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Institute of Public Health (IPH)

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September - December 2023

IPH Newsletter



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IPH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS



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OPENING MESSAGE



Dear readers,

It is with great enthusiasm and a shared commitment to health that we introduce the new edition of the Public Health Newsletter. At the IPH, we believe in the transformative power of knowledge and its ability to shape healthier communities. This newsletter is a testament to our dedication to excellence in public health. Join us on this enriching journey as we explore the latest developments, amplify student and faculty achievements, and foster a community united in the pursuit of a healthier tomorrow.

In this issue, we are honored to present an exclusive interview with H.E. Dr. Farida Al Hosani, Executive Director of Infectious Diseases at the Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre. Her insights are invaluable to our understanding of public health challenges and solutions.

We're also excited to share updates on the achievements of our faculty, students, and alumni. These stories showcase the impactful work being done within our community, from innovative research to meaningful outreach initiatives.

Additionally, we feature highlights from our recent webinars, offering expert perspectives on various public health topics, and updates from our Public Health Clerkship program, demonstrating the practical, real-world experiences of our medical students.

I observed a substantial change in public health in the past 11 years when I first started my career in this field. At first, public health was considered a fraction of the healthcare ecosystem. However, the field of public health has now become the core and the backbone of healthcare in the UAE.

Our wise and visionary leadership in the UAE and IPH's optimistic faculty and students ensure that this enlightenment and advancement in public health will continue.

Thank you for your continued interest and support. We hope you find this edition both enlightening and engaging.

Dr. Ali Al Rahma, IPH - PhD alumnus, Adjunct Faculty at IPH

Editor-in-Chief



Dr. Azhar Rahma
Instructor at IPH

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Postgraduate Studies
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Allow us to introduce the amazing editorial board that worked tirelessly to produce this newsletter:



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Director of the IPH



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Research Assistant at the IPH



Prof. Syed M. Shah
Professor at the IPH



Dr. Maryam Bashir
Adjunct Faculty at the IPH



Dr. Rami H. Al-Rifai
Associate Professor at the IPH



Dr. Zufishan Alam
Medical Research Specialist
at the IPH



Dr. Iffat Elbarazi
Assistant Professor at the IPH



Ms. Rouwida El Khalil
PhD candidate at the IPH



Mr. Aminu Abdullahi
Medical Research Specialist
at the IPH

IPH IN NUMBERS

September - December

7

MPH graduates



2

PhD graduates



4424

Followers on social media



5

Top 2% cited scientists by
Stanford in 2023



7

Webinars





Stanford's Top 2% Cited Scientists list - 2023

At IPH, we take immense pride in our extraordinary team and are thrilled to share a monumental achievement. Five brilliant faculty members and researchers from IPH have earned a prestigious place on Stanford's Top 2% Cited Scientists list in 2023!



Prof. Michal Grivna



Dr. Rami H. Al-Rifai



Dr. Javaid Nauman



Dr. Iffat Elbarazi



Dr. Yasin Yasin

Their inclusion in the Stanford's Top 2% Cited Scientists list in the year 2023 is a testament to their unwavering passion and the impact they've had in their respective fields. We are truly fortunate to have such an extraordinary group of individuals within the IPH family, driving us towards greater heights.

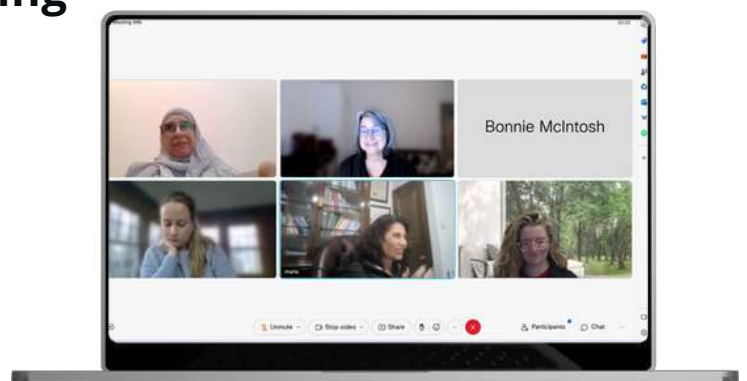
Congratulations for this incredible achievement. Your work is not just an inspiration to us but to the entire world of science. We can't wait to see the continued impact you'll make in the years to come!

Visit of University of Ottawa, Canada to CMHS

On September 11, 2023, a delegation from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa, visited CMHS, Al Ain. The delegation consisted of Dr. Bernard Jasmin (Dean), Prof. Mark Walker (Vice Dean), Dr. Chuck Su (Director of Enhancement), and Ms. Meghan Hach (Director of Internationalization and Global Health). Prof. Ahmed Al Suwaidi, Acting Dean of CMHS, welcomed the delegation. The leadership of CMHS was joined by Dr. Mohammed Al Houqani, Secretary General of National Institute of Health Sciences (NIHS), and Prof. Michal Grivna, Director of IPH. The parties discussed possibilities for future collaboration in education and research.

Pioneering Discussions at the International Health Literacy Association's (IHLA) Virtual Meeting

Dr. Iffat Elbarazi virtually attended the first meeting for the International Health Literacy (HL) Association Interest Group (IG) on "Health Literacy and Health Behavior" to discuss the topics and the possibility of the IG meeting in Rotterdam and to deliver workshops related to HL line with the Summit of IHLA to be conducted between 14-16 September, 2023.



Obesity Task Force Meeting

On September 18, 2023, Prof. Syed Shah and Dr. Iffat Elbarazi (from IPH) attended a meeting with the Obesity Task Force, the “Think Tank” to support research, and actions to control obesity. Her excellency Dr. Omniyat Al Hajeri attended the meeting and Dr Budoor Alshehhi chaired the meeting.



Strengthening Responses to Violence: National Workshop Collaboration by MOHAP, WHO, and UNICEF



Dr. Iffat Elbarazi and Dr. Zufishan Alam attended, the National workshop on ‘Strengthening Health System Response to Violence’ organized by the Ministry of Health and Promotion (MOHAP), in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF from 26-28 September, 2023, in Dubai.

Workshop to develop a Research Plan on Indoor Air Quality and Human Health in the UAE

Dr. Mohamed El-Sadig has participated in a workshop to develop a research plan on “Indoor air quality and human health in the UAE”. The workshop took place on September 27-28, 2023, sponsored by Abu-Dhabi Public Health Center. The workshop had experts from North Carolina State University, The Pennsylvania State University, Yale University, Singapore Institute of Technology, Technical University of Denmark, University of Amsterdam and other academic institutions.



Unveiling Childhood Challenges: Dr. Iffat Elbarazi's Insightful Presentation at the Maudsley Mental Health Conference

Dr. Iffat Elbarazi participated in Maudsley Mental Health Conference on October 13-14, 2023, held in Dusit Althani, Abu Dhabi. Dr. Iffat presented the Adverse Childhood Experiences prevalence study that was conducted in Abu Dhabi by the Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority (ECA) in collaboration with a research team from George Town University, UAEU and University of Birmingham (UOB). Ms. Rouwida Elkhailil (PhD candidate at IPH) also attended the conference.



Visit of University of Limerick, Ireland to CMHS

A delegation from the University of Limerick, Ireland, led by the Head of School (Dean) Prof. Colum Dunne, visited CMHS, Al Ain on October 23, 2023. Prof. Ahmed Al Suwaidi (Acting Dean, CMHS), Prof. Juma Al-Kaabi (Vice Dean, CMHS), Prof. Mohi Eldin Magzoub (Chair, Dept. of Medical Education, CMHS), and Prof. Michal Grivna (Director of IPH) discussed opportunities for collaboration with the University of Limerick.



