

Editorial**Dr. Ali Al Khalifa: A Loss of a Great Man with Great Achievements**

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On 11 July 2009, Bahrain Medical Bulletin lost one of its founding members, the medical profession lost, Dr. Ali A Al Khalifa, a pillar of the medical community. Patients lost an excellent orthopedic surgeon, medical students lost great teacher, doctors lost great medical administrator, the Shura Council have lost the far vision of Dr. Ali Al Khalifa. Dr Ali Al Khalifa would be remembered by poets of Bahrain and sea lovers. Dr Ali gave his medical service to public and military personnel for 30 years. I would miss him as friend, miss him in the sea trips, miss the poem recitation sessions with him and I would miss a medical schoolmate.

Dr. Ali and his brother Dr Mohamed Al Khalifa were the founders of the military hospital; Dr. Ali was the founder of the Sport Academy and the Royal Academy of Specialist. In BDF hospital he moved through the ranks from a chief of staff to Deputy Director of medical services and finally to the Director. After his retirement, he was appointed a member of the Shura Council where he was the chairman of the health services committee.

He and his brother Dr Mohamed Al Khalifa made immense efforts in establishing various medical and surgical departments of the military hospital. The fruit of their hard work came into existence of fully fledged a credited hospital.

Dr. Ali Al Khalifa was deeply missed in Bahrain and at Military hospital. He touched our lives; he is remembered by thousands of patients he saved. Dr. Ali Al Khalifa was admired for his dedication to our profession, his determination to serve his country and the people even during his health crisis and he would be remembered for his love and devotion to his family.

Dr Ali was born in January 1945. He was witty and the smile would not depart him, he was a great storyteller and he was an established poem writer and reciter. He never suffered from 'burnout' syndrome, always welcoming his friends and patients with kindness and great smile.

Professionals of any community are the image of progress by which the community is judged. They represent the crème de la crème of the society. Each professional, such as Dr Ali, represent 35 years of investing in learning and medical training. Dr Ali and other professionals are the pride and asset of our community.

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The community paid dearly to train the professionals and they invested dearly in themselves to achieve a good professional standard. Some of our professionals have become the pride of our nation and some others became worldwide names. Losing one professional, such as Dr Ali, means a loss of 35 years of public and personal investment.

Bahrain Medical Bulletin (BMB) proposed a medical research and clinical excellence center in the name of Dr Ali Al Khalifa who made many contributions for the medical advancement in Bahrain and he was one of the four founders of BMB in 1978.

The objectives of the center were the following:

- To involve the different health disciplines, medical professionals and patients to advance medical research and healthcare delivery.
- To save millions for the government by finding the best and most efficient way to treat any condition; the most efficient medication to be purchased for public consumption, not to forget the tremendous patient's benefits.
- Translation of clinical research into practice and health policy.
- Translation of epidemiological findings into method of screening and prevention.
- Allocate the time and the funds for those clinicians interested in research rather than to depend on overstretched practitioners, therefore, the traditional excuse, "lack of funds and time", will no longer be applicable.
- The medical research center would assume the responsibility of the "Institutional Review Board" (IRB). The purpose of the IRB is to review research and determine if the rights and welfare of human subjects are adequately protected. The IRB can approve, require modification or disapprove all research activities. A researcher must report injuries to subjects, and the IRB must report to the concerned institution.

The center would be open to questions by the lawmakers, professionals and public for its existing knowledge and the usefulness of any medication, procedure or guidelines.

The Center will provide guidance in specific areas of health and healthcare delivery:

- Health care priority setting, to include commissioned research based on the national health priorities in Bahrain
- The use of evidence based resources in the formulation and support of rational healthcare policy making
- Provide guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within Bahrain health services
- To develop clinical practice guidelines on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions
- Accreditation and Quality Improvement in healthcare to internationally accepted standards
- Give priority to procedures treating health problems according to their real health impact and the public expense they generate
- To promote and support quality research and enhance the opportunity for medical and paramedical professionals to conduct research relevant to the patients

- To ensure that research is used to improve health policy and practice of medicine in Bahrain
- To promote national, regional and international collaborations in science and medical research for the sake of improving health
- Create strong linkages between the universities, business, and the community
- To continue the search for new field of science and medical research relevant to improving the health of patients in Bahrain, and with specific focus on genetic diseases
- To develop strategic collaboration with other international organizations and centers of excellence i.e. NICE, NHS HTA, GIN, SIGN, AHRQ and the Cochrane Collaboration through the Bahrain Branch of the UK Cochrane Center

In addition, establish a National Electronic Library of Health, which will contain a fully searchable database of all healthcare research, conducted by Bahraini researchers as well as provide an open access real-time resource for healthcare providers, researchers and policy makers.

