

Medical News

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Pioneering Online Health Survey

Bahrain will become the first country in the region to launch an online survey to assess the health of the nation. The Health Ministry wants to determine the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCD) and the risks of unhealthy living. It signed an agreement with a US firm to carry out the survey, covering both Bahrainis and expatriates, through social networking sites. The periodic online research will help to determine priorities and to draw a roadmap in developing programs, policies and strategies. Health Promotion Directorate would prepare a special questionnaire, which would cover different aspects of NCD. The ministry will have access to use and review more than 13 types of analytical reports. This will help in the evaluation of educational campaigns and the survey will be published online through new websites or the e-government portal. The questionnaire will cover NCDs, general health and fitness. NCDs are specified, such as, diabetes, cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular ailments. Respondents will receive an online invitation with a link to the questionnaire and they can respond in a language other than Arabic and English, such as, Mandarin, Hindi, Urdu and others.

Charity Raft Race

Hundreds took part in a major charity event on 6 April 2012 to raise money for Bahrain's fight against sickle cell. The 36th Charity Raft Race was organized by the Rotary Club of Salmaniya and was held at Al Bander Hotel and Resort in Sitra. Thirty-one teams participated in this annual event, which has generated an overwhelming response as more than the target of BD25,000 has been raised - before the race kicked off at 9 am. The event consisted of two races, one for men in open waters at the resort and a mixed event inside the lagoon area. Each team comprised of 10 participants, eight on the raft and two as reserves. This year's event featured the participation of new companies, hotels and universities, as well as veteran teams such as Alba and the Golden Tulip Hotel. The raft race is the club's main fundraiser of the year, with all

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the proceeds going towards local charities and community projects. Charities to benefit from this year's event will be selected by the club's board and announced after the race. The raft race was first introduced during the late 1970s and since then it has raised more than BD2 million, which were donated to the Isa Town Rehabilitation Centre, the Health Ministry, Al Noor Institute, Uco Parents Care Centre and Bahraini Society for Mental Retardation.

Paperless Hospitals Soon

A pilot program to provide 'electronic medical file' for citizens and residents of Bahrain is underway at King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH). The initiative foresees the Kingdom's health sector soon having 'paperless hospitals'. With the successful implementation of the e-file, individuals in the Kingdom will have only one medical record, which will be incorporated into the medical system of the country and can be accessed by all concerned. The KHUH are the trial operators for this system, which would be soon applied at the Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) and the Bahrain Defense Force (BDF) Hospital, it was learnt. The efforts behind this initiative has been challenging as it involves massive amount of data to be entered and programming accuracy.

Plan to Increase Senior Citizens Care Centers

An ambitious plan to increase the number of care centers for senior citizens from the current nine to 20 has been approved. The Human Rights and Social Development Ministry also announced its keenness to upgrade services provided to the elderly in the country. Human Rights and Social Development Minister, Dr. Fatima Al Balooshi, said that the centers would be established in 2015, in cooperation with civil society organizations. Dr. Al Balooshi highlighted the Kingdom's pioneering efforts in taking care of the elderly and consolidating their capabilities. She said that Bahrain had set a regional example in this regard. She added that the government was keen to provide ageing citizens appropriate health, social, legal and rehabilitation services to assure a decent living for them.

REFERENCES

GDN, Daily Tribune and MOH intranet webpage.