UAE National Adaptation Plan

Dr. Balázs Ádám attended a meeting on Wednesday October 25, 2023 dedicated to the development of a roadmap for the UAE National Adaptation Plan. The plan aims to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience. The initiative is fostered by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA), in collaboration with the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). Dr. Balázs, invited through the Climate Change Research Network, used this opportunity to emphasize and advocate the importance of the aspect of human health in adaptation strategy planning.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) Research Retreat

The Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority's Research Team invited the IPH team (Prof. Luai Ahmed, Prof. Syed Shah, Dr. Iffat Elbarazi, Dr. Mohamed El-Sadig, Dr. Azhar Rahma, Mr. Ismail Elkonaisi, and Dr. Preetha Karuveetil) to participate in an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Research Retreat held on October 31 & November 1, 2023 at SeaWorld Abu Dhabi. The event featured an impressive lineup of speakers, including H.E. Sana Suhail, the Director General of the Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority, who delivered the welcome remarks. Following this, H.E. Faisal Al Bennai, the Secretary General of the Advanced Technology Research Council, provided the opening address, discussing the role of advanced technologies in empowering early childhood development research in Abu Dhabi. Dr. Mark Tomlinson, Co-Director of the Institute for Life Course Health Research at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, presented the keynote address, delving into the future of early childhood development research, including the influence of machine learning and AI on parenting and the ethical considerations of technology in the field. The event also featured a panel discussion with notable experts, including Dr. Asma Al Mannaie, Dr. Ekaterina Kochmar, Dr. Joseph Agbenyega, and Ms. Lama Choufani, covering various aspects of early childhood development research. The event concluded with a Design Thinking Workshop, focused on co-designing solutions for early childhood development research excellence, facilitated by the Abu Dhabi ECD authority.



First International Conference on Applied Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Dr. Iffat Elbarazi and Ms. Ithar Farah participated in the First International Conference: Applied Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences that took place in Sharjah on October 31 - November 2, 2023. Dr. Iffat and Ms. Ithar presented preliminary findings of an exploratory study conducted with perinatal women recruited from the Mutaba'ah study, about the role of the fathers in their children's well-being.



United Arab Emirates University and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of United Nations Symposium

The UAEU-FAO symposium on "The role of agrifood system transformation on healthy diet and prevention of obesity and non-communicable diseases" was held on November 1, 2023 in Al Ain. Prof. Ahmed Al Suwaidi, Acting Dean of CMHS, opened the symposium. Prof. Habiba Ali (Vice Dean of CMHS) presented issues related to maternal and child nutrition in the UAE and Prof. Ayesha Al Dhaheri (Consultant, Vice Chancellor's Office, UAEU) addressed the socio-behavioral determinants of non-communicable diseases in the UAE. Prof. Michal Grivna represented IPH at the symposium.



2nd WHO European Public Health Leadership course

Dr. Amal Al Zahmi, Assistant Professor at IPH, completed the 2nd WHO European Public Health Leadership course. The second iteration of the Leadership Course has been co-developed by the WHO in collaboration with the School of Public Health (ISPED), University of Bordeaux, France, and the graduate program on Digital Public Health (DPH), in collaboration with the Bordeaux Population Health Research Centre of the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm) and the Care and Public Health Research Institute (CAPHRI) of Maastricht University, the Netherlands. The course took place on November 13-24, 2023. This experience has opened doors for future collaborations.



Collaboration with the Yale University and American University of Beirut in Injury Research

On November 16, 2023, Prof. Michal Grivna and Dr. Mohammed Khogali held an online meeting with Prof. Iman Nuwayhid and Dr. Samar Al Hajj from the American University in Beirut, Lebanon, and Dr. Hani Mowafi from Yale University to discuss possibilities for collaboration in injury research. Dr. Hani and Dr. Samar introduced The Middle East and North Africa Program for Advanced Injury Research (MENA-PAIR), a project aimed at promoting injury research and awareness in the region by training young researchers in injury epidemiology, conducting interesting and cutting-edge research, and partnering with several stakeholders to advance injury prevention.

UAEU Awards for publishing in top 1% journals as corresponding authors

The outstanding achievement of Dr. Mohamed El-Sadig & Dr. Javaid Nauman in publishing as the corresponding author in a top 1% journal has earned recognition from the UAEU Chancellor Zaki Nusseibeh. A ceremony to celebrate this accomplishment was held on October 30, 2023, at the UAEU Crescent building. Congratulations to Dr. Mohamed El-Sadig & Dr. Javaid Nauman for this well-deserved honor!



Awards for Top Authors

Top Authors		Scholarly Output	Citations	h-index
1	Arabi, Yaseen M.	234	16,024	87
2	Rifadhel, Majid	128	1,558	30
3	Rajendram, Rajkumar	95	106	17
4	Umair, Muhammad	85	608	18
5	Masuadi, Emad M.	65	303	13
6	Shirah, Bader Hamza	59	244	12
7	Algahtani, Hussein A.	58	231	15
8	Alaskar, Ahmed S.	57	402	11
9	Alghnam, Suliman Abdullah	55	661	20
10	Allasser, Mohammed Ibrahim	53	84	9

Dr. Emad Masuadi has received award for being one of the top authors at The King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences (KSAU-HS), Saudi Arabia. This recognition is a testament to his contributions and achievements in the field of health sciences. Congratulations to Dr. Emad Masuadi for this notable accomplishment

Trailblazing Health Education: Launching the UAE's First Micro Master Program in Collaboration with IPH

Dr. Iffat Elbarazi and Dr. Javaid Nauman, in collaboration with Ms. Suheila Ali Hasan, have established the first Micro-Master on Health Education in the region and it will be the first of its own in the UAE. The program will be offered as part of the IPH post-graduate curriculum and will fill the gap for training health educators who will be able to work in the community and in the clinical settings. The program is still awaiting approval from the CAA and DOH. Once approved it will be open for admission.

16th European Public Health Conference, 8 - 11 November 2023

Dr. Rami H. Al-Rifai, Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the IPH, attended the 16th European Public Health Conference held in Dublin, Ireland. The conference saw participation of more than 2,500 scientists, epidemiologists, and public health professionals from across the globe. The theme of the conference was 'Our Food, Our Health, Our Earth: A Sustainable Future for Humanity'.



Inauguration ceremony of the Assessment Unit

On Wednesday, November 8, 2023, representatives from the Institute of Public Health (IPH) attended the inauguration ceremony of the Assessment Unit as invited by the CMHS acting Dean and Assistant Dean of Medical Education. The ceremony unfolded in the opened medical education area, located in Building A. The scheduled events for the afternoon included a comprehensive video presentation on the Assessment Unit's function, followed by the Dean's welcoming address. Dr. Ayhan then took the stage to provide a brief but insightful demonstration of the innovative new software that will play a pivotal role in the Unit's operations.



Dr. Javaid Nauman Engages in Dynamic Panel Discussion at The ASPHER Online seminar on Public Health and Academic Best Practices



On Tuesday, November 21, 2023, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, in collaboration with the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER), hosted an online seminar on Public Health and Academic Best Practices. Dr. Javaid Nauman, from IPH, actively contributed to a moderated panel discussion, providing valuable insights into contemporary public health challenges and academic excellence. Dr. Nauman's participation further enriched the seminar, bringing a wealth of expertise to the dynamic dialogue.

Visit of Dr. Elpidoforos Soteriades affiliated with the Open University Cyprus and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, along with his PhD students

The Institute of Public Health (IPH) was honored to host Dr. Elpidoforos Soteriades, a distinguished scholar affiliated with the Open University Cyprus and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, USA along with his PhD students for a collaborative and enriching academic exchange. Dr. Elpidoforos is a former Associate Professor of the IPH and left during the COVID-19 pandemic. The visit included active participation in the PhD Journal Club, where Dr. Soteriades and his students engaged in insightful discussions and shared their research perspectives. Furthermore, their invaluable contribution extended to the assessment of oral presentations by master's students enrolled in the Maternal and Child Health course, providing constructive feedback and fostering academic growth.



The highlight of the visit was the captivating seminar titled "Principles and Values of Public Health in the Post-Pandemic Era," presented by Dr. Elpidoforos Soteriades, held on November 13, 2023 in the College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS), United Arab Emirates University (UAEU). This event served as a platform for intellectual discourse, allowing the academic community to delve into the transformative principles and values shaping public health in the wake of the global pandemic.



The visit of Dr. Soteriades and his students undoubtedly enhanced the academic vibrancy of the IPH and fostered a collaborative spirit in advancing public health knowledge and practice.

COP 28 –UAE

Dr. Balázs Ádám, Associate Professor at the Institute of Public Health, participated in the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP 28) as a distinguished delegate of the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) and representative of the IPH. His presence underscored IPH's commitment to global sustainability and public health initiatives, emphasizing the institute's role in fostering international collaborations. Dr. Ádám's active engagement at COP 28 reflects the dedication of IPH and ASPHER in addressing pressing challenges at the intersection of health and environment on the global stage.



