and Aden.

According to Taha Al-Sama'i, a pharmacist, the citizen does not usually trust the local product, and the different price of medicines in the market is due to the different exchange rates of the dollar, also the different industries makes a difference in the price of the treatment, so the Indian treatment has a different price from the Egyptian or German treatment price.

Yemeni Trust in the Local Product

In an electronic poll conducted by the "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) on the extent to which Yemeni citizens trust the local and foreign pharmaceutical prod-

uct in varying proportions (very much, much, somewhat, and no confidence), the following was found: trust percentage in the local pharmaceutical product:

65.2% of citizens somewhat trust the local medicines, 21.3% don't trust them at all, 12.4% trust them much and 1.1% trust them very much.

As for the extent to which Yemeni citizens trust the foreign pharmaceutical product:

60.7% trust them much while 20.2% somewhat trust them, 16.9% trust them very much and 2.2% don't trust them at all.

Solutions

The unavailability of some types of medicines, the high treatment prices, and the decrease in local medical production were the most prominent problems facing medicines economically. Therefore, we met with a senior official in the department of Local Factories and Laboratories Control at the Supreme Board of Drugs and Medical Appliances - who requested not to mention his name - and he informed us about the unavailable items, the difference between local and foreign productions, and the solutions found by the Control department in the Supreme Board.

The source doctor says: the local production currently (in late 2020 AD) constitutes approximately 20% and the rest is imported. Most of vital drugs, especially sterile intravenous, muscle injections and medical supplies are imported. As for local production, it is mostly for oral medicines, ointments, creams and suppositories. Local factories have now started to establish lines for sterile drugs such as ampoules and vials.

As for the medicines received from international and relief organizations, they are distributed through the same organizations under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. The Board's work only acts to accompany the quality of the drug, and these drugs are: cancer, diabetes, Corona and kidney failure drugs.

The senior of the Board clarifies that the drugs that are scarce in Yemen are of European or American source and difficult to import by the original agents because of the conflict and the closure of Sana'a International Airport, and the ports.

To address this problem, the Board has allowed companies to provide alternatives originating in Asian states because of the non-availability of original drugs and the unstable exchange rate of the dollar. The exchange rate varies between Sana'a and Aden, and therefore, drugs are being imported from Asian countries for it is cheaper and because of its demand in the market.

Among the solutions developed by the SBDMA, the Board began to implement the local product self-sufficiency plan, by reducing the import of (14 fourteen items) of imported medicines and replacing them with the local product, according to Dr. Al-Absi.

Why is the Local Product More Expensive than the Imported One?

The source comments: Yemen does not have factories for raw materials, all of which are imported. Therefore, you find that the local antibiotic is more expensive than the Indian or Egyptian one and it's because the Indian and Egyptian factories have (raw) materials and manufacture even medical glass containers, stationery (bags) and so the end product (imported externally) is cheaper than the local Yemeni product .. As for the local factories, they lack raw materials, do not manufacture stationery, and import them at exorbitant costs, and this does not apply to all items (only some).

Regarding the supervisory role played by the SBDMA, the senior official in the department of Local Factories and Laboratories Control at the SBDMA says: The supervisory role of the Board is field visiting, monitoring of new factories manufacturing, creating sessions in GMP (Good Manufacturing), controlling prices and monitoring their rise and controlling drugs quality.

In case of irregularities - the source continues - he prevents the product from entering the market until samples are taken and examined: If the results match the specifications and standards, they are released to the market, and if they do not match the specifications, they are forbidden and destroyed. Stressing that the local factories are committed, and no product is released to the market, except after the approval of the Board, which in turn encourages the local industry, and we do not take the Board's control strict measures (to encourage the local industry) such as closing a factory. We only stop and withdraw the item from the market, and take legal measures.

The Most Prominent Difficulties Faced by the SBDMA

According to a highly-placed source in the SBDMA, the most significant difficulties facing the Board are:

First: Currency instability; the Board could not put a price on drugs (and control their prices) due to the instability of the currency.

Second: The inability to require traders to provide very necessary vital drugs such as cancer and kidney medicines. The Board cannot require the dealer or agent to import them because there might be a reluctance to import.

Third: Difficulty with the different exchange rate between Sana'a and Aden; so the Board is forced to make approvals for dealers to import certain types of drugs at lower prices. They are seized at first and then, after examination, released to the market with variable prices, of course.

Different Drug
Prices in Yemen
... Problems and
Solutions?



(360.000)

Yemeni Children At Risk Of Death Because Of Severe Acute Malnutrition

By: Rajaa Mukred
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Rafif struggles with hunger and disease despite her young age, not exceeding seven months. She suffers from malnutrition and heart disease. She lies with pain on that blue mattress, and she can neither reveal nor express her pain except by one means, crying.

The difficult economic conditions of her family prevented her from being treated and provided with the necessary treatment. Five years have passed since the family of Rafif Al-Rimi was displaced from Al-Hudaydah governorate to Abs district in Hajjah.

Zainab Omar who suffers from schizophrenia due to psychological trauma, lost seven of her siblings, and currently has nine children, all of whom suffer from anemia and malnutrition.

In Haradh, nine siblings are anemic and malnourished. Their father suffers from tuberculosis, and their mother suffers from schizophrenia.

Recently, malnutrition has spread a lot, which means that the body does not get the basic nutrients it needs, or even part of it and diseases may occur as a result of poor absorption of nutrients and important elements of food.

Malnutrition is considered a phenomenon in developing countries as a result of hunger and lack of food. It affects all groups: young people, the elderly, pregnant and lactating women. It also affects children and causes them future complications.

On the number of children who suffer from malnutrition in Yemen, and the areas where malnutrition is increasing, "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) met Dr. Abdul Karim Nasser from the Central Statistical Organization, who updated the newspaper with the latest developments in the field survey, concluded that malnutrition in Yemen is considered one of the highest rates in the world, and it has become an imminent threat besieging millions of children and mothers, and constitutes a threat to the future of human and economic development. As according to the Document on Humanitarian Needs Overview 2019 issued by the Central Statistical Office, about 7.4



million (seven million and four hundred thousand) people need services to treat acute malnutrition: of them two million children under the age of five, and 1.14 million (one million one hundred and fourteen thousand) pregnant and lactating women.

Dr. Abdul Karim also says, "Based on the results of the Smart surveys, which were conducted at the end of 2018 in 15 governorates and the results of the 2017 survey of the remaining seven governorates, the case of malnutrition in Yemen was classified as acute or critical in about 44% of the countries of 33 districts. In fact, the largest number of districts which crossed the emergency threshold is located in the governorates of Al Hudaydah, Taiz and Hajjah.

Dr. Nasser also explains, in the same summary of statistics, that during two consecutive years 2017 and 2018, five governorates Al Hudaydah, Lahj, Taiz, Aden and Hadramaut remained classified at critical levels of acute malnutrition prevalence rates exceed-



ing the emergency threshold of the World Health Organization by 15%. Malnutrition negatively affects children's growth and mental abilities, and thus their productivity and future income. Also, children, who suffer from malnutrition, are three times more likely to die than their healthy peers. As for children who suffer from acute and severe malnutrition, their number is three hundred and sixty thousand and they are nine times more likely to die than their peers.

The Reasons

In Abs District in Hajjah which contains a number of camps for the displaced, most of the areas from which they were displaced were classified in the governorates where there are most cases of malnutrition, such as Al Hudaydah. "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) met with the nutrition officer, Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Rabaei, who said, "There are many reasons that have led to child malnutrition, including

conflict, lack of food and the spread of diseases and pandemics". Emphasizing that if health care was available for the mother, the child would be healthy. This is because malnutrition can occur from the very beginning to children (premature babies) and symptoms of malnutrition can appear on the child after nine months, and the cause would be the mother because she was not well fed.

The Symptoms

Dr. Al-Rabaei emphasizes on a point that, according to him, is very important, which is: Why does the child not reach health facilities? He explains that the society's lack of awareness of malnutrition and its symptoms, namely: the occurrence of emaciation of the child and the looker of the child's abdomen finds its shape as skin on a bone, and notices sagging skin. As well as the symptoms appear even on the face of the child.

Solutions

Dr. Al-Rabaei stresses that awareness is more important than treatment because it is possible, even after treating the child from malnutrition, can have a relapse (the return of the disease), and awareness should be given to the mother in the first place for the mother on epidemic diseases and the need for the child hygiene, demanding for the necessity to restart the UNICEF project that had previously been started in 2018-2019 and then stopped.

Dr. Al-Rabaei says, "The project contributed to the transfer of children who suffer from severe acute malnutrition, with complications, from the areas of damage to the health facilities: the rest section, and it provided the child with transportation and a living allowance for the child's companion (father or mother) until the child gets better and returns home".

The project shows that it stopped with the beginning of 2020, and currently, in the Abs area of Hajjah, there are more than ninety cases, and if they are not followed up in a timely manner, then the possibility of the death will be very strong.

Dr. Al-Rabaei continues, "The project has had an effective role especially since most of Yemen's directorates do not have health facilities (rest section) for those suffering from severe acute malnutrition with complications.



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Travelling for Medical Treatment:

A Journey of Migration with Exhausted Bodies

By: **Haneen Ahmed - Cairo**
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

«The lack of modern medical devices in Yemeni hospitals, the weakness of medical services in general, the frequent medical errors and wrong diagnosis, and the loss of trust between the patient and the doctor are among the most important reasons why many Yemenis are forced to travel for treatment». With these words, Saeed Mansour, a 30-year-old man from Ibb governorate, reported the poor condition that the health sector in Yemen has reached.

