

Iraq Ministry of Health Weekly Update

MOH-CPA Health Team Current Policies and Initiatives, Vol. 16, September 25, 2003

Highlights for the Week:

- **MOH Senior Advisor Visits Two Cardiac Care Centers**
- **MOH Officials meet with the World Health Community to Assess Priorities for Rebuilding the Iraqi Health Care System**
- **MOH Senior Advisor and Interim Minister of Health attend World Bank / IMF Annual Meeting**

MOH Senior Advisor visits two Cardiac Care Centers

BAGHDAD—Senior Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Health, Mr. Jim Haveman visited the Ibn Al Betar Cardiac Center, formerly the Saddam Cardiac Center, and the Ibn Al Nafis Cardiac Center on September 18, 2003.

Before a tour of the Ibn Al Betar facility, Mr. Haveman and Dr. Khudair Abbas, interim Minister of Health, met with Dr. Hussein Al Hall, the director of the center, Mr. Jamal, the Arbil Minister of Health, and the Sulaymaniyah Minister of Health. Of the Ibn Al Betar patients 40 percent are children and 19 percent of these are Kurds. The participants discussed the need for outreach to the Kurdish community—which was neglected and underserved by the former regime—and how to increase the number of daily surgeries at the facility.

Following this meeting, Mr. Haveman toured the hospital and was impressed by the work that has been completed over the past few months. Three of the original eight operating rooms at the facility have been restored and the first surgery since April was held September 17, 2003. A basic schedule of surgeries will resume with three operations a day and plans to manage up to 10 surgeries a day in the immediate future.

Mr. Haveman also visited the Ibn Al Nafis cardiac center which specializes in vascular and cardiac diseases. Like many Iraqi hospitals Ibn Al Nafis, needs new equipment, technicians and specialized nurses. However, Director Mohammed Al Ameri and the hospital's main surgeon, Dr. Moustafa Al Warid said the surgeons still perform 8 to 10 operations a day in the two functional surgical theaters, one for thoracic and general vascular surgery and one for open heart surgery.

MOH is working with Ibn Al Nafis to help implement their goals to increase security, modernize their equipment and to ensure oxygen delivery on a regular basis. The facility also hopes to provide skills training in new techniques and medicines for Iraqi surgeons and increase the number of specialized nurses as a long term project.

MOH Officials meet with the World Health Community to Assess Priorities for Rebuilding the Iraqi Health Care System

AMMAN, Jordan—CPA and MOH staff traveled to Amman, Jordan to coordinate with United Nations and World Bank representatives on the immediate and long-term health needs assessment for Iraq. Participants in the meeting included representatives from

WHO, UNFPA, WB, UNICEF and CPA-MOH.

The three day conference resulted in a comprehensive document that was forwarded to the World Bank/IMF annual meeting held in Dubai this week on global health issues, and will be expanded, in collaboration with World Bank and United Nations representatives, in preparation for the Iraq International Donor Conference to be held in Madrid October 23-24, 2003.

MOH Senior Advisor and Interim Minister of Health attend World Bank / IMF Annual Meeting

DUBAI, UAE—Senior Adviser James Haveman, interim Minister of Health Dr. Khudair Abbas and his chief of staff, Mr Ammar al-Saffar, are in Dubai to attend the World Bank/IMF annual meeting. They are participating in the planning efforts on behalf of the Ministry of Health for the upcoming Donor's conference. The Dubai conference is the second step in efforts leading up to the International Donors Conference in Madrid and represents Dr. Abbas' first official outing abroad since being appointed as the interim minister.