Structured Operational Training (SORT) in collaboration with World Health Organization & ADPHC

IPH is thrilled to announce the successful commencement of the first ever Structured Operational Training (SORT) in the MENA region in collaboration with World Health Organization and Abu Dhabi Public Health Center. This event was lead by Dr. Mohammed Khogali, Assistant Professor at IPH.

The opening ceremony was held on Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at the Aloft Hotel in Al Ain and graced by the esteemed presence of key figures, including Dr. Ahmed Alsuwaidi, the Dean, Prof. Juma Al Kaabi, the Vice Dean, and Prof. Michal Grivna, the Director of the IPH as well as faculty of IPH. The ceremony was honored by the presence of H.E Dr. Farida Al Hosani, DOH, adding distinction to the event. This marked the beginning of a transformative journey in operational training, focusing on structured methodologies and collaborative approaches. The commitment and expertise of the team, coupled with the support of WHO and ADPHC, promise a program that will shape the future of public health professionals. 12 trainees were enrolled in this training from UAEU, Tunisia, Iran, and Egypt. The output of this initiative will be published in peer reviewed journals



Possibilities of IPH collaboration with Aga Khan University

Prof. Syed Shah was invited by the Aga Khan University, Pakistan, to serve as an External Examiner for Master's students in Epidemiology and Biostatistics in Fall 2023. The Department of Community Health Sciences at Aga Khan University has been offering thesis-based MSc program in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Health Policy and Management, and Medical Residents Training Program.

PhD graduate from AKU, Shireen Shehzad, presented her PhD thesis at Ghent University, Belgium, where Prof. Shah served as her External Examiner in Fall, 2023. Asad Ali, Chair of Community Health Sciences at the Aga Khan University met with Prof. Michal Grivna, Director of the IPH in December of 2023.



The IPH can serve as an intermediary between developed and developing countries. In this regards Community Health Sciences at the Aga Khan University and Institute of Public Health are well-laced to learn from each other and collaborate in public health research for a healthy tomorrow.

Round Table Discussion on Seasonal Influenza – MOHAP




Dr. Rami H. Al-Rifai, Associate Professor of Epidemiology at IPH, was an active participant in an exclusive roundtable discussion, focused on seasonal flu and strategies to encourage vaccination against influenza.

The event, organized by the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP), took place on November 23, 2023, at the Intercontinental Festival City in Dubai.

IPH contribution in the WHO report on the global research priorities for health, immigrants and refugees.

Prof. Syed Shah, Professor of Community Health Sciences at the Institute of Public Health, was acknowledged for his contribution, in a recent report published by Department of Health and Migration, World Health Organization, on the global research priorities for health, migration and displacement.

The report outlined the agenda to strengthen research collaborations and translate evidence into policy and practice for establishing inclusive and responsive health care systems for migrants, refugees and displaced populations. The detailed report is available at: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240082397> 

Research Capacity Building at the Gulf Center for Disease Prevention and Control (GCDC) Academic and Research Forum

The GCDC conducted a research prioritization forum that included a group of expert researchers in public health. The forum covered four research axes with the aim of advancing research between academics and researchers. The IPH proudly took center stage at the recent GCDC Academic and Research Forum held in Riyadh, with a strong representation from our faculty members. Dr. Rami Al-Rifai, Dr. Mohammed Khogali, and Dr. Stephanie Thomas (IPH Adjunct Faculty) showcased the significant contributions of IPH to public health in the UAE.

The IPH delegation received an overwhelmingly positive response from the representatives attending the forum, hailing from various academic and health ministries across the GCC countries. The admiration for activities of IPH was evident, recognizing its pivotal role in advancing public health not only in the UAE but also in the broader GCC region. This marks a significant step towards fostering more collaborations in public health and epidemiology research.



VIP Ambulatory Healthcare Services (AHS) Annual Research Day

The Institute of Public Health (IPH) participated in the VIP AHS Annual Research Day held in Al Ain on December 6, 2023. The day presented groundbreaking insights into cardiovascular health in the region. The focal point of discussion was the Abu Dhabi Risk Study (ADRS). Dr. Latifa Mohammed Al Ketbi, an eminent figure in the field of family medicine, delivered a compelling keynote address, emphasizing the importance of such studies in tailoring healthcare interventions to the needs of the local community. Her insights into the ADRS project underscored the significance of collaborative research initiatives in advancing healthcare outcomes.



Prof. Luai Ahmed from IPH Delivered a Workshop on Developing a Research Question

In a commitment to advancing research methodologies and fostering academic excellence, Professor Luai Ahmed from the IPH actively participated in a workshop titled "Developing a Research Question."

The workshop, organized by the Department of Internal Medicine held on Thursday, December 7, 2023. It provided a comprehensive exploration of the intricacies involved in crafting effective research questions. During the workshop, participants explored the nuances of formulating research questions that are both precise and impactful. The session aimed to enhance the skills of researchers in defining the scope and purpose of their studies, a critical aspect of successful academic inquiry.

UAEU جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
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القولعة الطبية والصحية
الجامعة العربية المتحدة
United Arab Emirates University

Department of Internal Medicine

WORKSHOP

DEVELOPING A RESEARCH QUESTION

CME APPROVED

7 December, 2023 | 12:30 PM- 17:30 PM

Prof Omran Bakoush INSTRUCTOR
Prof Tallal Younis INSTRUCTOR
Prof Luai Ahmed INSTRUCTOR

BY THE END OF THE WORKSHOP, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

Where do study questions come from?
What are the key considerations in developing a study question?
What are the components of a well-built study question?
Be able to formulate a "researchable" question to study or evaluate a health need or issue in an area of interest to you

Prof. George Patrinos and Dr. Christina Mitropoulou, The Golden Helix Foundation, Greece, visits to IPH

The Institute of Public Health (IPH) welcomed Prof. George Patrinos and Dr. Christina Mitropoulou on December 12, 2023, marking a significant stride towards interdisciplinary collaboration. In a fruitful meeting with Prof. Michal Grivna, the Director of IPH, and Dr. Mohamad El-Sadig, Director of the Emirates Health Technology Assessment (EHTA), discussions revolved around potential partnerships merging genomics, public health, and health technology assessment.



Seminar for Graduate Students at Aga Khan University

Prof. Syed Shah delivered an enlightening seminar titled "Addressing NCDs at an early age: Lessons learned from Alma-Ata to Astana - Prevention First" on December 6 at Aga Khan University, catering specifically to graduate students. Drawing from his vast experience, Prof. Shah shared invaluable insights on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and emphasized the significance of preventive measures from an early age. The seminar offered a comprehensive overview, highlighting lessons derived from Alma-Ata to Astana, showcasing the evolution and importance of addressing NCDs over time. Graduate students at Aga Khan University benefited greatly from Prof. Shah's expertise, gaining a deeper understanding of the critical role preventive strategies play in mitigating the impact of NCDs. The seminar served as a platform for fostering knowledge and empowering the next generation of healthcare professionals in their fight against non-communicable diseases.



Sustainable Behavior Change: UAEU's Diet and Sustainability Winter Camp

Dr. Iffat Elbarazi participated in a session on sustainable behavioural change at the Diet and Sustainability winter Camp, organized by the Nutrition Department at the UAEU Science and Innovation Building on 11-14 December, 2023.



Collaborative Horizons: CEPHEID and IPH explore future research opportunities in Infectious Disease Impact Reduction



On December 15, 2023, a team from CEPHEID (a molecular and diagnostic company) represented by Mr. Hussein Barazi, the Vice President of the company in the Middle East, Mr. Essam Bayoumy, Mr. Ahmad Madian and Mr. Ahmed Ramzy, visited the IPH to discuss future possible collaborative research. Prof. Michal Grivna, Dr. Rami H. Al-Rifai, Dr. Mohamed Khogali and Dr. Iffat Elbarazi from IPH and Ms. Hajar Aldhanhani from SEHA were present in the meeting. Mr. Ahmad gave a short presentation on the company's activities and work in reducing infectious diseases' impact on patients' outcomes and in combating health care associated infections and in the fight against AMR.



Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Mouza Alshebli Celebrates Public Health Clerkship's Influence on her Oncology Career

Dr. Mouza Alshebli (A CMHS alumni) paid a visit to the IPH. She praised the public health clerkship and its impact on her career. Dr. Alshebli participated in a past study with the IPH team under the supervision of Prof. Fatma Al-Maskari and Dr. Iffat Elbarazi on colorectal cancer prevention. Dr. Mouza is currently continuing her training in Oncology/Hematology.



