

AUBMC Celebrates 1000th Bone Marrow Transplant Milestone

The BMT Program has reached 1000 bone marrow transplants, with 80% of the patients being adults and 20% being children

Beirut, September 6, 2019: AUBMC today celebrated a landmark achievement of crossing the 1000 bone marrow transplants since the fruition of a dedicated Bone Marrow Transplant Unit in 2004, with 80% patients being adults and 20 % being children. Results from the AUBMC BMT program benchmark with the most prestigious BMT programs in North America and Western Europe, whereby it is the first program to perform unrelated donor transplants, mismatch and haplo-identical transplants in Lebanon.

The AUBMC BMT program is well-recognized nationally and internationally for its cutting-edge basic, clinical, and translational cancer research, particularly in the field of hematological malignancies. Committed to providing high-quality, compassionate, and state-of-the-art care, the BMT program strives to utilize the transplantation-based therapies and expertise to serve the patients' personalized needs to eliminate cancer.

The program is currently the largest transplant program in Lebanon and largely attracts patients from Lebanon and most regional countries. Our program is an official member of the European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation and was also recognized as an International Transplant Center by the US National Marrow Donor Program.

Held at the Issam Fares Lecture Hall, the event was organized by Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute under the leadership of Dr. Ali Taher, Director of the Institute, and Dr. Ali Bazarbachi, Director of the Bone Marrow Transplant Program with Dr. Jean el Cheikh, Master of the Ceremony, and the presence of Dr Mohamad Haidar representing his excellency the Minister of Public Health, Dr Jamil Jabak, Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB President, Dr. Miguel Abboud, Director of the Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplant Program, patient survivors, families of patients, medical practitioners, and media representatives.

Attendees witnessed the innovate treatment measures offered by the clinic and listened to patient success stories from across Lebanon and the MENA region. Dr Jean El Cheikh spread the hope by sharing the possibility of finding a matching donor for every hematology patient in Lebanon and in the Middle East.

Dr. Bazarbachi, Director of BMT Program said, "The program received the JACIE accreditation in 2016, and as such became the only internationally accredited program in Lebanon and one of eight worldwide outside Europe and North America with its state-of-the art research facility and compassionate, customized care in curing patients from cancer. With this acquisition, AUBMC achieved another milestone and establishes its legacy of being an enduring medical center in Lebanon and the region"

Dr. Miguel Abboud, Director of Pediatric BMT program, noted that at AUBMC we have all the advanced capabilities and treatment modalities to transplant children with benign and malignant conditions, what is needed is the support to allow access to these therapies and improve patient outcome.

Dr. Ali Taher, Director of Naef K Basile Cancer Institute, added," BMT patients are our inspiration. As a Director of Naef Basile Cancer Institute, I constantly seek to provide our patients with the highest modalities of treatment. Our work is at the core of our 2020 Vision. We seek to provide our patients with individualized care and most advanced treatment modalities. It also revolves around 2025 Vision, launched by Dr. Fadlo Khuri in 2016, in terms of social and human well-being."

During the event, Dr. Khuri, President of AUB, said:” This moment is when we pause to celebrate and reflect with our champion survivors and their loved ones, and all our diligent staff, on a journey that has not been an easy one but has saved lives and inspired thousands of others on the power of knowledge, duty, sharing, and what binds us one to another as fellow human beings.”

At the end, Dr Haidar, representing Dr Jabak mentioned that the exceptional results of the Bone Marrow Transplant program led to additional support from the Ministry of Public Health that was translated in increasing annual budget for Children Cancer Center as well as for Adult Bone Marrow transplant at AUBMC. The Ministry is also in the process of developing new policies regarding new therapies such as the inception of CAR T-cell therapy.

Celebrations also featured a comedic performance by Mr. Hisham Haddad, followed by a solo song performance by Ms. Samia Harake , a motivational talk by Ms. Joumana Mansour, an open debate with cancer survivors led by Annahar editor, Ms. Rola Mouawad, a musical performance by BMT survivor, Tiyyarat Warak Band, followed by a storytelling session by TIES at AUBMC, cake celebration, and lighting of the Daniel ACC building.

This ceremony is one of a series of events that will be held to shed the light on the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute, as well as the state-of-the art oncology services and the personalized cancer care that is offered at the center. It is aligned with AUBMC’s 2020 Vision of transforming healthcare delivery in Lebanon and the region to unprecedented levels of excellence.

The Naef K Basil Cancer Institute works to offer the best medical services to oncology patients on the national level by creating advanced specialized new program and on providing financial assistance to needy adults and pediatric bone marrow transplant patients. The Bone Marrow Transplant program (BMT) collaborates with the Children Cancer Center of Lebanon and the Cancer Support Fund to ease access to advanced medical services for needy patients and to support them throughout their recovery journey in both, the psychological and financial aspect.

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About AUBMC

Since 1902, AUBMC has been providing the highest standards of care to patients across Lebanon and the region. It is also the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine at AUB (established in 1867), which has trained generations of medical students and physicians, and whose graduates can be found at leading institutions around the world. AUBMC is the only medical institution in the Middle East to have earned the five international accreditations of JCI, Magnet, CAP, ACGME-I and JACIE attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, pathology/laboratory services and graduate medical education.

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