

MERETI News

A newsletter highlighting the activities of the
Middle East Research Ethics Training Initiative
(www.mereti.net)

Summer 2009

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MERETI Scholars Organize Workshops in Research Ethics

The following workshops in Research Ethics were held recently:

- The 1st Suez Canal University Conference On “Scientific Research Ethics” was held on Monday, 4th May, 2009, in Ismailia, Egypt. This conference was organized by Dr. Mervat Elshabrawy, Associate Professor in Ophthalmology and Ophthalmic Surgery at Suez Canal University.
- “Ethics and Good Clinical Practice” conference was held on 15th May, 2009 at the Conrad Hotel, Cairo, Egypt. Conference organizers included The Egyptian Society of Tropical Medicine, Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (ESTIP) in collaboration with the University of Paris Descartes, Paris, France. Dr. Azza Saleh served as the conference moderator.
- “Health Research Ethics and IRB Review Experience for Public and Private Health Sectors” was held in Amman, Jordan on 20-21 May, 2009. This meeting was supported by Jordan’s National Institute of Forensic Medicine with cooperation from the WHO. Dr. Ibrahim Ramahi served as the organizer and conference moderator.
- “Training of the Research Ethics Committee Members” workshop for members of the REC at the University of Gezira, Sudan was held on 1-2 June 2009. The workshop was organized by Dr. Mohamed Elhassan Abdalla, Deputy Director - Educational Development and Research Centre (EDC-Gezira, Sudan).

New Distance Learning Opportunities

The MERETI program has developed several distance learning opportunities in research ethics that can be found at www.mereti.net. These programs have the following target audiences:

- Investigators: Web-based programs in Research Ethics and Good Clinical Practices consisting of five modules each. Upon successful completion, participants can print out a Certificate of Completion.
- Members of Research Ethics Committees: A Distance Learning program consisting of live Webinars presenting topics in Research Ethics combined with a web-based discussion forum where cases are discussed with MERETI scholars.

MERETI Publications in Research Ethics

Kassem H, Abou-Zeid A, Rab F, Silverman H. *Beyond : research ethics committees: acceptance by investigators and involvement of the community.* Middle East Fertility Society Journal. 2009; 14:1.

Wazaify M, Khalil SS, Silverman HJ. *Expression of therapeutic misconception amongst Egyptians: a qualitative pilot study.* BMC Medical Ethics. 2009; 10:7

Abou-Zeid A, Afzal M, Silverman HJ. *Capacity mapping of national ethics committees in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.* BMC Medical Ethics. 2009; 10:8

New MERETI Trainees Begin Certificate Program



MERETI 09 Trainees visiting Washington D.C.
See page 2 for more details



FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR: I am happy to present to you the 2009 group of trainees who are completing their two-month academic training this summer at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, USA. Subsequently, they will go back to their institutions and conduct a project in research ethics. These projects will include designing ethics curriculums, conducting surveys assessing the needs of the RECs, surveys eliciting the attitudes of patients who enroll in research, and the assessment of a self-evaluation tool for RECs. New for this year is that the trainees will continue their education by a distance learning program that will be developed specifically for them. The MERETI program's educational philosophy embraces the design of distance learning opportunities to extend the reach of the program to others in the Middle East. Examples of our programs include Webinars on various topics in research ethics and a specifically designed 6-week distance learning program for individual RECs. Please contact me at hsilverm@medicine.umaryland.edu for further information about having web-based training for your research ethics committee.

New Trainees Selected for 12-Month Certificate Program

Egypt

Rehab Abdel Hai Ahmed, MD, PhD, is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Health & Community Medicine, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. Dr. Abdel Hai has received a grant to develop a distance learning course in Reproductive Health.

Reham Yousri, MD, MS, is Assistant Lecturer in Department of Public Health & Community Medicine, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. Dr. Yousri has investigated issues involved with providing health services to adolescents.

Hala Mansour Gabr, M.Sc. Pharm, is a pharmacist and certified clinical research associate at the National Hepatology and Tropical Medicine Research Institute, Cairo, Egypt and has been involved in teaching Good Clinical Practices in Egypt.

Libya

Taher Kehil, MD, is head of the department of the National Tuberculosis Program at the National Center for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control in Tripoli.



Jordan

Imad Al-Abdallat, MD, is Assistant Professor in the faculty of Medicine, Forensic Medicine & Toxicology Division at Jordan University, Amman, Jordan.



Saudi Arabia

Mohammed Al-Naif, PhD, is Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Health Sciences, King Saudi University, Riyadh and has been nominated to serve on the National Committee for Research Ethics.



Bakr M. Bin Sadiq, MD, is Deputy Chief of Research at the King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Center in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and is a member of the research ethics committee at his institution.



Network of Research Ethics Committees Formed in Egypt

In October, 2008, a meeting entitled "Enhancing capacity of research ethics committees in Egypt" was held in Ain Sukhona, Egypt. This meeting established a Network of Research Ethics Committees (RECs) in Egypt (Egyptian Network of Research Ethics Committees—ENREC, see www.enrec.org). The objectives of the network are to:

- exchange knowledge
- disseminate teaching materials,
- help RECs optimize their functioning.

Presently, 13 Egyptian RECs have joined the network, which also includes a discussion forum that serves to help members communicate with each other (http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/EGYPTIAN_RECS/). Dr. Azza Saleh and Dr. Sleem are the network coordinator and co-coordinator, respectively.



Azza Saleh

Hany Sleem,