Dr. Maria Aamir will start her journey with IPH as our new Adjunct Assistant Professor



Dr. Maria Aamir will start her journey with IPH as our new Adjunct Assistant Professor.

She previously taught public health at Abu Dhabi University (ADU) and held several leadership positions and consultant roles in the healthcare field in the UAE and UK. She also worked on key national and regional initiatives for healthcare within her previous roles.

Prior to joining UAEU and ADU, she worked at Emirates Health Services to develop a Mental Health Services Framework in line with National Mental Health policy and program. She also did consultancy to develop several surveillance programs focusing on disease registry platforms for the Department of Health, Abu Dhabi, including diabetes, cancer, mental health, & obesity. Additionally, she worked as Head of Cancer registry at Tawam Hospital for 14 years and carried out numerous initiatives including Hospital Cancer Program in line with international standards, development of cancer information services for Tawam Hospital as well as multifacility cancer registries for SEHA network.

Also, she has been part of the accreditation process for the hospital quality cancer program including Joint Commission International (JCIA) and National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) accreditation for Tawam Breast Cancer Centre. She has been a key member of several regional and national committees including National Cancer Committee, DoH Surveillance Committee and SEHA Cancer Committee. Dr. Maria Aamir received her PhD from the University of Salford in UK (2022), and Masters in Public Health Research from the Lancaster University in UK (2015) in addition to Masters in Health Informatics from University of Bath in UK (2011), and Bachelors from Dow Medical University, Pakistan (1999). Dr. Maria Aamir has published a number of research papers and has taught as an honorary lecturer focusing on disease surveillance previously.

As a strong advocate for Public Health, she led the development of innovative models of the disease registry platform and assessment methods deploying digital health frameworks. Dr. Maria's main goal is to contribute to the Institute of Public Health, through integration of competent teaching, state-of-the-art research, and community outreach. She strongly believes that skill-based learning techniques allow students to learn through practice and apply those strategies into the real world. Her teaching philosophy is to develop independent thinkers and to nurture students and teach them in a way that creates enthusiasm in their lifelong learning.

Dr. Maria, welcome to the IPH team, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors.



Dr. Stephanie Thomas participated in:

- **5th International Abu Dhabi Vascular Conference**

At the 5th International Abu Dhabi Vascular Conference held in October 2023, Dr. Stephanie Thomas delivered a compelling podium presentation that captured the audience's attention. The title of her talk was "Vascular infections - are the bugs winning?". Dr. Thomas' analysis shed light on the concerning rise in global vascular infections and highlighted the need for innovative strategies in the field of vascular medicine to effectively combat these challenges. She also showcased her expertise through a poster presentation on "Endovascular Aneurysm Repair (EVAR) for the management of *Listeria monocytogenes* mycotic aneurysm: a wolf in sheep's clothing?"

- **Climate Change and Infectious Disease Epidemiology**

Dr. Stephanie Thomas, Adjunct Faculty IPH, delved into the critical intersection of climate change and infectious disease epidemiology, during her teaching session on October 12, 2023. Dr. Thomas provided profound insights into the implications of climate change on the spread and prevalence of infectious diseases. Her expertise illuminated the complex relationships between environmental shifts and public health challenges, offering MPH students at UAEU a nuanced understanding of the dynamic interplay between climate factors and epidemiological patterns. This informative session not only enriched the students' knowledge but also underscored the importance of addressing environmental considerations in the broader context of public health.

Dr. Glenn Laverack's Collaboration with WHO EMRO



Dr. Glenn Laverack, Adjunct Faculty at the Institute of Public Health (IPH), has embarked on a significant professional collaboration with the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) to pioneer a comprehensive roadmap for promoting health and wellbeing across a diverse region comprising 21 countries and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Leveraging his extensive expertise, Dr. Laverack is at the forefront of developing inclusive priorities and action areas that address the unique health challenges of the region.

This collaborative initiative underscores the commitment of IPH and EMRO to advancing public health strategies that are sensitive to the diverse contexts within the Eastern Mediterranean, with the ultimate goal of fostering sustainable health and wellbeing for all. In preparation for the collaboration, Dr. Glenn met with Prof. Michal Grivna and Dr. Iffat Elbarazi to brainstorm.

Interview

Interview with H.E. Dr. Farida Al Hosani, Executive Director of Infectious Diseases at Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre



**Can you provide some insights into your background and expertise in public health?
What motivated you to pursue a career in this field?**

Background and Expertise

- Graduated from the College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS), UAEU.
- Obtained Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins University, United States.
- Obtained DrPH in Health Policies and Management in 2018, and Diploma in Public Sector Innovation from Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Government Innovation, UAE and University of Cambridge, United Kingdom.
- Additionally, obtained Masters in Strategic and Security Studies from the National Defense College, UAE.
- Played the role as a founding member of the board of directors of the "Rahma" Association for Cancer Care.
- Currently, Dr. Farida holds the position of Executive Director of Infectious Diseases at Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, and the Official Spokesperson for the Health Sector in the UAE.

H.E. Dr. Farida Al Hosani contributed to the field of public health, as she participated in scientific and international research in health and infectious diseases and developed strategic plans for infectious diseases preparedness and dealing with the pandemics. She is an expert of the World Health Organization in the field of emerging diseases, as well as played a key role in the UAE's response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Achievements

- H.E. Dr. Farida Al Hosani received several awards, including: Hamdan Bin Rashid Education Award for Outstanding Performance in 2007, Excellent Bravo Award for Outstanding Employee from the Department of Health in Abu Dhabi and Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance in 2013. In addition, an excellence in Teaching Award from the UAE University.
- H.E. Dr. Farida Al Hosani was awarded the Arab Woman Award for her significant contributions to medical efforts in combating COVID-19 and her proactive work in responding to the pandemic.
- H.E. Dr. Farida Al Hosani is also the first Emirati female to join World Health Organisation's Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework Advisory Group as a Member for the period 2022-2024

My motivation to pursue my career stems from a deep passion for supporting and helping people live healthier, high-quality lives.

Public health issues have been in the spotlight recently, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. What are some key lessons or takeaways from this global crisis that you believe will shape the future of public health?

Many lessons – the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of community education and trust in shaping effective public health responses. Key lessons include the need for sustained pre-pandemic education efforts, fostering trust within communities, and promoting international collaboration. The pandemic has highlighted the value of resilient healthcare systems that can adapt and scale quickly. These lessons will undoubtedly influence future public health strategies, emphasizing proactive community engagement and global collaboration.

As an adjunct in public health, what are some of the most pressing challenges and opportunities you see in educating the next generation of public health professionals?

As a public health adjunct, navigating the evolving educational landscape presents the challenge in keeping pace with rapidly changing skills such as: AI, molecular and genetics. Yet, this dynamic presents an opportunity to shape a generation of professionals skilled in the use of new technologies. Integrating these advances into curricula will equip students with the skills to analyse complex health data and contribute to the development of evidence-based policymaking, enabling them to address challenges about future health effectively.

Additionally, these challenges coincide with opportunities to provide better patient care, utilize new technologies to enhance healthcare services, and improve outcomes. Embracing this chance, educators play a crucial role in shaping the future of public health.

What is your favorite book or piece of literature that has had a significant impact on you?

There are a lot of interesting books, that I have read, that have made a great impact and I advise everyone to read as well including:

- 5 AM Club by Robin Sharma
- A Life in Administration by Ghazi Abdul Rahman Al Gosaibi

And there is a new book that I read and advise you to read as well: “Glucose Revolution” by Jessie Inchauspe.

Who has been a significant role model or mentor in your journey? What valuable lessons have you learned from them?

Our Father, Sheikh Zayed, may God have mercy on him, has been a significant role model and mentor in my journey. As the greatest leader in the world, he inspired wisdom, insightful vision, and remarkable patience. Witnessing how he achieved unparalleled success in the prosperity of our beloved country, the Emirates, and in building a promising future for its people, has left an indelible impact on my values and aspirations.

Additionally, I've obtained important lessons from my teachers in the College of Medicine and Health Sciences. Their guidance and words of encouragement have played a pivotal role in shaping my career. I continue to carry their teachings and words with me, appreciating the support and influence they have had in my professional development.

As an educator in public health, what advice would you give to undergraduate, MPH or PhD students who are aspiring to make a meaningful impact in this field?