“Sickness airplane”, this is how Egyptians call airplanes coming from Yemen, due to the large number of arrivals for the treatment of diseases that are difficult to treat in their country, due to the deterioration of the health sector affected by the ongoing conflict, and the lack of modern equipment used for radiation and eradication of tumors, and other diseases that need special medical attention.

A Journey with Illness

Saeed Mansour, who suffers from a stomach tumor, tells his journey with the disease. “My health condition has deteriorated for the worse due to my frequent visits to a number of state and private hospitals, and the wrong diagnosis of my condition by doctors every time I visit them, due to wrong medications that I have taken that contributed to deteriorating my health badly. After I reached a critical health condition and lost hope for treatment in Yemen, I decided to sell everything I owned in order to travel for treatment abroad».

Saeed added, “My condition began to deteriorate five years ago, and after my travel, I was able to overcome the stage of danger, and the tumor was removed, and currently, I continue to receive treatment, despite the difficult circumstances represented by the increase in the high travel costs, the value of treatment, housing and the necessary expenses to go on with the treatment”.

Saeed recounts his suffering in selling everything he owned in order to save his life, and searching for a ticket, after our country's hospitals were unable to treat him, and he says, “After I sold all my valuables and a benefactor

took in hand the costs of facilitating my travel, I arrived to Egypt and started the treatment. I ran the necessary tests for the disease and I was diagnosed with a stomach tumor which must have been eradicated as soon as possible, expressing his sadness for the situation that the health sector in Yemen reached in general.

Our Hospitals Lack Capacity

Fahmi Ali, a 47-year-old man from Taiz governorate, also recounts his suffering from mitral valve prolapse and arterial embolism. He says that he was feeling pain in his left shoulder, and the inability to exert any effort or breathe, and that for a period of five months. He visited many doctors who diagnosed his condition, and the result was that he was infected with the Corona virus. Some others diagnosed him with malaria and Cardiomegaly (enlarged heart) stating that there was no harm from that, and medicines were dispensed for each diagnosis.



He adds that his condition began to deteriorate little by little, which led to swelling of his limbs as he had diabetics and hypertension, and he could not risk his life more, so he decided to travel for treatment abroad, despite the difficulties of transportation and the high travel costs. «I had to travel to Egypt to find out the true diagnosis of my disease, and then treat it.»

When he arrived, his case was presented to a cardiologist, and after the examinations, it was found that his condition is very dangerous, and the surgery must be performed as soon as

possible and the valves and swollen arteries must be replaced in less than a week.

He says with regret, «I feel great pain when I see our hospitals and doctors lack the necessary competencies and the most basic needs required to save a patient and alleviate his suffering, which has increased in recent years due to the conflict».

Brain Drain

T.M.A., one of the doctors in the Yemeni Consulting Medical sector residing in Egypt, explains that Yemen has many centers for oncology but Yemenis are forced to travel abroad for several reasons, including the lack of Yemeni competencies, the lack of the nuclear imaging in Yemen, and the lack of radioactive iodine which is very important for adenocarcinoma patients, as well as the lack of modern radiation devices, in addition to the absence of modern technology for eradicating tumors in the brain.

🔴 *Cancer, heart, kidney failure, and cornea are the most important reasons of travelling for Treatment*

And he justified the reasons for that shortage due to the ongoing conflict that contributed to the deterioration of the health sector and its lack of development according to recent data that contribute to reducing the suffering of citizens, in addition to the departure of many medical personnel outside the country.

Regarding the working mechanism of the consulting sector, he says, “The consulting sector provides assistance to Yemeni patients abroad, by offering discounts in several factories and laboratories with which they are contracted, ranging from 30% to 40%, and instructing the

patient to a well-known doctor to provide him with the necessary assistance and follow up on his health condition”.

He also reveals that most of the Yemeni cases that come to Egypt for treatment, have cancerous diseases and it is considered the largest percentage of diseases found in Egypt, followed by heart diseases, kidney and hepatic failure, and corneal transplantation.

A Therapeutic Trip

Sumaya Nasser, a 62-year-old woman from Taiz, suffers from paresthesia and numbness in the shoulder and right hand due to the pressure of the vertebrae on the spinal column.

Sumaya tells her story with the disease, and says, «I have been suffering from mild pain from time to time, until the pain intensified, and although I went to the doctor, the pain lasted for six continuous months, and after running several tests, they told me I needed to implant metal sheets between the spinal cord and vertebrae”.

Sumaya describes her feeling of fear by saying “O Soul There Is No Soul Other Than You” and that she was not able to perform this surgery in Yemen, because it is dangerous and the simplest mistake will lead to permanent disability, as well as because of her lack of confidence in Yemeni hospitals that lack the minimum necessary resources. So she decided to travel for treatment, and she endured more suffering during her journey from Taiz Governorate to Aden.

When she arrived in Egypt, Sumaya explained that her case was presented to a specialized doctor, who told her that he had encountered such cases a lot from Yemen.

The doctor assured her that her condition does not require surgery, and that she must live her life normally while committing to follow the instructions required relieving back pain.

She concluded by saying, “There are many patients whose condition has worsened in Yemen, and their treatment has become difficult due to the deterioration of their financial situation, and they were unable to travel for treatment”, wishing that every doctor feels the great responsibility that he bears in Yemen, and that the situation of hospitals and health facilities be improved in the required form.



On the morning of Eid Al-Adha 2020, Fares Hawil felt pain in his stomach, with slight sweating on his forehead, so he decided to go to a private hospital, close to his residence in Sana'a.

Muhammed Al-Masoudi, Uncle's Faris says, "We entered the hospital emergency room, and Fares was on his feet. He was immediately given an intravenous Flazol injection, before taking any diagnostic measures for the patient's condition in the emergency section, even vital signs known in any emergency department, such as: blood pressure, blood oxygen level, and the primary clinical examination were not measured.

The patient's condition worsened; his face became swollen, the seizure of sweating increased, his breathing became short, and severe shivering began. Thus, the doctors didn't pay attention despite his brother's repeated shouts - according to Al-Masoudi.

Fares felt a very cold feeling after the needle. After that, the nurse thought about measuring the patient's pressure. 30 minutes had passed after getting his first aid. She discovered that he had a pressure defect. She did him an electrocardiogram, once, twice, and three times.

By: Rajaa Mukred
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The Assistant of the King of Death: Azrael

The nurse showed the diagram to the doctor, whom Al-Masoudi called "Azrael's assistant", then the doctor ordered the nurse to give the patient another injection "Avil" that rendered ineffective the previous shot, but what is the use of this unfortunate, isolated, late attempt, according to Hawil uncle, since the patient went into a coma, and was dying.

Doctors rushed to transfer him to the recovery room which Al-Masoudi called "the guards' room" because there was no minimal and most basic equipment of the care room, after which the doctor finally came to examine the patient, and injected him with an adrenaline shot intravenously, thus another doctor in the hospital denounced the latter's action according to the uncle of the deceased.

Al-Masoudi says that 50 minutes had passed, which was definitely enough to pay attention to the patient and examine him while he was in the emergency section and diagnose his condition, but the hospital staff wasted every second, every minute and did not care to save Faris' life, so he became a victim of their indulgence and neglect.

And he adds, "We hold them responsible, and we are awaiting a decision of the Ministry of Health and the Medical Council to punish the transgressors, so that such mistakes are not repeated, in which indifference and lack of responsibility are evident".

The case was referred to the Medical Council which is the official body legally authorized to monitor the work of private hospitals, and in turn, the Council issued a decision on August 24, 2020, acquitting the hospital and the working medical staff, describing the medical procedures taken by the hospital as «sound and without errors.»

Al-Masoudi commented on the decision on his Facebook page with an appeal in which he requested justice in the case of the death of the late Hawil, describing the medical report - according to him - as careless, indicating, "There are things that the investigation did not take into account: timing, medical autopsy, and that the council rushed in issuing the decision".

Medical Mistakes

In recent years, medical services in state hospitals have declined. On the one hand, most medical devices have become outdated, down, or in need of maintenance. On the other hand, the lack of fuel and electric power which prompted citizens to resort to private hospitals which, despite the exorbitant prices for medical services in their health facilities, medical errors, contradictory diagnosis, and negligence are all mentioned in some private hospitals, and this is what the citizens complain about.

According to the statistics report of the Investigation, Accountability and Control Committee of the Medical Council in Sana'a at the end of 2018, most of the medical errors occurred in the departments of obstetrics and gynecology and general surgery, especially the orthopedic department. Carelessness and negligence in exerting the necessary care for the patient was observed in the general surgery department, then the department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, followed by the department of Nephrology and Urology.

Also, most of the complaints were against private medical facilities, and the percentages of the treating staff causing medical error, default or negligence were distributed as follows: the foreigner 38% and the local 62%. According to the report, the total number of complaints received by the Council from 2009 to the end of 2018 is 800 complaints directly submitted to the Council, and referred by the Public Prosecution and the

courts.

While the total number of complaints for the year 2019 reached 40 complaints distributed from the various governorates of the republic and their landmarks from the governorates of Al-Amana, Sana'a, and Al-Hudaydah, medical errors represented 25% of the total number of complaints, and they were referred to the Public Prosecution. As for the complaints related to medical negligence, they represented 26%, while 49% of the complaints were vexatious.

