



9 June 2015 – Cairo, Egypt | WHO Egypt, in collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population, recently organized and hosted a family health advocacy and support day for Syrian refugees living in 6 October district, Cairo. The district hosts the largest concentration of Syrian refugees in Egypt – a community of 35 000 out of a total of 135 000 currently residing in the country.

The purpose of the event was to bring Syrian families together and increase awareness of health services available to them. Importantly, the event also created an interface and forum for dialogue between various health care providers and the Syrian refugee community.

“This is the second event of its kind that we’ve held for Syrian refugees in Greater Cairo and the fourth in the country,” said Dr Gasser El Kareem, technical health officer for WHO. “We are trying to ensure that refugee communities across Egypt are aware of the importance of health and know what services are available to them, and how and where to get help. This is crucial in keeping them healthy,” he added.

The Syrian refugee population in Egypt is largely urbanized, spread throughout Cairo, Qalyubia, Giza, Alexandria, Sharkia and Damietta governorates. Major health conditions presented by Syrian communities include cardiovascular diseases, respiratory infections, cancer and diabetes. There is also a considerable need for treatment of accidents and medical emergencies that require hospitalization.

The Government of Egypt offers a broad range of free health services to registered Syrian refugees in Egypt, including preventive care, testing and diagnosis of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, chronic disease treatment, basic care for women and children,

mental health, and trauma and surgical care. At the event, stalls and tables were set up with educational material on prominent health issues. Maps pointing out locations of primary health care facilities were provided to Syrian families. Referral processes for secondary and tertiary treatment were also explained to attendees on the day.

The event hosted more than 450 Syrian refugees and was attended by representatives from government health departments, United Nations organizations, nongovernmental organizations and universities. The programme included presentations by representatives from the Ministry of Health and Population, WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, specialized medical centres, Giza Directorate of Health, 6 October Health District, and health officials from the primary health care sector. A Syrian lunch followed and a band performing traditional Syrian music brought families and health workers together in song and dance. A kids' corner and games organized by volunteers provided entertainment for the children.

Guests expressed their appreciation for the event and for efforts made by WHO and the Ministry to increase community awareness of health issues and available health services.

“People seemed to enjoy the advocacy and support event,” Dr El Kareem said. “It offered our guests the chance to meet with health care providers and have their questions answered. It was an informative and fun-filled day and an effective way to get our messages across,” he added.

WHO continues to support the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population in stepping up the level of health care services available to Syrian refugees in Egypt. It provides technical training, material and coordination support to the Ministry and other health partners active in the response.

The advocacy and support event is one in a series of health outreach activities for Syrian refugees in Egypt made possible through the support of the Government of Kuwait.

Related link

[WHO hosts advocacy event for Syrian refugees in Cairo, 21 May 2015](#)

Thursday 25th of April 2024 11:00:26 AM