For students aspiring to make a difference in public health, my advice is simple: recognize the challenge, be modest, and keep learning. Your journey won't be easy, but it's worth it. Learn from people, books, and always have a vision that inspires you to give more to mankind and contribute to the well-being of others. Stay dedicated, stay curious and your impact will follow.

Balancing academic and professional commitments in public health can be challenging. Could you share some of your top time management tips or strategies that have helped you succeed in both the roles?

Balancing academic and professional commitments in public health is challenging, but effective time management is the key. Prioritize tasks, set clear goals, and create a schedule that will help you in different roles. Developing life skills like time management and priority setting has been crucial for success. Sharing knowledge and experiences through interest in academic research not only contributes to the field but also enhances personal growth.

I never imagined that one day I would teach at a university. Teaching at the university unexpectedly became a rewarding part of my journey, reinforcing the importance of inspiring future leaders to continue the path of knowledge sharing and research.

For me, it's a lifelong commitment and I hope I can inspire the future leaders to continue this path.



International Conference on Microbiome: Human, Plant and Environmental Health, Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2023

Ms. Suad Ajab and Ms. Sumaya Zoughbor presented a poster titled "Survey of the human gut fungi in health and disease" at the International conference on microbiome: human, plant and environmental health held on November 21-22, 2023, at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC), Abu Dhabi.



Dr. Ghuwaya AlNuaimi receives British Safety Council Occupational Safety and Health Award on behalf of Al Ain City Municipality



Al Ain City Municipality, represented by our IPH alumna Dr. Ghuwaya AlNuaimi, received the International Safety Award for the year 2023 from the British Safety Council in the category "Occupational Safety and Health" due to her commitment to maintaining the health and safety of workers and work sites.

Public Health Research Talk at Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, Masdar City, Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2023

Two PhD students from IPH, Ms. Nadia AlBreiki, and Dr. Preetha Menon, presented their research on October 30, 2023, at the Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, Masdar City, Abu Dhabi. The Public Health Research Section, Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, led by Dr. Maha AlSafi, hosted the Public Health Research Talk to foster research endeavors nationwide. Dr. Preetha presented her research on "Quad bike injuries in the UAE: evidence for injury prevention strategies," and Ms. Nadia presented "Low self esteem among children and adolescents; disparity by nationality."



Research Retreat, Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority, Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, UAE, 2023

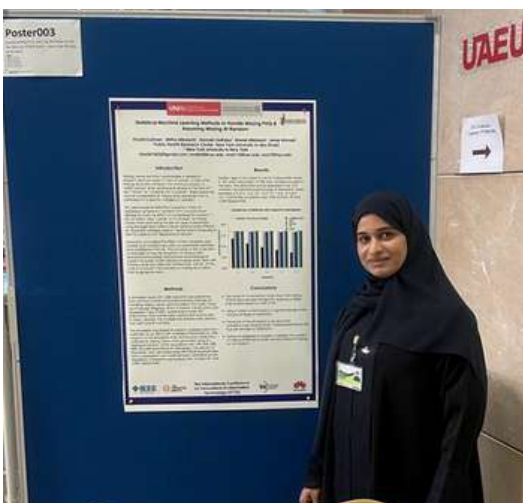
Two research teams from the Institute of Public Health participated in the Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority Research Retreat at Yas Island on October 31 and November 1, 2023. Our PhD students Ms. Messaouda Belfakir, and Ms. Preetha Menon were part of the research project "Child physical activity patterns and practices in Abu Dhabi." A multi-disciplinary research team is currently working with various stakeholders to gather evidence on school policy that can enhance physical activity and healthy diet among elementary school children in Abu Dhabi.



2nd Burjeel Holdings International Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Congress, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Ms. Messaouda Belfakir shared her research titled "Chlorhexidine bathing for candida auris decolonization among adult patients in healthcare settings: Protocol for a systematic review and meta-Analysis" at the 2nd Burjeel Holdings International Nursing, Midwifery, and Allied Health Congress held at ADNEC, Abu Dhabi, from November 9 to 11, 2023.

The International Conference on Innovations in Information Technology, IIT'23, UAEU, Al Ain, UAE, 2023



Ms. Maitha AlBalushi presented a poster titled "Statistical machine learning methods to handle missing PHQ-8 assuming missing at random" at the International Conference on Innovations in Information Technology, IIT'23, UAEU, Al Ain on 15th November 2023. The presented study aimed to prevent the exclusion of missing data "I don't know" & "prefer not to answer" rather than to generate data to handle the PHQ-8 missing data best.

Diet Sustainability Winter Camp at UAEU, Al Ain, UAE, 2023


Ms. Maitha AlBalushi and Mr. Mustafa Sherif, IPH PhD students, joined forces with international scholars from Sorbonne University and the University of Montreal at the Diet Sustainability and Cardiometabolic Health Fall Camp hosted at the Science Innovation Park, UAEU, Al Ain from 11-15 December 2023. The program featured diverse activities, workshops, and field visits to a local Aquaponic station and farm.




A key focus was developing sustainable dietary recommendations for cardiometabolic diseases, fostering global collaboration at the intersection of nutrition and sustainability.

16th European Public Health (EPH) Conference in Dublin, Ireland, 2023


Our alumnus, Dr. Maryam Bashir, presented a poster on “Medical doctors practices regarding gestational diabetes screening and diagnosis in the United Arab Emirates” at the Youth Researchers Forum during the 16th European Public Health (EPH) Conference in Dublin, Ireland (8-11 November, 2023). This accomplishment is particularly commendable given the highly competitive selection process.



The Association of Schools of Public Health
in the European Region



UAEU جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
College of Medicine and Health Sciences




جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
United Arab Emirates University

Medical Doctors' Practices Regarding Gestational Diabetes Screening and Diagnosis in the United Arab Emirates

Maryam M. Bashir¹, Lual A. Ahmed², Rami H. Al-Rifai², Ifat Elbarazi³, Shamma Alkhanbani³, Safeya Almadhaani³, Hajar Alkifan³, Mohammed AlJatani³, Bachar Afandi³, Juma M. Alkaabi³, Fatma Al-Maskani²

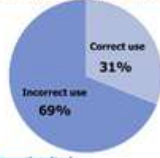
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²Special Centre for Health Sciences, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates
³College of Medicine and Health Sciences, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates

Use of local GDM guidelines by the doctors (N=121)



52% Do Not Use Local Guidelines

Correct use of GDM diagnostic criteria by the doctors (N=121)



31% Correct use
69% Incorrect use

Background: Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) screening and diagnosis is a contentious topic worldwide, and guidelines used by medical doctors are widely inconsistent¹ which makes it difficult to accurately combine or compare GDM burden, locally and globally.² This study assessed doctors' screening and diagnosis practices in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This will inform targeted practice recommendations and areas of emphasis in future guidelines.

Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional study among medical doctors in Al Ain city of Abu Dhabi, UAE from October 2021 to June 2022. Recruitment was from 10 primary healthcare facilities and 1 tertiary hospital. We collected data from eligible doctors, online or in person, using a validated self-administered questionnaire.³ Data analysis was conducted using STATA statistical software version 16.1.

Results: 121 doctors were recruited. 87% were females. 43% were Family Physicians, 37% were Obstetricians, 10% were Endocrinologists, and 10% were General Practitioners.

- 93% of the doctors practice universal screening for GDM
- Only 76% screen during the second trimester as recommended
- 26% use multiple screening tests
- 16% of the doctors use multiple guidelines
- 11 different GDM guidelines were used across the recruitment facilities
- For GDM diagnosis, most (93%) of the doctors use the recommended 75-g OGTT test

Factors associated with the correct use of GDM diagnostic criteria:

- Doctors' place of specialization (Abroad vs. MENA, 50% vs. 24%, p=0.013)
- Doctors' place of practice (Tertiary vs. Primary facilities, 44% vs. 20%, p=0.011)
- Doctors' Specialty (OB/GYN (47%), Endocrine (41%), Family Medicine/GP (17%), p=0.003)

Recommendations/ Conclusions:

- This study identified **gaps in doctors' practices** regarding GDM screening and diagnosis in the UAE.
- We recommend **training and re-training doctors** with regular **monitoring and evaluation** by the UAE Health Authorities regarding GDM guidelines use.
- Further **qualitative research** could reveal specific challenges experienced by doctors in GDM care.

