

Editorial

**Bahrain Medical Bulletin – 20th Anniversary Issue
The Pioneers**

Ahmed Al Arrayed, MD*

In July 1979, the Bahrain Medical Society and the Bahrain Health Care Community had, for the first time, their own medical publication. The aims of that journal as listed in that first issue of the Bahrain Medical Bulletin of July 1979 were to explore and examine issues in the following areas:

1. Ethics – examine how medicine was and how it should be practiced between doctor and patient and between doctor and doctor.
2. Research – to publish research studies by Bahrain’s medical community and
3. Public Education – to examine issues about disease prevention and treatment.

The Editorial Board and the doctors who worked hard to publish Bahrain Medical bulletin and those who had made this dream possible were:

Dr Jaffar M Bareeq
Dr Mohammed Al-Khalifa
Dr Fayek Al Hilli
Dr Ali Al Khalifa
Dr Hassan Al-Arrayed
Dr Faisal Al-Mousawi
Dr Najeeb Jamsheer

Over the years, the journal has published many medical research papers and original studies, case studies, personal medical viewpoints, along with news about the development of health care in Bahrain and specifically developments in the Salmaniya Medical Complex and Bahrain’s health centers.

The first 3 issues of the journal had a very high standard, especially those dealing with ethics in the first issues of the journal.

An editorial of the 1st issue written by HE Dr Ali M Fakhro, the Minister of Health at that time, explained the challenges facing the health provider in Bahrain. Dr Fakhro explained that in the past, Bahrain’s health care challenges had been (1) to establish the primary health care system, and (2) to establish the secondary and tertiary health care systems at Salmaniya Hospital. He defined the challenges for the future as follows:

1. To initiate programs and activities that will lead towards making Salmaniya Medical Center an accredited teaching hospital

* Consultant Physician & Nephrologist

Department of Medicine
Salmaniya Medical Complex
State of Bahrain

2. To play a major role in the establishment of a medical college, that will hopefully become part of the Gulf University.

In the last paragraph of his editorial, Dr Fakhro praised the pioneering efforts of the Bahrain Medical Bulletin and welcomes this first medical publication to Bahrain².

In the second issue of the Bahrain Medical Bulletin, Dr Hassan Fakhro spoke about decentralization of health services³. In 1994, with the establishment of cost centers and a quality management program throughout the Ministry of Health, decentralization became a reality.

During the 21 years period of the life of Bahrain Medical Bulletin, the Board in its effort to improve editing and medical writing in Bahrain and in the Gulf region, has arranged six workshops and one seminar in collaboration with the British Medical Journal and Harvard Medical School. The Board in its effort to improve the awareness of health has conducted 12 Ramadan Seminars which tackled difficult controversial subjects in medicine and religion ranging from abortion to tissue transplant, rejuvenation, genetic therapy, in-vitro fertilization, cloning and others.

During this period Bahrain Medical Bulletin has been indexed in the World Health Organization Index Medicus for Eastern Mediterranean Region (IMEMR), Extramed of the United Kingdom and International Serial Data System of France.

Bahrain Medical Bulletin is the second medical journal to be published in the Gulf region. The first one was in Kuwait. It is an achievement that Bahrain Medical Bulletin is continuing for all this time serving the research and research publication.

Over the course of the past 21 years, there have been many changes to Bahrain and to its medical community. From 1982 until 1995, HE Jawad Al Arrayed served as the Minister of Health. During his term, many more of those early dreams and challenges for the Bahrain medical community became a reality. The first health center was built in 1978 and by 1993 there were 18 health centers and clinic in Bahrain. During the tenure of the current health minister HE Dr Faisal Al Mousawi, another 5 health centers were opened. Residency Training Programs were instituted and the Arab Board of Medical Specialties became a functioning establishment. The College of Health Sciences became accredited teaching facility and established a BS program in nursing sciences as well as programs for various health care technicians. A public education function, a training directorate and information technology and analysis section were established and flourished. A proto-type medical "team" approach to Health Center services was established at the Sitra Health Center and proved to enhance care and reduce costs. During Minister Jawad's term, ground was broken for a major expansion of the Salmaniya Medical Center Complex in 1992 and when it was completed, opened by the current health minister HE Dr Faisal Al Mousawi in 1996.

For all of those who have worked to make the Bahrain Medical Bulletin a success over the years, we give our thanks. We especially wish to express our appreciation to those who have served on the editorial board and to those who have published in the journal. Our special thanks must go to the Chief Editor, Dr Jaffar M Al-Bareeq, who has served continuously on the editorial board from its initiation in 1979 until today.

It is that kind of dedication that serves as an inspiration to us all and which had led to the success and the excellence of this journal. To all who have contributed, we extend our gratitude. And to its pioneers, we extend our thanks for your perseverance and your foresight.

REFERENCES

1. Al-Bareeq JM. Lecture given in BDF Hospital, [December 16]1999.
2. Fakhro AM. The Challenges of Tomorrow. Bahrain Med Bull 1979;1:5.
3. Fakhro H. The Birth of Bahrain Medical Bulletin. Bahrain Med Bull 1979;1:24.