Medical Negligence

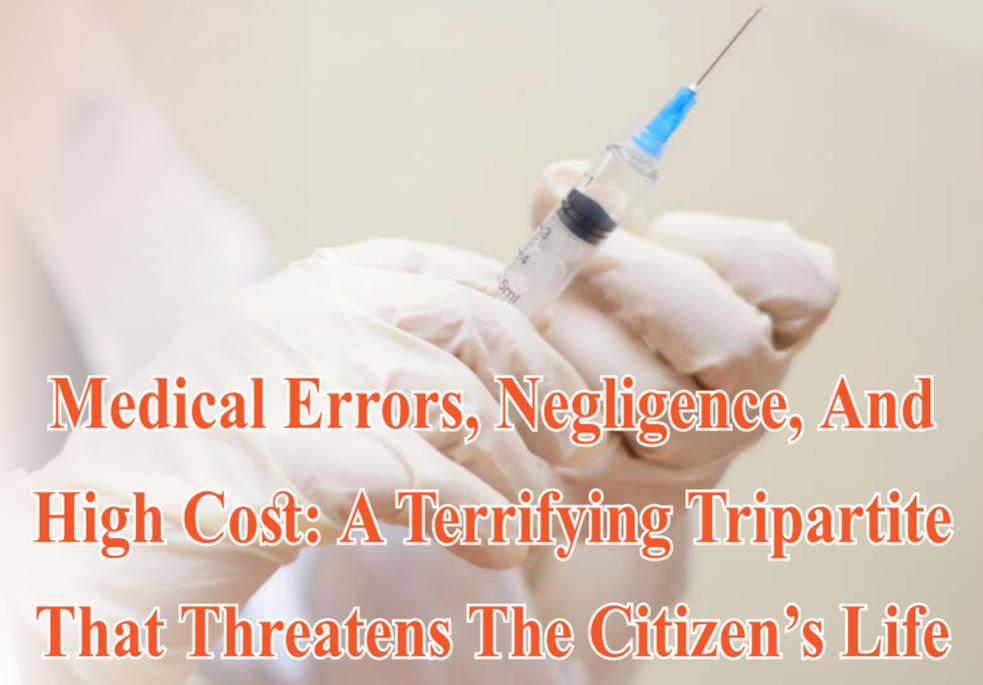
"We cannot do something for him" This is how one of the doctors answered Umm Yunis after she rushed to the hospital, hoping that she might find a solution to save her child, whose neglect had caused him to be infected with a virus. She says, "I endured the suffering of anesthesia failure during childbirth in a hospital in Sawan ("Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) keeps the name of the hospital), and it happened that the nurse came and told us not to put the baby on the blankets because they are not clean, but her warning was late, as the newborn was already on the blanket. The child had a viral infection that doubled his pain, which relapsed due to health problems in his little heart and his weak immunity did not help him to overcome it".

The poor mother took her child to other hospitals, perhaps she would find someone to save him from death, and offer them hope again. But it was too late, and acute pneumonia occurred in the child hollow who was barely three months old and a tragic end happened to Umm Yunis watching her child dying in her arms, while she wasn't able to do anything for him, except shedding tears mixed with sorrow during the final separation. "From the moment I gave birth to my child, and my heart was wounded, praise be to God", this is how Umm Yunis concluded her story about medical negligence.

In an online poll conducted by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) on 70 stories, it was found that more than 41.6% of them - neither they nor any of their relatives - have been subjected to a medical error, while 58.4% have.

In an interview by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) with Dr. Fadel Hurrab, Head of the Pharmacists Syndicate, President of Yemen General Federation of Medical Professionals, mentioned the types of common medical errors in our country, including: - Performing surgery on a patient who has passed away - Performing surgery on a patient who died in the Intensive Care Unit - A patient who died shortly after an surgery that was described as successful of which he confirmed that this is a very common phenomenon during this period - A "five-star" hospital, in other words, a famous hospital, but the patient dies in the emergency section, and another died due to the delay of the specialist doctors in rescuing him, although he remained in the emergency room for several hours while he was in a critical condition after he had a stroke, and he passed by three

Medical Errors, Negligence, And High Cost: A Terrifying Tripartite That Threatens The Citizen's Life



hospitals, each of which disposed of him and transferred him into another hospital (there is no need to mention the names of the hospitals) and that this is a result of lack of coordination, and nurses' stupidity, as well as the doctor on duty in the emergency section.

An example of this is the errors resulting from anesthesia, such as increasing the dose of anesthesia, inserting tubes in a wrong way which leads to death or clinical death and burying him after he died because of anesthesia.

And Dr. Hurrab cites, "There are many examples of medical errors that actually exist, including a neglected and inexperienced doctor who inserted catheters into the patient's body, and left several openings which caused internal bleeding, but the doctor informed them that the catheter succeeded, and that the patient died without a doctor going into a surgery process on him to close what his colleague had done."

2- A successful doctor leaves fatal signs in most of the surgeries that he performs in the field of kidneys. Instead of trying to discover the causes, we see him advising his blood-related patients, to compensate for the bleeding of blood, through the urinary tract. The patient may continue in this situation until another doctor discovers the error, rescues him, and re-conducts the surgery to correct the mistake of his negligent colleague on his patients.

Some foreign doctors, and a few Yemenis, perform Caesarean sections for most of the women in order to obtain a greater financial return.

And he continues his speech with more realistic stories, including, a doctor deluding his patient to perform a successful laparoscopic surgery for one million and three hundred thousand Riyals, in addition to the fact that some doctors practice this profession with forged certificates.

A doctor practiced the profession for 30 years with forged documents, and was finally discovered, and another doctor specialized in plastic surgery, performed three plastic surgeries on a young girl, and tampered with her body until it became deformed. In the end, he was punished! Dr. Hurrab keeps the names of the doctors and confirms that monitoring these cases is for the purpose of educating colleagues and hospitals, thus he did not mention names in the interest of patients protection and safety.

Expensive Medical Services

The high prices of medical services and medicines, medical errors, fraud (in some cases) are matters that we find most citizens complain about in most Yemeni governorates.

Muhammed Al-Zuwar, a citizen in Sana'a says, "The treatment of private hospitals has become based on material and not humanity, and their work is based on profit, not saving lives". He adds, "When taking patients to private hospitals, the first thing you are asked is to provide a sum of money (in the amount of service they are going to provide. If it is a birth condition, you will be asked to pay 100 thousand Riyals as a down payment, and if it is an Intensive Care case, you will be asked to deposit an amount of one million Riyals as a down payment, "kindly get out of here", as he said.

In the context of the visitors' conversation, despite the big sums of

money that are being paid to private hospitals, some private health facilities have medical errors.

On his side, Mustafa Al-Sama'i, from Al-Hudaydah, says, "Private hospitals often have health components as beds, chairs, mobile carriages, advanced devices (such as MRI), laboratories and qualified personnel, but they are at exorbitant or extravagant prices".

Al-Sama'i added, "There are, from time to time, medical errors that some doctors commit because of their inability to correctly diagnose the type of disease".

Dr. Akram Burhan, Internal Medicine Specialist, says, "Private hospitals provide recreational and service care for patients but in return, lack to be a place for the weak to seek refuge. They are reserved for the upper class only and forbidden to others, and so their owners are like executioners".

Many citizens describe the work of private hospitals like investment projects, as prices differ from one hospital to another, and most hospitals hold back the patient's car or any valuable possessions of his own before entering the hospital.

Patients' companions complain about cases of extortion, for example: the patient is actually deceased, yet doctors install care devices on the dead patient's body as a reason to obtain more money from the patients' families, as described by citizens. And one of the greatest deficiencies is that hospitals do not specify the patient's health, or recovery percentages.

Nadwa Al-Absi, a resident of Sana'a, says, "Hospitals are just commercial deals only, and they deal with fraud and employ unqualified cadres. The patient enters on his feet and leaves in a coffin".

100% Commercial

Many opinions agreed on a set of the defects surrounding the work of private hospitals including the high cost, the extortion of patients and their families and the frequent medical errors. In this regard, Amal Al-Dabai adds, "The work of private hospitals is 100% commercial, and medical errors are incoming", and she justifies, "We did an eyelid operation for my cousin's daughter, and for a year and a half, up until today, she is unable to close her eyes".

Professor Soad Salem added that dealing with private hospitals is very tiring. When treating a patient, you must pay attention, focus and know a close person working in the hospital by intermediary, otherwise, according to her, you will not be safe from mistakes. "Many of my relatives (victims) died due to medical errors", and she continues, "Their prices are beyond reasonable, and their services are poor, as she describes it".

Diagnosis

Izdihar Al-Absi from Sana'a says, "About two years ago, I suffered from allergies in the skin. The medical staff did not know the causes of the allergy. I went from one doctor to another, and visited skin consultants, the most powerful medicines and injections were dispensed for the allergy, which led to a pain in my stomach, and loss of immunity. After all this, they asked me ("Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) keeps the names of the doctors) to go to internal medicine doctors, run new tests on other medical devices.

Al-Absi added, "According to the internal medicine doctors, some said that I have worms, and others stomach germ, and another diagnosed a third disease, and so on. And of course, with every possible diagnosis a list of drugs, while the rash was still present, neither the skin nor the internal medicine doctors helped me. I gave up on them all, and went back to healing myself with natural herbs, surfing the Internet and practicing self-medicating".

Solutions

The medical errors that occurred are dealt with by submitting a complaint to the Medical Council, then the council forms a committee to investigate about the complaint, and if the accusation is proven against the hospital or the doctor, then it is referred to the judiciary and legal measures are taken against them.

The Supreme Board for Drugs and Material Appliances, in turn, maintains its supervisory role over those who violate the legal procedures and controls with regard to supplies, medical solutions, and the requirements for their conformity with international standards.

President of Yemen General Federation of Medical Professionals, Dr. Fadel Hurrab accuses the Yemeni patient of being an accomplice in the occurrence of medical errors because he was lazy to go to the hospital until the situation got very bad, and became difficult to save his life. That is why he is a partner in error, just as the lack of health awareness, among most of the people, as well as poverty and helplessness are among the main causes of medical errors.