References

1. M. Zhang, Y. Zhou, J. Zhong, K. Wang, K. Wang, Y. Ding, and L. Li, "Current guidelines on the management of gestational diabetes mellitus: a content analysis and appraisal," *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, vol. 18, no. 1, p. 200, 2018/09/13/2018.

2. M. M. Agarwal, "Consensus in Gestational Diabetes Mellitus: Looking for the Holy Grail," (in engl.) *J Clin Med*, vol. 7, no. 6, May 28, 2018.

3. M. M. Agarwal, S. M. Shah, J. Al Kaabi, S. Saquli, and Y. Othman, "Gestational diabetes mellitus: Confusion among medical doctors caused by multiple international criteria," (in engl.) *J Obstet Gynaecol Res*, vol. 43, no. 6, pp. 861-9, Jun 2006.

PhD Dissertation Defense by Dr. Preetha Menon

We are thrilled to announce the successful defense of Dr. Preetha Menon's PhD Dissertation, titled "Quad Bike Injuries in the United Arab Emirates: Evidence for Injury Prevention Strategies," on November 9, 2023. Congratulations to Dr. Preetha and her advisor, Prof. Michal Grivna and Dr. Mohamed El-Sadig, for this significant achievement.



PhD Dissertation Defense by Dr. Fadwa Babikir

Congratulations to Dr. Fadwa Elgid Elmogadam Babikir and her advisor, Prof. Emmanuel Stip, for the successful defense of her PhD Dissertation titled "Cross-Cultural Adaptation and Validation of the Emirati Version Instrument that Assesses Cognition Problems among the UAE Population: The Subjective Scale to Investigate Cognition - Emirates (Sstic-E), A Cross-Sectional Study," on December 5, 2023. With this achievement, Ms. Fadwa advances to the next stage of her doctoral journey.



IPH WEBINARS

Public health scientific webinars

Qatar biobank - Diabetes case

IPH hosted a webinar titled webinar on “Qatar biobank - Diabetes case”, held on September 26, 2023, via Zoom. The webinar was presented by Dr. Eleni Fthenou, the Lead PI of the Qatari Birth Cohort (QBiC) study in Qatar, and moderated by Dr. Balázs Ádám, Associate Professor at the Institute of Public Health.

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



Loneliness and social isolation among older adults: An emerging public health challenge

Dr. Ashwin Kotwal, Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Geriatrics at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) School of Medicine, USA, was the speaker on November, 21, 2023. Dr. Kotwal addressed the topic on “Loneliness and social isolation among older adults: An emerging public health challenge”. Dr. Azhar was the moderator of the webinar. Many international and international experts attended the webinar.

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



From Public to Planetary Health

Ms. Paula Schwenke (Chair of Public Health and Health Services Research, Institute for Medical Information Processing, Biometry and Epidemiology, Germany), was the speaker on June, 20, 2023. Ms. Paula Schwenke addressed the topic on “From public to planetary health”. Dr. Amal was the moderator of the webinar. Many international and international experts attended the webinar.

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



IPH WEBINARS

Health Promotion webinars

Injury prevention in schools

The webinar targeted parents and teachers and discussed injury prevention at home, on the way to school and in the school. The webinar was delivered in September by Ms. Samira Alkathheeri representing the Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre and was moderated by Dr. Amal Alzahmi, Assistant Professor at the IPH. The participants provided very positive feedback.

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



Digital citizenship – right digital behavior

In October, the IPH organized a webinar on Digital Citizenship delivered by Mr. Mohamed Alheera, a well-known coach and trainer and moderated by Ms. Shamsa Alshamsi (Senior Administrator at the IPH). The webinar discussed the safe use of internet and social media, cyber security with a focus on the impact of the use of internet on mental health.

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



Sustainability in the UAE

During November, in line with the activities of the COP28, the IPH conducted a webinar on sustainability in the UAE, the current achievements and the prospects with a focus on community participation. Dr. Rahaf Ajaj represented Abu Dhabi University and presented the webinar providing her extensive knowledge and expertise to discuss the topic. The webinar was moderated by Ms. Messaouda Belfakir (PhD student at the IPH)

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



Intuitive eating

The final health promotion webinar in 2023 discussed Intuitive Eating and Dieting. The webinar took place on December 19 and was delivered by Dr. Rita Samuel representing the Nutrition Department, UAEU. It was moderated by Dr. Azhar Talal from the IPH.

To watch the webinar recording, kindly [click here](#)



IPH WEBINARS

Upcoming scientific webinars

Webinar announcements:

27 February 2024	AI in healthcare: benefits and drawbacks
6 March 2024	Rare genetic disorders
16 April 2024	Interdisciplinary approach to public health
21 May 2024	Megatrends in quality and accreditation in health care and higher education

SAVE THE DATE

Public Health Clerkship

Her Excellency Dr. Farida Alhosani teaching at the Public Health Clerkship

Her Excellency Dr. Farida Alhosani, Executive Director of Infectious Diseases, an esteemed figure in the field of public health, serves as an Adjunct Faculty of the IPH. Dr. Alhosani's dedication to advancing healthcare in the United Arab Emirates is well recognized. Her role as a teacher in the public health clerkship program is characterized by her exceptional expertise in the epidemiology of infectious diseases.



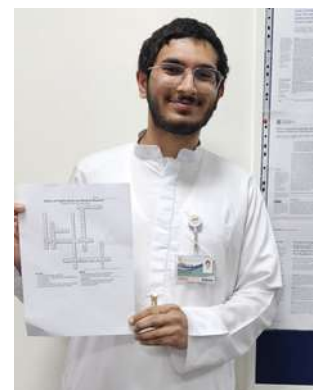
With a wealth of knowledge and experience, she imparts invaluable insights to her students, fostering a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics involved in the spread and control of infectious diseases. Dr. Alhosani's commitment to educating the next generation of healthcare professionals exemplifies her unwavering passion for improving public health and bolstering the UAE's healthcare system.



Champions of ethics in public health



Congratulations to the champions of the Ethics in Public Health from the public health clerkship (Group B): Salem Almheiri, Shamma Al Zaabi, Maryam Alfadli and Mirah Al Shehhi. They correctly answered the crossword of ethics and enjoyed the learning journey.



Public Health Clerkship

PhD candidates involvement in the clerkship

Mrs. Rouwida El Khalil (under supervision of Dr. Iffat ElBarazi) introduced the students to Behavioral change models and conducted many in-class exercises to consolidate the theories.



Field visit to Holistic Medical Center and Air Monitoring Station in Abu-Dhabi



Taking our students in the public health clerkship program on a field visit to the Holistic Medical Center and Air Monitoring Station in Abu Dhabi offers a unique and invaluable learning opportunity. This experience allows students to bridge the gap between classroom theory and real-world practice. Such field visits not only broaden their knowledge but also inspire a deeper commitment to improving public health by exposing them to the diverse facets of the field and fostering a holistic understanding of healthcare's multifaceted nature.



Public Health Clerkship

Site visit to Tawam Hospital

During the public health clerkship program, students received comprehensive training in infection control, with a unique opportunity to explore real-world practices through a site visit to Tawam Hospital. This enlightening session was meticulously organized by the Infection Control Department of the Al-Ain region. Throughout the training, students were exposed to essential concepts and best practices in infection control, ranging from hand hygiene protocols to the proper use of personal protective equipment.



The highlight of the program was the site visit to Tawam Hospital, where students observed firsthand the meticulous infection control measures in place at a renowned healthcare facility. This practical experience allowed them to witness the critical importance of maintaining a sterile environment in healthcare settings, ensuring that they leave the program with a deep understanding of the crucial role they play in safeguarding public health.



Public Health Clerkship

Public Health Clerkship Student's testimony



”

Maryam Alfadli

Participating in the public health clerkship has greatly benefited me personally. Through this educational experience, I have gained valuable knowledge and skills that have had a positive impact on my journey as a future doctor. By exploring topics such as disease prevention, health promotion, and healthcare systems, I have developed a deeper understanding of public health principles and practices. Moreover, the critical thinking and problem-solving skills I have acquired during the clerkship have allowed me to analyze complex health issues.

I am now better equipped to propose effective interventions and advocate for positive changes in my own community. Overall, not only did it enhance my personal growth but also equipped me with the tools to contribute to the improvement of public health on a broader scale.