The center would be a remembrance, which would include a section for each lost colleague.

Unfortunately, Bahrain Medical Bulletin did not have the fund or the sponsor to establish that center; therefore, Dr Mohamed Al Khalifa proposed an alternative of establishing 'Dr. Ali Bin Abdulla Al-Khalifa Research Fund', principally, the fund is supported by the family.

The Late Dr Ali Bin Abdulla Al-Khalifa Research Fund is an agency for supporting medical research in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The aim is to lead the way towards health research that improves people's health and quality of life. The main research field should concentrate on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of common diseases in Bahrain such as coronary heart diseases, diabetes, hereditary blood diseases, and cancer.

For over thirty years, Dr. Ali Bin Abdulla Bin Khalid Al-Khalifa had played an important role in advancing the conduct of research and its dissemination by being on the Board of Bahrain Medical Bulletin.

Criteria for Accepting Research Proposals

1. Conducted by health professionals in Bahrain.
2. Addresses common diseases or health care priorities in Bahrain.
3. The aim is to increase our understanding of common diseases, their etiology, diagnosis or therapeutic investigations.
4. Applicant should submit a structured research proposal.
5. The research proposal should be scientifically sound and ethically acceptable.
6. Approval of research should have been obtained from the Scientific and Ethical Committee at the Investigator's institution.

Application for funding research could be submitted to the Research Committee of Bahrain Medical Bulletin. Dr. Fadheela Al-Mahroos, Chairperson, Dr. Ali Al-Khalifa Research Fund, P O Box 30880, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Download the application form:

http://www.bahrainmedicalbulletin.com/Dr._AliAlkhalifa_Research_application.pdf/

In June 2008, I saw Dr Ali while he was being treated from the recurrent health crisis. He looked me in the eye and said, "I lived my life deeply, I released myself to the people and dedicated myself to medicine and my country, I lived a useful life, I have always loved my family, my colleagues, and people of Bahrain; therefore, I have absolutely no fear of death." Truly, he had no fear of death; he was a hero who feared nothing. He and I shared a common believe in 'Arab unity', despite all the upsets in the last 60 years.

Bahrain Medical Bulletin delegation to the conference of European Association of Science Editors' in Basel, Switzerland 1988.

From right to left Dr Ali Al Khalifa, Dr Jaffar Al Bareeq and Dr Hassan Al Arrayed. Dr Jaffar Al Bareeq presented a study titled 'Training Editors and Authors'.



"The happiness of the drop is to die in the river", Al-Ghazali said. Finally, it is fit to present the following poem by Melinda Sue Pachon to Dr. Ali Al Khalifa's family and to his colleagues. I believe truly that he did not die, he is still among us, his contribution to the medical services would continue for many generations. Every acclaimed and achieved professional is rare breed. We hope that someday another professional will fill the place of Dr Ali, his enthusiasm and dedication to medicine.

I Did Not Die

Do not stand at my grave and forever weep.
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.

I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn's rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush

Of quiet birds in circled flight.
 I am the soft stars that shine at night.
 Do not stand at my grave and forever cry.
 I am not there. I did not die.

Finally, let us unite as professionals and protect our interest and the public alike. Let us be kind to each other and to the family members of our colleagues. Let us abide by the medical ethics, which binds us together. Let us aim at raising the standard of medical practice and aim at "the state of the art in medicine". Let us unite to establish a research and remembrance center for our lost colleagues.

وأختم ببعض الابيات للشاعر صالح بن شريف الزندي اهديها للطبيب الشاعر على عبد الله آل خليفة ولجميع محبيه:

لكل شي اذا ما تم نقصان فلا يغر بطيب العيش انسان
 هي الامور كما شاهدتها دول من سره زمنن سائته ازمان
 وهذه الدار لا تبقي على احد ولا يدوم على حال لها شان

You are welcome to send your comments or contribution to jmab@batelco.com.bh