Hurrab asserts, "Most of the developed countries suffer from medical errors, but their causes and numbers differ from one case to another. Doctors are not always the reason. In fact, the health sector is an integrated system, and a closed loop in which some complement others", and he justifies, "What can a doctor do regardless of his skill and experience if an anesthesiologist and assistants are not available in the operating room? How can a doctor succeed in surgeries in a room that is not subject to the required specifications, and where there are no devices or equipment available?"

He adds, "The doctor's long experience and skills are not sufficient. It is not permissible, not even by Sharia, for a citizen to believe that a doctor is the only healer and savior of life. God is the Healer and the Curer, and He, Glory be to Him, alone has ages and lives in His hand".

Yemenis
 are Fleeing the
 Overcrowding and Poor
 Services of Government
 Hospitals Heading to the
 Mistakes and Neglect of
 Private Hospitals



People With Chronic Diseases In Yemen Are Facing Death

By: Yasmine Al-Khiwani
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The suffering of people with chronic diseases in Yemen is exacerbated by the unavailability of medicines and medical supplies in treatment centers, and their high prices in pharmacies and private health facilities, accompanied by the neglect of the relevant authorities and international organizations in supporting the health sector in Yemen.

Amina Saleh, a 55-year-old woman, spends more than fifteen thousand Riyals per month on medicine to treat heart disease, hypertension and diabetes, while she suffers from deteriorating living and economic conditions after her husband lost his source of income, and government salaries were cut off. She tells "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that the war has exacerbated her suffering and that the medicines that were dispensed to her for free from state pharmacies in Sana'a have been cut off. The situation has become worse and worse and the prices very high, and they became between the devil and the deep sea regarding the disease and the lack of medicines and their high prices.

A.P., one of the patients suffering from diabetes,

tells her struggles to obtain treatment which is difficult to get from private pharmacies due to her difficult financial conditions. She tells "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that she needs to use two injections every month as prescribed, so she goes to Kuwait Hospital in Sana'a to get the injection, but she is forced to pay a nominal amount as fees, at a time when it is supposed to be free, not to mention the distance she travels to reach the hospital, in addition to the transportation costs that she pays in order to reach the hospital.

Kidney Failure

The number of patients with kidney failure and cancer in Yemen is increasing at an alarming rate, and those with kidney failure and cancerous tumors suffer more than other patients in Yemen, as a result of the deteriorating health situation, which the current conditions have further worsened. In fact, their lives depend on their ability to reach kidney dialysis centers or cancer treatment centers, many of which have been stopped, while the rest of the centers struggle for survival, and suffer from a lack of materials and capabilities and some disruption of their devices.

Patients with kidney failure are also suffering from deteriorating health conditions, and difficulty

in obtaining treatment, as patients stand in a queue for long hours to receive kidney dialysis, as a result of the crowding of centers that are receiving overloaded patients in Sana'a and other governorates.

Muhammed Hussain, a 45-year-old patient with kidney failure, expresses his concern about the closure of the kidney center at Al-Jamhuri Hospital in Sana'a due to the scarcity of medicines and dialysis materials.

He said that he faces many obstacles every time he goes to the kidney dialysis. He can hardly buy treatment from private pharmacies because of their high prices, and he sometimes cannot afford the solutions and medical supplies needed for dialysis without the help of some of his relatives.

Ministry of Health Spokesman in Sana'a, Dr. Yousef Al-Hadri, says that the statistics are not always known, especially those related to people with chronic diseases by virtue of it being broad and not linked to an epidemic center such as cholera or malaria. He added, "We have large numbers, those who were unable to travel abroad for treatment, and were unable to be treated in the country, which are more than 400 thousand from August 2016 to present and about 40 thousand of them have died due to the closure of Sana'a airport, most of them

with chronic diseases".

He added that "in mid-2016, we had more than 800,000 diabetic patients, for whom free treatment was available such as insulin, pills, injections, or their drugs, noting that the Ministry currently cannot provide these medicines, except for what organizations provide from time to time. It does not exceed 10% or less, pointing out that the number of kidney failure and dialysis diseases exceeds 10 thousand, and they need health care.

In addition, a special source in the Supreme Drugs Authority said that there is a rise in prices in the medicine market due to the ongoing conflict in Yemen, the rise of the dollar and other reasons as such.

The source, who requested anonymity, indicated that the high prices of medicines are due to the fact that the chronic patient needs them for life, while salaries have been cut, and this is another suffering for patients, in addition to the presence of a large shortage of medicines in the pharmaceutical market, as some medicines need special transport and care such as insulin derivatives or other solutions or hormonal drugs that need special and rapid transportation, and this of course is one of the reasons that increase the suffering of patients with chronic diseases.

Cancer Patients Between Hope And Pain

By: Alya Muhammed
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Faith and patience, courage and challenge, hope and persistence are words that a cancer patient needs to believe in to win his long battle against the disease. Many stories in which hope and optimism line the title of the experiences of cancer patients who challenged the disease and were able to accept it and coexist with it during the journey of treatment.

"There is no life without will and no hope without patience". This is how Nawal Ahmed, a 30-year-old woman who has been suffering from cancer for five years, expressed herself. From breast cancer to lungs cancer, this is how Nawal's health condition developed, and despite that, she continues her sessions and chemotherapy, and says, "I keep wearing my smile!"

High spirits left a great impact in Hassan Ahmed, an 18-year-old young man, who was diagnosed with a tumor in the neck. He says, "It is true that the pain is severe, and I feel tired because of the many medicines, but despite all this, my spirits are still high, and here I am getting chemotherapy sessions, and I hope to stay like that, so I get rid of the disease!"

From the National Cancer Control Foundation, we stop at the story of Dr. Bahja Hassan, a 50-year-old woman, who discovered that she had breast cancer two years ago while working in the oncology center. She says with a charming smile, "I have enough strength to withstand this disease, and I consider myself different from the rest of the patients because of my long work in the Oncology Center as I have been associated with patients greatly".

From the Oncology Center in Sana'a, one of the centers' employees says, "The center suffers from an increase in the number of arrivals from the governorates for treatment at the center, and indicates that about 600 cases are received every

month, while the center suffers from a lack of medicines and medical solutions due to the war", adding that some patients need more than 30 radiotherapy sessions, apart from chemotherapy, noting that the cost of treatment is high.

Cancer Patient Support

According to a statement issued by World Health Organization 2019, the number of cancer patients in Yemen has reached 35,000, including more than a thousand children.

The organization says that on May 7th, 2018, it provided more than 7 tons of cancer drugs and

chemotherapy supplies to the National Cancer Control Foundation in Sana'a, and 10 thousand cancer patients received a part of these drugs, according to the organization.

The National Cancer Control Foundation contributes with 30% of the patients' treatment, and in a special statement to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope), Abdul Moneim Al-Shamiri, Public Relations Director in the Foundation says, "Patients go through long stages of treatment, some

of them need more than 30 radiotherapy sessions, apart from the chemotherapy. Indeed, free treatment contributes 20% of the costs of radiotherapy sessions for patients and 50% of the cost of chemotherapy. Also, there are services provided by the foundation to patients, starting with diagnosis, following by the provision of treatments that are not available in the governmental center, of which we provide six types, and sometimes more than one type. And if we receive news that some medicines are not available to patients, we work out solutions to provide them within the specified period".

He adds, "Radiation sessions are among the most important and difficult sessions that the patient needs, and we, as a foundation, provide 30% of the sessions, excluding critical and old cases. We take care of all sessions although the cost of one session is twenty-one thousand Yemeni Riyals and unfortunately it is not available except in one hospital which constitutes a great burden on the cancer patient, in light of the current conditions".

Psychological Support and Social Care

Wijdan Al-Jarmouzi, Director of Social Welfare at the National Cancer Control Foundation says, "Cancer patients need psychological support and social welfare. They are the main agents in the disease recovery, and what we provide at the center

from psychological support to patients is sufficient to stimulate the immune system in order to combat and eliminate the disease".

She added, "Many cases come to us from all governorates, facing a number of problems, the most important of which is that they remain for a long period of time for treatment. Housing is also the biggest obstacle, and we try, as much as possible, to provide them with housing in the shelter, as well as the necessary needs. We are currently preparing rehabilitation and training project for patients' companions and their mothers on sewing, embroidery and hairdressing".

Early Diagnosis Saves Lives

The oncologist Dr. Ibtisam Amin confirms that early diagnosis guarantees a complete recovery of up to 95% and saves material, psychological and health costs.

She added, "Ignorance, lack of awareness, shame and poverty are among the most important factors that exacerbate the suffering of a cancer patient. For 80% of cancerous masses are painless and many people ignore them. They only reach us in late stages when the disease has already spread, and then we face great difficulty in how to deal with it".

On the commitment of women to perform regular breast cancer examination, Dr. Ibtisam says, "The genetic factor, delay in marriage, lack of childbearing, early puberty, and the continuation of the menstrual cycle beyond the age of 55 are all risk factors that oblige women to perform early examination periodically to prevent breast cancer".

"I am stronger than cancer" is a phrase for those heroes, who fight disease with full determination and strength despite the obstacles that stand in their way. The most important of which are pain, material and psychological troubles. With this phrase they try to create a beautiful and better reality for their suffering with this disease.





Many scholars and researchers describe our era that we live by the age of anxiety due to the increasing social, family and economic pressures that affect the psychological state. In fact, mental health is of great importance facing this age, and for this the necessity and importance of attention to treating cases and mental disorders is emphasized.

