

Primary Health Care Project in Iraq (PHCPI)
National Workshop of Patient's Rights Charter
“Good Health is your Right; Learn Your Rights to Ensure Decent Health”
March 04-05, 2012



Under the Patronage of His Excellency Minister of Health, Dr. Majeed Hamad Ameen and with the supervision of the Senior Deputy Minister of Health, Dr. Essam Namiq, the Head of the Supreme Committee for Accreditation and Patient's Rights, and in coordination between the Iraqi MoH and USAID/PHCPI, a two-day workshop on Patient's Rights Charter was held entitled "Good Health is your Right, Learn Your Rights to Ensure a Decent Health". The workshop took place at the Oil Cultural Center in Baghdad during the period March 4-5, 2012.

With a distinguished presence of USAID representatives, including the Deputy Mission Director, COTR and General Development Officer from the Capacity Building Office, more than 280 participants attended the workshop, represented by the MoH DGs, Section Directors from the Public Health Directorate, Technical Affairs, Planning, Administration, Inspection, and PHC Departments from the MoH and DoHs, representatives from Ministry of Human Rights, Iraqi Medical Syndicates, WHO, and civil society organizations.

The first day of the workshop was devoted for the discussions by the working groups of the five topic areas, including Justifications for developing the Patient's Right Charter, Patient's Rights in treatment and care, Patient's duties and responsibilities, Mechanism of disseminating patient's rights charter, and MoH approaches in accreditation, quality assurance and patient's rights and responsibilities.



On the second day of the workshop, the Senior Deputy Minister of Health, Dr. Essam Namiq, Head of the Supreme Committee for Accreditation and Patient's Rights, delivered a speech in which he stated that "Patient's Rights Charter represent the



cornerstone for accreditation of health facilities as they depend on the standards of elevating institutional performance in line with affirming standards of communication with the patients and clients who use health services". He mentioned that patient's rights must be part of an integrated framework of human rights. He considered that this workshop

is conducted in active partnership with USAID/PHCPI and it is a prove of the integration between patient's rights and accreditation of health facilities down to the comprehensive quality management assuring all regulations, instructions and activities that can elevate these concepts. Finally he praised the workshop describing it as a new and serious initiative and a step forward to complete building the health system in Iraq.

The Head of Arab League and the Iraqi Medical Syndicate, Dr. Nadhem Abdul Hameed, addressed the rules pertinent to practicing medicine in international legislations and treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and the Arabic Covenant for Human Rights. He also addressed the medical code of ethics especially the doctor-patient relation. He added that the syndicate is set to implement a strategy to disseminate recommendations related to respecting patient's independency, comprehensive care and respecting patients themselves.



Addressing the results of the workshop, USAID Deputy Mission Director, Mr. Alex Dicki, stated that the ongoing cooperation between the USAID and the Iraqi MoH resulted in significant advancements for the Ministry and the overall health system in Iraq. “It is the result of a strong partnership, joint commitment and hard work over the past year. We commend the working groups for their efforts. The progress made over the past two days clearly reflects the priorities of the MoH and their commitment to the citizens in Iraq. The results achieved in this workshop reaffirm the close relationship and mutual understanding between the public Health Directorate and USAID’s PHCPI. They demonstrate the true partnership of our two governments in paving the way for improved healthcare for people of Iraq,” Mr. Dicki said.



The PHCPI COP, Dr. Bushra Abbasi, delivered a speech defining the PHCPI efforts and steps to assist the MoH in developing the National Charter of the Patient's Rights in Primary Health Care. She added that the MoH has already made progress through the individual efforts of the Supreme Committee for Accreditation and Patient's Rights, the Public Health Directorate, the Planning and Human

Resources Directorate, and the Inspector General Office, who called for adopting the Patient's Rights Charter, training the medical staff on implementation, and disseminating for wider access by the community. The PHCPI COP added that the project will proceed with scaling up and circulating the National Statement of the Iraqi Patient's Rights to all provinces in Iraq.

A discussion panel, headed by Dr. Saleh Al-Hasnawi, former Minister of Health and current member of the Parliament's Health and Environment Committee, also included Chief of Arab League and Iraqi Medical Syndicate, Dr. Nadhem Abdul-Hameed, DG of Public Health Directorate, Dr. Hassan Hadi Baqer, and the PHCPI COP Dr. Bushra Abbasi. The outcomes of the five working groups were discussed and evaluated, thus guiding the MoH and PHCPI in further defining the Patient's Rights Charter through engaging the relevant legislative and executive committees and translating the charter into practice.



Additionally, a side meeting was held and attended by the Senior Deputy Minister, DoHs DG from MoH and provinces, USAID Mission Director and COTR, PHCPI COP and Advisors. The USAID Mission Director and Senior Deputy Minister exchanged opinions regarding ways the PHCPI can assist the MoH in rolling out the Charter to communities and health facilities, so that citizens and health care providers can begin to incorporate the concepts outlined in the Charter into their everyday practice, and work together towards the achievement of universal, high quality healthcare. Both parties thanked each other for mutual efforts in making the workshop a real success. The COP presented PHCPI achievements to date, and the provincial roll out plans. The DGs expressed their appreciation and full support to USAID/PHCPI, welcomed its Advisors and Provincial PHC Coordinators, and encouraged to meet with them to discuss various PHCPI programs.

The workshop has achieved its goals in terms of:

- Drawing the participants' attention and broadening their awareness by discussing patient's rights references and documents presented by the project.
- Focusing on topics specified for each group and coming up with good results in accordance with the project's goals, in cooperation with the preparatory committee consisting of relevant MoH departments.
- Participation of MoH, Parliament, and human rights organizations in Iraq, Medical Syndicate, and DGs gave a visible momentum to the workshop jointly conducted by the MoH and USAID/PHCPI.
- Recommendations that affirmed the importance of patient's rights and the need for cooperation with MoH through its Consultative Body and human rights entities in the Parliament.
- The involvement of the Iraqi Medical Syndicate through its Head, Chief of the Supreme Council of Arab Physicians Union.
- Agreed to develop a work plan and implementation mechanisms within a clear timetable in order to approve the implementation of the charter's items and utilizing them in quality and accreditation systems.