”


Carlo Signorelli Elected President of APHEA

The Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Carlo Signorelli as its new President, effective December 14, 2023. As an experienced leader with a proven track record in public health, Professor Signorelli – Director of the School of Public Health (Igiene e Medicina Preventiva) in Vita-Salute San Raffaele University of Milan (Italy) - brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the Agency. Professor Signorelli begins his term of office by stating that, “accredited schools and courses of public health play a pivotal role in training the workforce needed to strengthen public health 20 systems. As we all know APHEA is committed to assuring and improving the quality of education and training activities. By aligning missions and strategies with the Agency’s members, the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) and the International Association of Public Health Institutes (IANPHI), APHEA will be able to ensure that our efforts complement each other to deliver the full potential for quality assurance in public health education”.



ASPHER Statement Calling for Action on Climate Change and Health

The ‘ASPHER Statement for COP28: A call for action in seven points’ has been published in the journal Public Health Reviews. The pre-publication version is available here along with translations to several languages.


For more information [click here](#) 

Contact: Laurent Chambaud, ASPHER Climate and Health Lead – Laurent.CHAMBAUD@aspher.org
Tara Chen, ASPHER Climate and Health Fellow – Tara.CHEN@aspher.org




ASPHER-GCCHE European Climate Change and Health Course - FREE

Online, Tuesdays (Feb 6th, 2024 - April 9th, 2024) from 12:00-13:30 CET ASPHER and the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education (GCCHE) are offering a free online responders course open to all professionals with an interest in climate change and health. The goal of this course is to act as a flagship initiative to engage and educate the public health, wider health workforce, and other professionals interested in climate change and health to facilitate participation and engagement in policy and advocacy related to climate adaptation and mitigation as well as research that supports decision making across sectors.

[Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education](#) | [Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health](#) 

Participants who attend >70% of sessions and pass a test at the end will be awarded a certificate in climate and health from ASPHER/GCCHE

Sessions: FEB 06: Climate Change and Health | FEB 13: Extreme Temperatures | FEB 20: Wildfires and Air Quality | FEB 27: Water Supply and Sanitation | MAR 05: Vector Borne/Zoonoses | MAR 12: Sustainable Lifestyles | MAR 19: Sustainable Health Care | MAR 26: Climate Litigation and Health | APR 02: Communication, Engagement and Advocacy in Climate Change | APR 09: Europe in a Global Context: Climate Justice The course is open to all. Please share it widely with your students, faculty and networks!

Download the course flyer here: [DRAFT ASPHER GCCHE European Responders Course](#) 

Register here: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#) 

Contact Tara at tara.chen@aspher.org for more information.



Digital Public Health Working Group


ASPHER established a working group focused on examining the impact of digital transformations on public health education and training. Since its inaugural meeting in March 2023, this working group has been led by Rok Hrzic (r.hrzic@maastrichtuniversity.nl), Assistant Professor at Maastricht University and an ASPHER Associate Fellow in Digital Public Health. An early achievement of the group includes developing a set of principles for revising public health curricula considering digital transformations, showcased at the Deans' and Directors' Retreat in Dublin in September. Underpinning the working group's efforts is a four-pillar strategy encompassing reviewing public health curricula, identifying training needs arising from digital shifts, monitoring existing educational offerings, and reviewing digital skills certifications. Recently, the working group further expanded its scope by launching a subgroup dedicated to understanding the impact of social media on public health. As we continue our work in 2024, we invite collaboration with ASPHER members, hoping our collective efforts will prepare public health education and training in Europe for the opportunities and challenges of the digital era.

Public Health Undergraduate Education Working Group

The Public Health Undergraduate Education Working Group meets on a regular basis under the leadership of Kai Michelsen, Fulda University of Applied Sciences. The working group is currently working to put together a comprehensive listing of undergraduate offers at ASPHER member schools. They are also considering how undergraduate education in public health can contribute to lifelong learning.


Public Health Reviews

The journal Public Health Reviews, which is published by the Swiss School of Public Health (SSPH+) and edited in partnership with ASPHER is proud to have received an Impact Factor (IF) of 5.5. In addition, it has a CiteScore of 5.6, ranking 1/40, 98th Percentile (Community and Home Care) and 122/577, 78th Percentile (Public Health, Environmental & Occupational Health). The Gold open access, independent society journal accepts manuscript submissions in all areas of public health, both local and global scope.

For more information [click here](#) 

ASPHER 2023 Deans' & Directors' Retreat Statement published

The ASPHER Statement on the 2023 Deans' and Directors' Retreat theme of the New Normal is now published in Public Health Reviews. A New Public Health Curriculum for a "New Normal". If you missed it before, be sure to read the ASPHER Statement: A New Public Health Curriculum for a "New Normal". Codd M, Barros H, Davidovitch N, et al. 2023. ASPHER Statement: A New Public Health Curriculum for a "New Normal". Public Health Reviews 44. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/phrs.2023.1606539>

SSPH+ | [ASPHER Statement: A New Public Health Curriculum for a "New Normal" \(ssph-journal.org\)](https://ssph-journal.org) 

Global Public Health Week: 8–12 April 2024

Global Public Health Week (GPHW) is an initiative of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) that aims bringing together institutions, communities, and public health actors from around the world to recognize the contributions of public health and its workforce. This 3rd edition of GPHW will take place on 8 – 12 April 2024 with the theme "Fostering Peace as a Prerequisite for Equitable Health".

Whether you are a public health association, a health organisation, an institution, a health professional, a student, or an ordinary citizen interested in one of this year's five GPHW themes, you are invited to participate. ASPHER aims to take part in GPHW under the umbrella of the Global Network for Academic Public Health (GNAPH).

For more information please visit the GPHW page: <https://www.wfpha.org/global-public-health-week/> or send an email to: secretariat@wfpha.org

Call for Abstracts: Swiss Public Health Conference on "Strengthening the Culture of Public Health Surveillance"- 3-4 September 2024, Fribourg

In the "infodemic" and "big data" age, access to diverse data has increased enormously, opening up new possibilities for surveillance. At the same time, Switzerland is struggling to define what is needed for a reliable and efficient health information system. How should we assess cancer burden or environmental risks? How do we monitor the quality of health care? What surveillance tools do we need and want? And what about governance?

Public health surveillance lies at the interface between applied public health, population-based health sciences, and epidemiology, and therefore concerns all actors who want to protect and promote the health of the Swiss population. We would like to invite you to submit an abstract either for a 10-minute oral presentation at one of the parallel sessions, for a topical workshop or for a poster.

The submission deadline for abstracts is 1 February 2024 (12pm CET).

Learn more and submit abstracts here: [click here](#)

12th IUHPE European Conference on Health Promotion

The International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) conference invites global health professionals for in-person networking and collaboration. Co-organized by the Medical University of Lodz and its Foundation, the event focuses on "Cultivating Change Through the Lifespan," emphasizing the evaluation of health promotion practices and challenges to shape the field's future. It plays a crucial role in disseminating research aimed at facilitating health transformations at every life stage.

Learn more here: [Home](#) | [IUHPE 2024](#) | [Medical University of Lodz \(umed.pl\)](#)



IUHPE

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION



Promoting Inclusion of Arabs in Clinical Research: Towards Advancing Public Health in the MENA Region



By Hadi Danawi, Ph.D. Professor in Global Public Health & Epidemiology; CEO & Founder of the "Arab Board for Clinical Research"



Ado Mohammed, MD. CEO & Founder of Pharmedas Pharmaceutical Consultancies.

Clinical research stands as a vital pillar in our quest to advance medical knowledge and enhance healthcare outcomes for all, encompassing diverse populations. However, a long-standing challenge has been the underrepresentation of Arabs in clinical trials, which has resulted in limited data concerning their unique healthcare needs. Nair (2013) and Mohamed (2021) have both highlighted the urgent necessity to scale up clinical trials in the MENA region. Shockingly, at present, sponsors of clinical trials conduct less than 1% of global studies in the MENA region.

Creating a clinical research roadmap within the public health framework of the MENA region has become and will remain a top priority in the coming years. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), positioned strategically for economic and social growth in the region, is poised to lead this initiative. There are numerous public health advantages to be gained by raising awareness and inclusion in clinical research in the MENA region. The UAE can serve as a role model in the region, addressing health disparities, promoting personalized medicine, strengthening community engagement, preventing and controlling regional endemic and emerging diseases, and developing impactful health policies. Specifically, by promoting the inclusion of Arabs in clinical research, we can collectively work towards addressing health disparities and gaining valuable insights into the unique genetic, cultural, and environmental factors associated with diseases and treatment outcomes among Arabs. This will result in improved health outcomes for Arab populations contributing to evidence-based health policy development.

