

IMPACT

November 2017

HEAR HIS PLEA

HELP PATIENTS SUFFERING
FROM HEPATITIS C



آغا خان یونیورسٹی ہسپتال

The Aga Khan University Hospital



The Patients' Behbud
Society for AKUH

FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Assalam-e-Aleikum

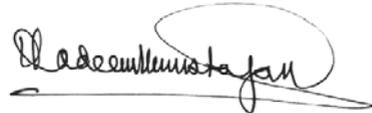
It is a privilege and honour to serve as the President of The Patients' Behbud Society (PBS) for AKUH. I have served as a member of the Executive Committee ever since its inception in 2002, and our aim has been to provide a shariah compliant method of attracting zakat funds for mustehiq patients at the University Hospital. PBS has been successful in raising over PKR 200 million in 2016. At the same time, we have ensured that our processes and documentation are compliant with best practices - we have received shariah certification from two shariah scholars, are a compliant member of the Pakistan Centre of Philanthropy, and are audited annually by a firm of chartered accountants.

Having been the CEO of the Aga Khan University Hospital for 14 years, I can assure you that we treat the sickest of patients. The AKUH, a tertiary care hospital, attracts patients from all walks of life and ensures that its doors are open to all. No one is denied care because of inability to pay. It becomes a double obligation as a member of The Patients' Behbud Society to continue to raise funds, so that more and more patients can be treated.

We are mere "trustees" in this transaction—the real winners are the mustehiq patients and YOU, the givers, who benefit by giving. Our vision for PBS is to make it a society of zakat well-wishers who are joined together in this farz. To me, this investment of zakat

has no equivalent rewards in any other earthly investment. We aim to raise PKR 1 billion for this cause by 2020, inshallah, and our hope is that you will continue to open your hearts and make the hospitalizations of more mustehiq patients possible at AKUH.

Jazak Allah Khair.



Nadeem Mustafa Khan
President, The Patients' Behbud Society
for AKUH



HEAR HIS PLEA

Help other patients like Yaras, as we continue to grow the funds available for treatment of hepatitis C.

For Yaras Roshan, the busy, dusty streets of Karachi are already a far cry from his native town of Shangla in Swat. The greenery and abundance Yaras knew in scenic Shangla have been replaced by pollution and poverty in Karachi. For over 20 years, Yaras has worked as a chowkidar and lived with his large family of nine members in cramped servant quarters, or other temporary housing. He now earns barely PKR 13,000 a month as wages. He also does odd-jobs during the day, to make ends meet.

Amidst his other problems, Yaras faced yet another challenge. He started experiencing fever, muscle aches, loss of appetite and a heavy head. He continued to work to support his family, and visited a public hospital to seek treatment. The hospital gave him treatment that lasted for several months, but provided no respite. Infact, he faced mounting debt due to his medical expenses. Yaras's friend Kamar had received medical and financial support from Aga Khan University Hospital. When Yaras's condition deteriorated, Kamar advised him to visit the Hospital to seek diagnosis and cure.

When Yaras arrived in AKUH, he was soon diagnosed with hepatitis C. He was put on a four month course of treatment and supported financially. The medication worked well. After four months, Yaras was able to return to Shangla to take rest and also leave his family in his native village.

Yaras has recently returned to Karachi alone. He plans to continue to work here to support his family.

“Prior to starting treatment at AKUH, I visited many doctors who were unable to guide me or provide relief from hepatitis. After starting my treatment here, I am feeling much better and more able to cope with my daily life.” - Yaras



Yaras praises the Hospital and says:
"The medical and welfare system of an advanced, recognised hospital like AKUH is a blessing."

HEPATITIS B AND C: THE SILENT KILLERS

Hepatitis B and C represent the foremost health challenge confronting the developing world today. With the major burden of disease in Asia, these viruses represent a significant source of morbidity and mortality in the next few decades in this region.

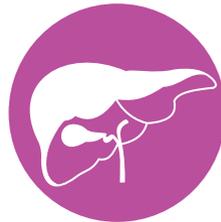
The national figures for Pakistan for the prevalence of hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C virus (HCV) are 2.5 % and 4.9 % respectively¹. With a population of 200 million, this translates to a healthcare burden of 15 million people suffering from these viruses.

If left untreated, HCV infection results in a condition called cirrhosis, where the liver shrinks in size, and complications such as bleeding from the stomach, unconsciousness, and fluid retention by the body may occur. It is therefore imperative that hepatitis be treated early and appropriately to prevent these complications from developing.

THE LIVES LOST*



Estimated number of people with hepatitis C infection (globally): **71 million people**



A significant number of those who are chronically infected will develop cirrhosis or liver cancer.