Mental disorders are divided into 200 hundred types according to the classification system, which is based on observations, symptoms, signs, and diagnostic criteria, while mental disorders are classified into 22 diagnostic categories, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition: DSM-5, issued by the American Psychiatric Association.

By: Alya Muhammed
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

In Yemen, 195 Out Of Every 1,000 Individuals Suffer From Mental Disorders!

The Importance of Mental Health

Dr. Munira Al-Nimr, Head of the Psychological Unit at Al-Resala Hospital, for the Treatment of Psychiatric Diseases and Addiction says, "Depression, dementia, schizophrenia, and anxiety are among the most common mental disorders, and they can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, income, or social status. Mental illness is a neurohormonal imbalance and requires medication to wage any other disease. What we must understand is that all mental illnesses are organic diseases, but they appear as disturbances in behavior and feelings".

She added, "The psychological state is no less important than the physical health, and it may be more important. In fact, Physical illnesses require high spirits to defeat the disease. The biggest example on this is the use of psychotherapy to cure cancer patients".

Nehme Saleh, a cancer patient, says, "I coped with my disease because I have a great motivation to live and continue working. The disease did not deter me from continuing my life as other people. And it's all thanks to God, and my psychological state, which prompted me to accept the disease and live with it".

The State of Mental Health in Yemen

About 17% of the Yemeni population suffers from depression, and 15% from post-traumatic stress disorder, according to the World Health Organization. (Citing Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies 2019)

In Yemen, 195 out of every 1,000 individuals suffer from mental disorders, according to a study issued by the Family Development and Guidance Foundation 2018, which dealt with the age group above 16 years and the elderly. The study was carried out during the period of March 2015 and June 2017, and the results concluded that about 5.5 million people suffer from psychological disorders.

A field survey of the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Health and Population that was carried out in November 2016 on 3,507 health facilities in 16 Yemeni governorates out of 22 governorates, confirms that services related to mental health and non-communicable diseases are present at 21% of the facilities surveyed.

In the context, Dr. Al-Nimr says, "Yemen lacks governmental hospitals that specialize in psychotherapy. They do not exceed seven hospitals, and the mental health sector is one of the least supported sectors. As for psychiatric drugs, effective ones in particular, are not available in the market".

Adding: "Very high costs are borne by the patient alone in the absence of the role of the competent authorities and organizations supporting this sector. The organizations' role is limited to providing training projects and psychological support, which is not sufficient, and insufficient to meet the needs of mental patients in Yemen as clinics, psychiatric clinics, consultations, and medicines that are provided free of charge".

In turn, Dr. Muhammed Aqlan emphasized that a large number of people who suffer from mental

illnesses also deal with other kinds of suffering, especially in light of the current conditions, so a number of patients cannot continue treatment sessions due to the costs of psychological sessions, which number depends on the diagnosed case, and thus, by stopping the treatment, the psychological state deteriorates and becomes worse.

Aqlan stressed the importance of caring for psychiatric patients, providing the necessary treatment for patients, opening more hospitals, and providing free medicines for people with limited income.

Psychiatric Patient in Conflict with Society:

The psychological aspect constitutes an important dimension in a person's life and formation. This aspect needs a great culture that stems from within the individual and society.

Many difficulties face mental health in Yemen. The difficulty lies in the extent to which people accept mental health culture. Many find themselves in a struggle between mental illness and society's perception.

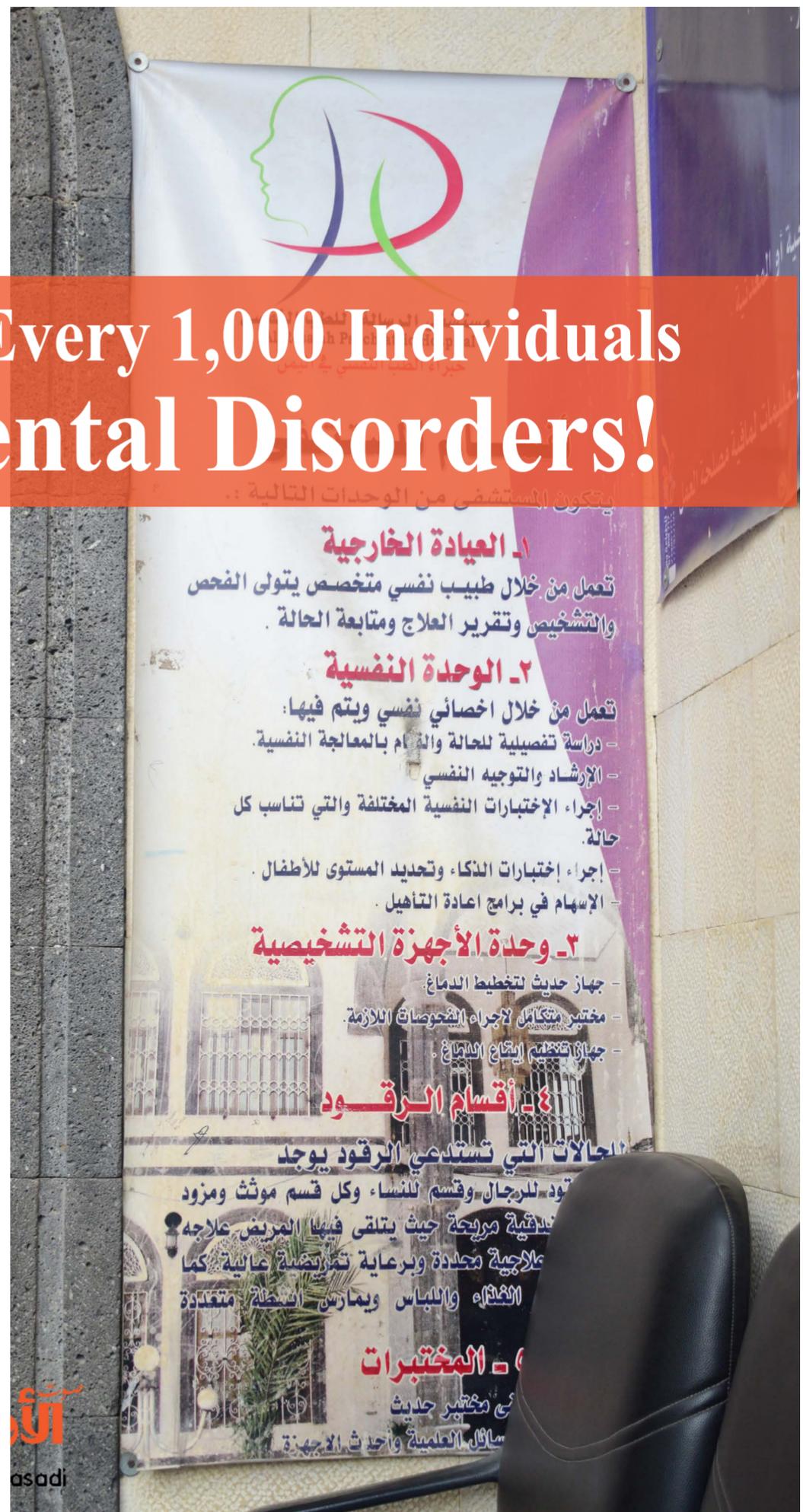
H.M.H. says, "I suffered, in past years, from some mental disorders, but I refused to go to a psychiatrist because of my fear that people would describe me as «crazy», and after that my condition worsened. At that time, I became certain that there was no solution for me except going to a psychiatrist and receiving treatment, and after the sessions I felt comfortable".

As for Umm Hassan, she says that she neglected her son because of the prevailing culture of society and says, "My son was subjected to psychological trauma, and became lonely and did not want to meet anyone, or talk to anyone, and many advised me to take him to a sheikh to perform "ruqyah" on him on the pretext of being possessed or under a spell. I hastened to go for treatment, but it did not improve until a close friend advised me to take him to a psychiatrist, and so I did, and his condition improved".

And about the extent to which people accept cases of mental illness, Nehmat Mandub, a psychiatrist in the Psychiatric and Neurological Hospital in Aden, says, "a large number of people confuse neurotic mental illness, in which the patient is insightful and conscious, and the mental illness in which the patient loses consciousness, and loses control of himself, and from this aspect, the problem of parents' lack of acceptance becomes clear. The idea that one of their family members suffers from a mental illness is a disgrace to them, and we notice that many people prefer to go to the sheikhs and charlatans, according to the popular culture of those affected by it. And when that does not work, they turn to psychological treatment, but after the deterioration of the condition".

She adds, "We must realize and understand the culture of mental health because mental illness is one of the most complex diseases, and in recent times, cases of mental illness have increased, and many have been exposed to depression and post-traumatic stress disorder because of life's stress".

Dr. Al-Nimr affirms that the society's view of mental illness differs, to some extent, from what it was before. Hence, there has been a great breakthrough in the extent to which society



understands and accepts mental illness, as the media contributed to spreading awareness and psychological culture and its importance.

She added, "We receive in the hospital all cases: women, children and the elderly, whether the cases are psychological, neurological, or family and marital problems, and we provide them with sessions, and the support that we do is with complete confidentiality and this is what mostly comforts the patient".

Awareness of Mental Health Culture

On the tenth of October of each year, the world celebrates World Mental Health Day. On this day, light is shed on the mental disorders suffered by billions of people in an attempt to find solutions in order to reduce their suffering, and create adequate awareness about mental illness.

Concerning awareness of mental health culture, the specialist Nehmat Mandub says, "the first steps in treating mental illness are the patient's

own recognition of the problem, and his family's recognition as well to reach us in the early stages of illness so that we can help him by conducting sessions for the patient and sessions for the family, to convince them to accept the disease and consider it like any other disease".