Clinical trial research plays a crucial role in advancing public health by evaluating the safety and efficacy of new medical interventions, including drugs, treatments, and preventive measures. These trials generate evidence that informs medical practice, contributes to the development of clinical guidelines, and influences healthcare policies. Furthermore, the link between clinical epidemiology and clinical research is instrumental in translating population-level insights into practical applications for individual patient care. Clinical epidemiologists employ epidemiological methods to study disease patterns, identify risk factors, and assess the impact of interventions in clinical settings. This interdisciplinary approach bridges the gap between understanding health at a population level and implementing evidence-based practices in the realm of patient diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of both individual and public health.

Abu Dhabi and Dubai are already leading the way in advancing clinical research in the MENA region, with innovative healthcare initiatives and strong government support. These efforts can be further enhanced through investments in capacity building, local expertise development, collaboration with the pharmaceutical industry, and the cultivation of public-private partnerships. Strengthening the UAE's capacity for clinical trials and establishing a robust regional framework will position the region as a center for cutting-edge research, attracting global collaborations. A patient-centric approach, considering cultural values and social norms, will prioritize the well-being and preferences of patients and position the MENA region as a global leader in advancing public health. Together, we can harness the full potential of a vibrant clinical research environment to drive transformative advancements in medical care, improve the health and well-being of our diverse population, and stimulate new waves of economic activity.

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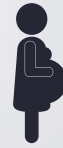
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Updates on the
Mutaba'ah Study
January - December 2023



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Participants



17

Published articles



29

Conference presentations



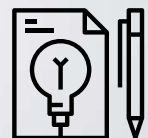
3

Completed PhD



6

Ongoing PhD projects



Publications (September - December 2023)

*publication with students as co-authors

**publication with international collaborators

***publication with students as co-authors and with international collaborators

1- Abdo NM, Aslam I, Irfan S, George JA, Alsuwaidi AR, Ahmed LA, Al-Rifai RH. **Chlamydia trachomatis seroepidemiology and associated factors in fertility treatment-seeking patients in Abu Dhabi Emirate, United Arab Emirates.** Sex Transm Dis. 2023 Sep 1;50(9):583-590.
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8- Nys E, Pauwels S, Adam B, Amaro J, Athanasiou A, Bashkin O, Bric TK, Bulat P, Caglayan C, Guseva Canu I, Cebanu S, Charbotel B, Cirule J, Curti S, Davidovitch N, Dopelt K, Fikfak MD, Frilander H, Gustavsson P, Höper AC, Kiran S, Kogevinas M, Kudász F, Kolstad HA, Lazarevic SB, Macan J, Majery N, Marinaccio A, Mates D, Mattioli S, McElvenny DM, Mediouni Z, Mehlum IS, Merisalu E, Mijakoski D, Nena E, Noone P, Otelea MR, Pelclova D, Pranjic N, Rosso M, Serra C, Rushton L, Sandal A, Schernhammer ES, Stoleski S, Turner MC, van der Molen HF, Varga M, Walusiak-Skorupa J, Straif K, Godderis L. **Recognition of COVID-19 with occupational origin: a comparison between European countries.** Occup Environ Med. 2023 Nov 23;80(12):694-701.** <https://oem.bmj.com/content/80/12/694.long>

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Publications (September - December 2023)

*publication with students as co-authors

**publication with international collaborators

***publication with students as co-authors and with international collaborators

10- Khan W, Zaki N, Ahmad A, Masud MM, Govender R, Rojas-Perilla N, Ali L, Ghenimi N, Ahmed LA. **Node embedding-based graph autoencoder outlier detection for adverse pregnancy outcomes**. Sci Rep. 2023 Nov 14;13(1):19817. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37963898/>

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16- Laurent Chambaud, Tara Chen, Chiara Cadeddu, Ana-Caterina Pinho-Gomes, Balázs Ádám, John Middleton, Susana Viegas, Nadav Davidovitch, Doris Zjalic, Flavia Pennisi, Lore Leighton, Robert Otok, Carlo Signorelli and The ASPHER Climate and Health Working Group. **ASPHER statement for COP28. A call for action in seven points**. Public Health Rev. 2023 Dec; 44:1606889.**<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37953627/>

17- Thorpe Jr. RJ, Miller DS, (Eds) Sheek-Hussein M, Abid M, Abu-Zidan F, et al. (2023). **Health disparities, disasters, and crises: approaches for a culture of preparedness [Chapter: Preparedness for pandemic disasters to come]**. Routledge. 2023 Dec. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003140245>

SOCIAL NEWS

UAE Flag Day

IPH actively participated in the UAE Flag Day celebration held at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, United Arab Emirates University on November 3, 2023, showing our heartfelt support and best wishes to the UAE.



During the event, IPH staff and students joined in raising the flag with pride, symbolizing our strong solidarity with the UAE, and we wholeheartedly wish the nation continued prosperity and success in the future under the leadership of the exemplary leader HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.



Dinner to celebrate Mr. AbuBaker wedding

The IPH joyously celebrated the wedding of Mr. Abu Baker in a warm and festive dinner held at the Ayla Hotel on November 16, 2023. The evening was filled with laughter, camaraderie, and heartfelt congratulations as colleagues and friends gathered to share the joyous occasion. It was a wonderful opportunity for the IPH community to come together, extend their best wishes to Mr. Abu Baker, and partake in the joyous festivities that marked the beginning of this new chapter in his life. The IPH family extends its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Mr. Abu Baker and his spouse as they embark on this beautiful journey of marital bliss.



Lunch Celebration for baby “Zoey” Sophia Nauman:



In a heartwarming gathering, the IPH Family came together on Monday December 25, 2023 to celebrate the newest addition to their family, baby girl Zoey, born to the proud parents Dr. Javaid Nuaman and Dr. Maryum.

The celebration concluded with warm wishes and blessings for baby Zoey, encapsulating the spirit of love, togetherness, and the start of a beautiful journey for baby Zoey.

Calling MPH Batch 2012 Alumni: Share Your Stories and Memories!

Dear MPH Batch 2012,

It's time to reconnect and reminisce! As the years have passed since our time together in the Master of Public Health program, we would love to hear about the incredible journeys and accomplishments each of you has experienced. Whether you've forged a successful career in public health, pursued further studies, or embarked on unique adventures, your stories matter.

Share your memories, career highlights, or any valuable lessons you've learned along the way. Your experiences can inspire and motivate the current and future generations of public health enthusiasts. Connect with us through social media, alumni events, or by reaching out to the MPH program coordinators. Let's make this a vibrant and supportive community that continues to thrive beyond our academic years.

We look forward to hearing from you and celebrating the diverse paths each of you has taken since our time at the MPH program in 2012.




Job Opportunity

Exciting Opportunity in Public Health at UAE University!

The Institute of Public Health at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, United Arab Emirates University, is on the lookout for a dynamic and passionate faculty member to join our team in the fight against infectious diseases.

Job Description:

We are seeking a full-time Assistant/Associate/Full Professor in Public Health to contribute to our teaching and research activities in Infectious Diseases/Communicable Diseases Control and Public Health. If you have expertise in epidemiology, prevention, disease management, surveillance, immunizations, emergency planning, and more, we want to hear from you! 

Minimum Qualification:

Medical degree (MD or MBBS). Specialty certification infectious diseases (consultant/specialist) by Arab Board, ACOEM (US), FPH (UK), or equivalent. Public health practice, academic, and research experience in infectious/communicable diseases.

Preferred Qualification:

PhD in Public Health or Epidemiology.

Expected Skills/Rank/Experience:

Track record in teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
Designing curricula, overseeing courses, and supervising student projects.
Accomplished in conducting and supervising research projects.
Published research findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

Why Join Us?

The IPH has a thriving graduate teaching program with over 30 PhD students and 40 MPH students. Collaborate with colleagues in the College of Medicine, local and regional institutions, and contribute to the health of working communities in the UAE.

Close Date: 29/02/2024

Posting Number: 3603

Join us in making a difference! Share this post and let's build a healthier future together

<https://jobs.uaeu.ac.ae/Postings/PostingDetails/3603>



September -
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SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS



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