Estimated number of people who die each year from hepatitis C: **399,000 people**



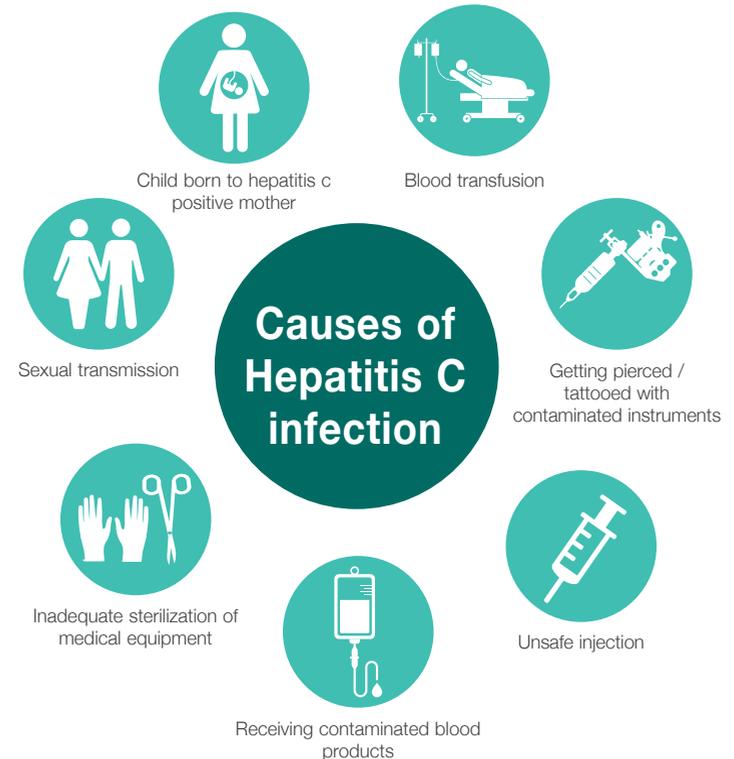
Antiviral medicines can cure more than **95%** of persons with hepatitis C infection, thereby reducing the risk of death from liver cancer and cirrhosis, but access to diagnosis and treatment is low.

AKUH's nation-wide campaign to save patients

The treatment of HCV has undergone a revolution in the past few years. The advent of all oral, interferon free direct-acting-antiviral therapy (DAA) has made treatment easier, cheaper, and with fewer side effects. Given these factors, and the burden of disease, it is anticipated that a large population of patients will be treated by general physicians (GP). It is vital that they are properly trained, not only in the treatment, but in all aspects of HCV disease, to avoid mismanagement.

The Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) programme is based on a similar programme in the US, which takes the treatment of HCV into the community. Through a process of on-line supervision by hepatologists, staff at remote sites are trained and counseled to treat patients according to current best practice.

The ECHO programme at AKUH was launched in September 2016 under the supervision of Professor Saeed Hamid. The operational sites in Karachi are Baldia, Quaidabad, Rashid Minhas Road and Nazimabad, with more sites scheduled to be opened in 2017 and 2018. In addition, two sites were selected for the ECHO programme in Punjab - Lahore and Rawalpindi.



¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/214975-prevalence-of-hepatitis-b-&c-in-pakistan-assessed>
 * <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs164/en/>

A core team of physicians, nurse and manager are selected at each site. After the initial process of training remote site physicians in the diagnosis and management of HCV is complete, patients are recruited into the project.

The hub for each clinic is AKU. Every couple of weeks, the team of doctors involved with the ECHO project connects online with the staff at the remote sites. Cases are discussed, advice is provided, and diagnostic challenges and treatment approaches are addressed. Competitive packages for screening, diagnostics and treatment have been developed in collaboration with the laboratory and pharmacy, and welfare support is also available for needy patients.

The impact of the ECHO programme - affordable Hepatitis C treatment

The HCV ECHO programme offers the cheapest diagnostic and treatment package, which maintains the AKUH quality standard. A patient with HCV infection can be diagnosed and cured for a total cost of approximately PKR 30,000. This cost is likely to go down substantially very soon, with the introduction of newer drugs.

So far, nearly 100 patients have been successfully treated at the outreach sites of the ECHO programme with many more under follow-up. We recently received a wonderful WhatsApp message from one of the family physicians involved with the project which said: “Good news!!! My first patient of the ECHO came with PCR negative, 3 months post treatment, today! Alhumdullilah.”

Over time the project will recruit many more sites into the programme, to make it a truly national effort to provide quality and accessible care to our patients.

“The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower.” Al-Quran 2:261

WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



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- Inherited Metabolic Disorders
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- Paediatrics - Cancer

Please make your zakat contribution in favour of "Patients' Behbud Society for AKUH" and send to:

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Room # 13, Pink Office, Aga Khan University Hospital, Stadium Road, Karachi
Tel: +92 21 3486 3000; Cell: +92 300 072 3000
Email: patients.behbud@aku.edu Website: <http://pbs.aku.org/>
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