Regarding the accusation of many that mental illness drugs worsen the psychological state, Dr. Munira Al-Nimr says, "There is no medicine in the world that has no complications or side effects, and the medicines used in psychotherapy are the least harmful, and no complications occur, except for reasons such as the high dose, or the non-adherence of the patient to the dose as required, or that the parents do not give the patient the dose in a timely manner".

And she stresses by saying, "Psychiatric drugs help greatly, but they require accuracy in their use, and treatment is left only under the supervision of a doctor, even if the condition improves because psychiatric drugs need to be withdrawn gradually".



Women and Reproductive Health in Yemen

By: Nada Al-Bakary
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“The Reproductive Health system in Yemen is considered as one of the most important systems, which private centers and government agencies in cooperation with international organizations seek to improve through implementing awareness programs and activities for women in the various Yemeni governorates, and give it great attention, in terms of providing protection, shelter, and the necessary health care services, especially since Yemen is currently suffering from the largest humanitarian crisis in the world as a result of the conflict.

Current Reproductive Health Status

Dr. Nabila Al-Haimi, Head of The Yemeni Association for Reproductive Health (YARH) in Sana'a, tells “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) that the situation of reproductive health in Yemen has improved well, despite the challenges that the country is going through, by the implementation of many health services compared to the past, in cooperation with international organizations specialized in the field of health, in addition to the current and great interest in developing awareness-raising programs related to the elements of reproductive health. Thus, it is no longer limited to family planning, as some believe but rather includes many services under the name of reproductive health”.

Nevertheless, Zainab Al-Thalaya, a Reproductive Health midwife in the Red Crescent in Dhamar Governorate, disagrees with her, and says, “In the past, the necessary vaccinations for women and children were widely available in various health centers in the governorate, and family planning methods were available. As for now, the field of reproductive health in Yemen, in general, and in Dhamar governorate in particular, lacks such health services, which have remarkably caused an increase in complications for pregnant women and during childbirth. There is also a lack of the necessary health capabilities to improve reproductive health”.

The Importance of Visiting the Health Center

Dr. Ibtisam Shammar, a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology at the Motherhood and Childhood Health Center of the Marie Stopes International organization, confirms that complications of pregnancy and childbirth still exist. Despite the presence of awareness, many women still fear hospitals and doctors.

Dr. Shammar attributed these challenges in the field of reproductive health to, “the current situation, which has become a problem for pregnant women and children, because of the difficulty for them to access the necessary health services in their areas as required, most of the time, for they reach the health center in an unstable

condition which contributed to the exacerbation of the problem”.

Regarding the roles of female doctors, in improving women's reproductive health, Shammar explained, «Unfortunately, some female doctors randomly give information to the pregnant woman during her visits to the health center; sometimes health guidance for a pregnant woman varies from one doctor to another, and this leads to the distrust of the patient or the beneficiary of the health services”. She confirmed that this mistake is from the service provider, not from the beneficiary of the health services, as many centers employ female graduates of general medicine, who are not specialized doctors. In fact, awareness of health service providers is very important for the continuation of the life and safety of the pregnant woman.

With regard to health education which is a large part of reproductive health, Dr. Nabila Al-Haimi Head of The Yemeni Association for Reproductive Health (YARH) in Sana'a, mentions that health awareness has an impact on most women in various Yemeni regions as they have become more aware of their health, the fetus', and family planning. They also frequently visit the reproductive health centers, despite the difficult conditions the country is going through, and the scarcity of health capabilities in most centers.

The Role of Reproductive Health Organizations and Centers

The World Health Organization stated on May 8th, 2020, through a statement published on its website (The Health of Millions of Yemeni women is at risk), that “the reproductive health system has been suffering from many problems since before the current crisis in Yemen, in light of a health system on the brink of collapse”. The statement revealed that more than 3.75 million women and girls of childbearing age and 600,000 pregnant women are at risk of death and disease.

The organization indicated in the statement that “the medical sector operates at about half of its capacity and only one third of the operating health facilities. It does not provide reproductive health services due to the lack of staff and supplies, and the inability to meet operating costs or damage to equipment due to the conflict”.

Amat Al-Rahman Babrik, Head of the Motherhood and Childhood Center says that the international organizations interested in the health sector in Yemen, especially in reproductive health, work to build the operational capacities of health systems and community services, by providing emergency reproductive health services to women, and increasing their access, especially for pregnant women and vulnerable communities affected by the conflict in remote and besieged areas.

Babrik reviews the role of the Motherhood and Childhood Center that is affiliated to the Marie Stopes International organization which is to provide many health services, considered

as one of the most important elements that contribute to the development of health awareness, which targets many cases received by the center because the largest percentage in society is unconscious, or lack important and basic information about reproductive health, family planning and other services. It also trains midwives, on all reproductive health services, and on continuous follow-up of cases, and implements an integrated series of reproductive health services, with high quality by providing the necessary medicines.

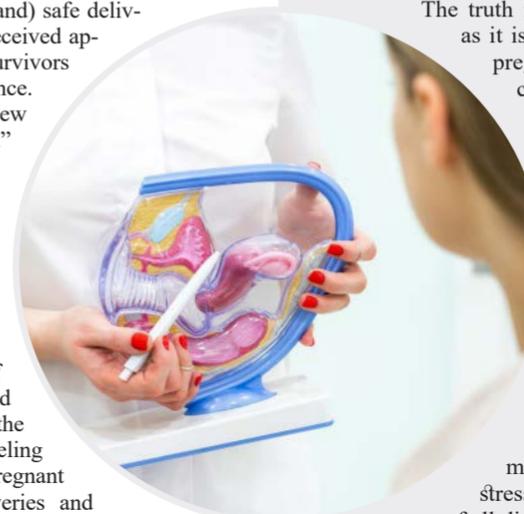
Umm Abdullah Al-Salem, a 19-year-old woman from Lahj Governorate, expresses her suffering during her first pregnancy, after discovering that she was pregnant in the second month, and only three months had passed since her marriage. She lives in a remote area where there are no necessary health services or transportation near the heart of the city of Lahj.

She explains that her condition became difficult in the first months of pregnancy. This forced her to come to Aden and stay at her sister's house to continue her treatment at one of the medical centers of the United Nations Population Fund in the Khormakser district. She received advice, treatments, and regular follow-up at the center until she delivered her first child there. She and her child are currently in good health.

More than 3.5 Million (three million five hundred thousand) People Have Received Health Services

The United Nations Population Fund indicated in a report issued during the year 2019 that more than 3.5 million (three million five hundred thousand) people in Yemen received life-saving emergency packages, reproductive health services, and protection, through the support of the United Nations Population Fund, in addition to facilitating more than 116,000 (one hundred sixteen thousand) safe deliveries, and they have received approximately 30,000 survivors of gender-based violence.

In a special interview with “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope), Dr. Afrah Al-Adimi, the Reproductive Health Officer at the United Nations Population Fund, said, “Reproductive health targets mothers, newborns, men and women of childbearing age, and aims at organizing the family through counseling and follow-up of pregnant women, natural deliveries and postpartum follow-up, as well as referring emergency cases for cesarean deliveries, and saving the life of the mother and the newborn within the reproductive health standards”.



Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) Is the Most Common Disease among Women!

Mona al-Asadi
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“Polycystic ovary disease does not cause infertility as it is common and does not prevent afflicted women from getting pregnant, but it has other complications. If it is not treated in early stages of the disease, it may require surgical intervention”. This is what Dr. Nabila Ismael, Obstetrics, Gynecology and Infertility Specialist, confirmed to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope). And she told us about the most common diseases among women, and gave us more details about this disease:

- To start with, what are the most common diseases among women?

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome is at the top of the list of diseases that afflict women in the current period. So, it can be said that it is the disease of the era, which many women of childbearing age suffer from.

- What is PCOS?

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome is a disorder of the level of female reproductive hormones, in a way that leads to problems in the ovaries, and thus affects the level of the ovulation process.

- What are the causes of polycystic ovaries?

In fact, there are no clear causes of polycystic ovaries. Indeed, the causes are unknown until now, but we can say that the genetic causes, an unhealthy diet, as well as severe stress, all play a fundamental role in the emergence and continuation of the disease in women.

- What are the symptoms caused by polycystic ovaries?

Normally, the ovaries produce balanced proportions of the estrogen and androgen hormones. In fact, the estrogen hormone is known as “the female hormone” because it is present in the female body in higher proportions than it is in the male body while the androgen hormone is known as “the male hormone” because it is found in the male body in greater proportions than in the female body. In the case of infection with PCOS, it causes disorder in the body. So the levels of androgen hormone rise at their normal levels, which leads to the emergence of some symptoms, including menstrual disturbance, or severe pain associated with it, hormonal acne, hirsutism, obesity, hair loss, and other symptoms that do not all necessarily occur in women who suffer from polycystic ovaries.

- How can the disease be prevented?

As I mentioned, the main causes of the disease are unknown. This is why it can be infected by any female of childbearing age. Many girls visit me at the age of 14 years with ovarian cysts, what expands the circle of questions about the causes of illness. But it is certain that exercising which relieves tension and avoiding fast food are very important for the illness recovery!

- What complications may occur for PCOS patients, if no treatment is given?

Neglecting polycystic ovaries may lead to Amenorrhea. This is an important indication for the patient that it is necessary to see a specialist. But, if the patient neglects that, she exposes herself to the growth of cysts in the ovaries, which increase in number and size over time until the surgical intervention to remove these cysts becomes the only solution!

- There are those who say that polycystic ovaries cause infertility. How true is that?

This is one of the common and erroneous information. The truth is that PCOS does not cause infertility as it is common, and afflicted women can get pregnant. But, as I mentioned, it has other complications if it is not treated in the early stages of the disease, and may require surgery.

- Do mothers get polycystic ovaries?

Yes, mothers visit me. Some suffer from polycystic ovaries and others suffer from ovarian cysts.

- What advice would you give women through “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope)?

My advice to every female is that to avoid stress and pressure, and deal with matters and problems more calmly because stress is one of the most common pathologies of all diseases, not just polycystic ovaries!



Because Of The Lifestyle Youth Have The Highest Share Of Diseases

By: Alya Muhammed
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“Due to the chronic shortage of health care, and the many problems affecting health in the modern era, the youth group is taking the highest share of illnesses and diseases, as well as it records a high rate in mortality, due to the lifestyle. And in our Yemeni society, there have been widespread practices and behaviors carried out by young people that are capable of affecting their health for years to come. “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) met with a group of young people, female and male, to get closer to knowing their health and preventive lifestyle and the impact of habits and behaviors practiced by young people that affect their physical and psychological health

Anxiety and Fear

Adnan Ali, a 29-year-old man, says that the most important causes which lead to the deterioration of young people's health are likely to be psychological and social pressures, anxiety, fear, frustration, and material pressures. These and other causes are enough to undermine the health of young people and affect them.

As for Amal Abdullah, a 29-year-old woman, she thinks that sleeping for long hours and the lack of movement are one of the reasons that affect the health of young people the most. “Recently, the increase in the unemployment rate has greatly contributed in negatively affecting young people's health”.

Whereas Saeed Al-Beri, a 28-year-old man, says: “What we notice is that many young people have been afflicted with heart diseases and many other chronic diseases in recent years. The reason behind this is a number of psychological, economic factors, wrong diet, and individual's behaviors that

affect the bodily functions, and cause chronic diseases that can lead to death”.

As for Munira Al-Tayyar, a 26-year-old woman, she says: “The conditions that the country is going through have affected our thinking, and made us constantly anxious, and many young people have become indifferent to their lifestyles and their health due to the feeling of frustration that led to the declining of their health”.

Sam Nizar, a 30-year-old man, affirms that for the sake of better health for young people, it is very important to exercise; likewise, young people must change their lifestyles concerning food and sleeping.

He adds: “Nervousness plays a big role in affecting young people's health. Therefore, they should avoid them, and must deal with problems calmly in order to preserve health!”

Suwaid Al-Keldi, a 35-year-old man, agrees with him, adding that bad behaviors are practiced by young people from eating unhealthy foods full of saturated fats, as well as hydrogenated oils, and vegetable oils that are heated to a high temperature and then hydrogen that is added to transform oils from liquid to solid state, and then used in foods manufacture.

He adds: “There is an important factor which society overlooks, and that may limit these diseases which is exercising. Actually, sport activates the body's cells and supplies it with oxygen, as well as prevents blood clots from forming”.

As for Hosni Al-Berkani, a 30-year-old man,

he says, “The frequent use of sedative and stimulant pills leads to the deterioration of youth's health. Many young people are unaware of the negative effects of these drugs, and they overuse them, as a result of many pressures that they face”.

Salwa Nasser stresses that it is necessary for a person to pay attention to his/her diet, to be keen on eating vegetables and fruits, and on diversifying food, thus to completely avoid foods that contains fats in order to preserve his/her health.

She added, “What we see today has become frightening. Young people whose food is limited to fast food, cause obesity, and many other problems to the body. We must remember that healthy and proper food protects us from diseases”.

Kifah Abdullah, a 30-years-old woman, shows that there is a wrong habit practiced by young people because they don't know the extent of its importance and the danger of its abstinence, which is not drinking sufficient quantities of water. And this is a dangerous factor that affects human health because it causes dehydration and complications in the kidneys. Therefore, they must care about drinking water in a big quantity.

On his part, Abdullah Muhammed, a 29-year-old man, believes that consuming shammah (a plant that is grounded and placed in the mouth) in all types and causes, in addition to some products saturated with aromatic substances such as Piper Betle, a plant that is somewhat similar to the Qat leaf, affect the human health and expose

him to a number of cancerous tumors.

After being informed, Dr. Abdul Hafiz Abdullah, Internal Medicine, Hepatology and Diet Specialist, on the opinions of young people, he emphasized that young people practice daily habits that are inherent to them, and which they do automatically, without being aware that they negatively affect their health in the long run. This is the reason behind the chronic diseases that hit young people such as: diabetes, heart, pressure, angina, and other diseases, which only the elderly are supposed to afflict, thus the youth are afflicted too because of a number of bad practices like smoking, taking stimulant pills, Qat, staying up late, not adhering to a healthy diet, and relying on fast food full of fat, which increase cholesterol in the blood, and in turn affects the heart and a number of body organs.

And he adds, “There is a big problem among young people, which lies in the lack of awareness, and a healthy education. Therefore, they practice wrong behaviors without knowing their harm to their health, thus they may not visit the doctor until the condition has worsened, and this is a dangerous indicator that affects the health of young people”.

Dr. Abdul Hafiz concluded by advising all young people who want good health to stick to exercise and adhere to a good diet. This will be the beginning of changing the lifestyle for the better.

On the relationship of mental health with diseases, Dr. Muhammed Aqlan, a specialist in psychiatry, says: “Psychologists and sociologists unanimously agree that the body consists of three entities, a physical, psychological and social entity, and there is a great relationship between the soul and the body”.

According to Dr. Aqlan, contemporary and open-minded psychologists see that the relationship of the soul and the body is a dialectical relationship, so what affects the soul affects the body, and vice-versa, in addition to the effect of the social aspect on both, and here the interaction bears the name of network interaction.



Health Services: Trade, Or A Professional And Humanitarian Duty?

«Please, tell the doctor that I cannot pay this big amount for the inspection paper, and the echography ... it is necessary for me to get a reduction». With these words, Intisar Saleh, a 26-year-old woman, spoke with the secretary of one of the women's clinics in Sana'a, but her demand was immediately rejected, as the secretary responded firmly, "I'm sorry but the doctor does not make a discount to anyone."

The situation seemed shocking and strange to me at first, but after meeting with the patients, listening to their anger, I felt that it was a routine matter that happens in most hospitals and private clinics.

By: **Mona Al-Assadi**
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Intissar expresses her deep dissatisfaction with the high prices of health services, saying, "10 thousand Riyals is a very large amount just for an examination paper and an echography and I cannot pay it". This forced her to leave the clinic sad and tired at the same time.

A patient in the waiting room comments on the situation by saying: "The more famous the doctor is, the higher the health services provided by his clinic or the private hospital in which he works will be". Another patient says, "The problem is not only in the high prices of the examination, but rather that the examinations and medicines, periodic echography as well as the costs of C-sections and cyst removal operations are the biggest burden for us, which is why workers, in the health sector, had to give up some of their ambitions to make money out of patients".

Wala Mansour, a 28-year-old woman, agrees with her by saying, "The costs of childbirth, and the care she received after giving birth, she and her child, for six days in a private hospital in Sana'a, exceeded 500 thousand Riyals which is equivalent to 850\$ for tests, the C-section, medicine, and rest", adding that this cost them large debts.

In a questionnaire conducted by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) on a sample of citizens, it was found that 79.8% believe that the average per capita income in Yemen is not commensurate with the prices of health services, and 15.7% believe that it is somewhat proportional, and only 4.5% believe that it is completely proportional.

Ahlam Muhammed, a 27-year-old woman, says that the prices of health services do not match the average per capita income. In fact, health services and medicines are constantly increasing, while the income is constantly declining, in addition to the lack of some health services in state hospitals which gives the individual only one choice: to go to hospitals and private laboratories where the prices of services are only commensurate with only a small segment of citizens.

Muhammad Lotfi Bakhwar, a 30-year-old man, agrees with her, by saying, "Booking an examination and conducting the tests, in addition to buying medicines which prices have greatly risen, as well as the deterioration of the Yemeni Riyal rate against the dollar are all reasons that played a role in creating a large gap between the average per capita income, and the prices for health services".

According to a report published by the Economic Studies and Forecasting sector of

the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in December 2017, the Central Statistical Organization estimates that the poverty rate significantly increased in Yemen in 2017 to 78.8% compared to 49% in 2014.

The average per capita income shrank from about 1247 (one thousand two hundred forty-seven) dollars in 2014 to 485 (four hundred eighty-five) dollars in 2017, with a cumulative change rate of 61.1%, which means that more people fell below the national poverty line, which is estimated at 600 dollars per year per person.

Regarding this, Amat Al-Rahman Babrik, Head of a reproductive health center in Sana'a, comments by saying, "There is a great corruption among health workers, and the problem is not limited to the prices of the examination paper", pointing out that the policy of marketing percentage in dispensing medicines constitutes one of the most dangerous forms of corruption; medicine is dispensed to patients not according to the need and the purchasing power but on the basis of marketing percentage.

Babrik continues, "This is an inhumane and unprofessional behavior that inflicts additional burdens on patients".

She asserts that the solution is to issue laws that abolish the policy of marketing ratios for medicines, punish violators of these laws, and limit the role of drug representatives to introducing drugs available in the companies they work for.

As for Dr. A.B., Obstetrics and Gynecology Specialist, she describes this unprofessional work as criminal acts, saying, "Through my work as an obstetrician and gynecologist, I notice that some doctors may be greedy enough to perform a C-section on pregnant women in order to profit from the costs of the surgery, while these women would have delivered through natural birth without the need for surgery".

Private Clinics: A Lot of Patients and Whoever Pays Double Goes in First!

In a field survey for "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) to a number of private clinics in Sana'a, it was found that the number of patients exceeds the area size of the waiting room which causes their resentment and dissatisfaction, and an increase in the waiting time, with no regard for people coming from far away.

In one of the private women's clinics, everyone seems upset about waiting for an admission appointment, which may exceed four hours. One patient says, "4000 (four thousand) Riyals is a large sum to book for an examination, which duration does not



exceed 3 minutes", pointing with her hand to a large number of patients, who are laying on the ground as there are not enough chairs for everyone!

In another clinic, one of the patients coming from a distant area outside Sana'a expresses the ill-treatment he was subjected to, by saying, "I did not know that I had to take an appointment in advance, and I cannot take one today and return after a week as per the regulations of the clinic", adding, "I have told the secretary that I'm coming from afar, and there is hardship and cost in coming back again but she did not respond to me, which forced me to pay double the examination amount to book an appointment today!"

The health situation in Yemen was not ideal, but it has worsened in recent years, and despite this, you find the citizen overseeing life with hope, facing it with difficulty, but he does not lose his great hopes for a better tomorrow. Even at the hospital thresholds, you find his anger mixed with persistence. Not to mention a new generation being created, upon whom the people place great hopes to change the dark state of health in Yemen to a brighter future. They are students of medical faculty, who have faced great obstacles to get there. They are coming and will change the concepts of health in Yemen. None of them wants to repeat what happened to him or to one of his countrymen at a medical and health facility!



Alya Muhammed

The Health Situation in Yemen: Where to?

Despite the development in the health sector infrastructure in Yemen, the entire health system suffers from an unprecedented collapse.

The increase in the number of hospitals, health units, preventive and curative centers, in addition to the participation of the private health sector in providing health services and the spread of health services at the rural and city levels, immunization programs and disease control were the most prominent developments in the health infrastructure.

Despite this development, the health sector found itself facing a number of challenges and risks that put it on the edge of a precipice, resulting of a number of factors that affected the functioning of the wheel of health. As the resources available to the health sector are no longer sufficient to meet health needs and are still limited, and health standards are not met, at a time when Yemen is witnessing tragic humanitarian conditions because of the conflict and its consequences such as displacement, poverty, and the spread of diseases, half of the health facilities have been unemployed.

After 2015, the health sector faced a set of challenges; the country was exposed to a number of pandemics such as Cholera, Dengue fever, Diphtheria, and they returned to the forefront after years of disappearance, thus many people have lost their lives.

The last of these epidemics was Covid-19 (Corona), which sounded the alarm in the most powerful health systems in the world, and that was the biggest challenge faced by the health sector in Yemen, in addition to the emergence of childhood diseases and reproductive health problems.

There is no doubt that the humanitarian and medical need is increasing more and more in the long run, while the health sector in Yemen needs to look at it, focus on it, take care of it, and solve the problems that hinder its improvement. Therefore, it is necessary to shed light on the health situation in Yemen and reveal the extent of the difficulties it faces by reviewing a set of issues that have affected the health sector. In this regard, the opinions of specialists, doctors and the competent authorities in this field must be sought, as well as health advice and guidance that promote healthy patterns in the lives of children, women and men, and raise awareness among all members of society must be provided.



سوت الأمل
النظام الصحي في اليمن
Health system in Yemen

49% Of Yemenis Do Not Trust Health Services

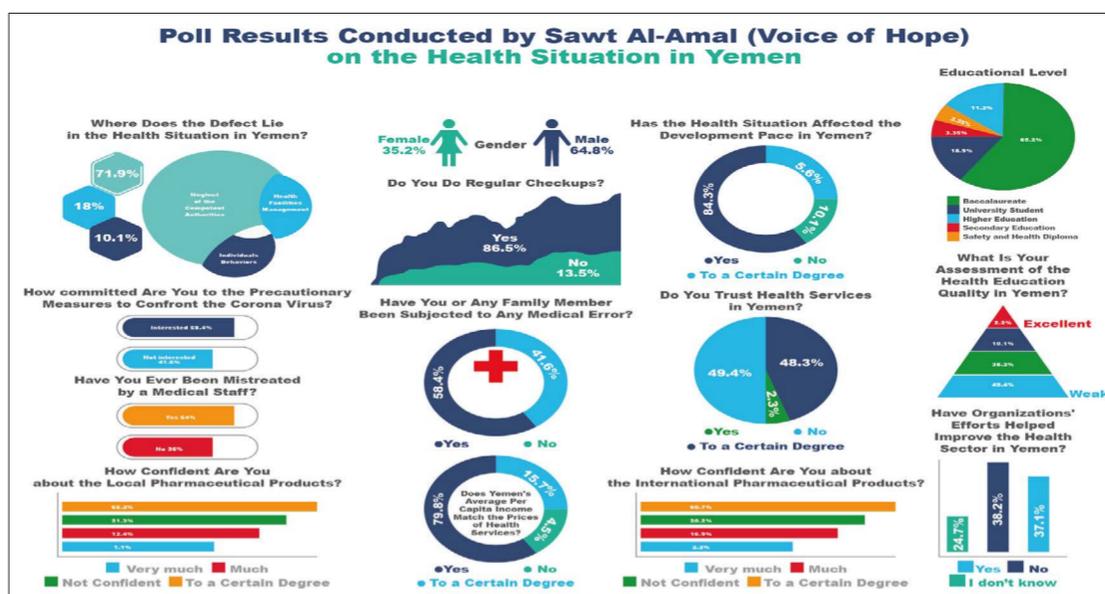
The Information and Public Opinion Polls Unit of the Yemen Information Center for Research and Information (YIC) took the opinions of citizens from various Yemeni governorates on the health situation in Yemen, and the extent of its impact on the wheel of development during this exceptional phase that our country is going through.

The poll, which targeted 64.8% of males and 35.2% of females, of various age groups and educational levels shows that 84.3% of citizens affirm that the current health status has significantly affected the development process in various fields.

While 10.1% believe that it has not affected it, and 71.9% assert that the reason for the defect in the health situation in Yemen lies in the negligence of the competent authorities to improve health services in a way that serves the citizens, while 18% of the respondents believe that the reason lies in the poor management of health facilities, and about 10% think that the reason is likely to be the behavior of individuals in dealing with the services provided.

The poll, which was carried out for "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) newspaper, showed the lack of confidence between 49.4% of the citizens and the health services provided in Yemen, especially in the current situation, while 48.3% trust the available services, but not in a complete manner that gives full confidence, while only 2.3% have great confidence in the services currently available. In addition to that, 60.7% of those surveyed assert that they greatly trust pharmaceutical products imported from abroad due to their lack of confidence in the local products, and 20.2% have confidence to a certain degree. While 16.9% trust foreign products very much, as they are the most appropriate at the present time, overlooking their large costs, and 2.2% do not trust the imported products.

Regarding the role of international and local organizations in improving the health sector in Yemen in the current situation,



citizens explained in the survey that the efforts of these organizations were weak and insignificant in a way that meets all the citizens' needs for health services and activities, at a rate of 38.2%, while 37.1% believe that the organizations provided assistance clear and impressive.

The poll also shows the extent to which citizens adhere to precautionary measures to confront Coronavirus (Covid-19) at a rate

of 58.4%, while 41.6% are not interested in these measures.

The poll showed the extent of citizens' evaluation of the quality of health education in Yemeni universities, as 49.4% assured that it is weak, while 2.2% see it as excellent, and the percentage of citizens who have been exposed to various medical errors by doctors and hospitals in various Yemeni governorates reached 58.4%.

Medical Success Story: An Invention that Eases the Suffering of Patients with Kidney Failure!

By: Nada Al-Bakary
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Creativity is born out of suffer, efforts and diligence, difficult experiences, facing pain, fear, pressures and challenges. With these words, we can indicate that there are those who have resisted difficulties to innovate in a medical achievement, in which they can help many people.

Despite the customs and traditions in our Yemeni society, which is described as patriarchal, and despite the obstacles which caused the limitation of the spread of many inventions, for many young people of both sexes, the engineer Reham Al-Mukhtari has continued to realize her dream in obtaining the title on the Yemeni innovator and achieving first place during her participation in the competition which was held by the Ministry

of Industry and Trade in Sana'a in July of last year 2020, for her invention "the medical vest device" that performs dialysis on the patient by wearing it.

The Engineer Reham Al-Mukhtari, born in the governorate of Raymah, a graduate of Sana'a Community College and a specialist in bio-medical engineering, Department of Medical Equipment Engineering at Sana'a University, says to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that "the idea of the invention came after I saw a lot of suffering on patients with kidney failure. At that moment, I got the idea of the invention that greatly dominated my thoughts since the second year after our training in Al-Thawra Hospital, and upon entering the dialysis department and seeing the suffering of patients while waiting for a long time for their turn to conduct the kidneys dialysis, and the hardship of their arrival from distant governorates that

lacked dialysis centers, and the shortage of necessary medical supplies, the idea of inventing a home device that would contribute to alleviating their suffering came.

She added that "it is required for every student in his/her graduation project to prepare an idea for the making of a medical device, and accordingly, I began to invent a special portable device for dialysis patients, which contains a high percentage of safety and sterilization that targets all groups of society who are patients with kidney failure."

Regarding the device and its importance, Reham explained to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) the content of the features that contribute to alleviating the suffering of patients from various Yemeni governorates and regions.

She said that "the invention is an effective device that performs the dialysis process for patients Continuation on page 2

