



7 July 2022 – Sultan Qaboos University, represented by the Developmental Medicine Unit of Sultan Qaboos University Hospital and the WHO country office in Oman signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in the field of early childhood development and disability.

The MoU was signed on behalf of the university by His Highness Sayyid Dr Fahd bin Al-Julandi Al Said, Vice Chancellor of Sultan Qaboos University, and Dr Jean Jabbour, WHO Representative in Oman. It comes out of the two institutions' eagerness to enhance and develop cooperation in the implementation of joint projects.

Oman hosts two WHO collaborating centres – the Collaborating Centre for Quality and Patient Safety (accredited in 2018), and the Collaborating Centre for Emerging and Emerging Infectious Diseases (accredited April 2022). WHO collaborating centres provide advisory and training services to Member States in various fields.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Dr Jean Jabbour said, “Our understanding of disability and the needs of people with disabilities has evolved considerably over time. Early childhood spans the prenatal period to eight years of age. It is the most intensive period of brain development throughout the lifespan and therefore is the most critical stage of human development. Today, is a step to encourage the building of strong partnerships between parents and professionals to provide assistance to strengthen universal health coverage.”

Dr Watfa bint Saeed Al Maamari, Senior Consultant Child Health at the University Hospital, stated that the desired benefits of this agreement at the local and regional levels were in scientific consultations, exchange of knowledge and experiences, and providing best global practices in the field of early childhood development, which would be reflected in raising the efficiency of doctors and workers in the sector on the other hand, there will be cooperation in the field of training, conducting lectures, organizing seminars and attending academic meetings related to early childhood development. Sultan Qaboos University Hospital will be the approved authority in the region for training and research in this area at the regional level.

It was agreed to start an important set of work in the field of investment in early childhood development, which is an emerging area of interest in the field of global public health. Evidence has shown that the early years of life determine and influence the health, well-being, behaviour and cognitive functions of people. Early detection and early intervention for children with disabilities greatly improves their chances of inclusion, well-being and productivity throughout life, and the early childhood years provide an important opportunity to build a strong base for societies. Sultan Qaboos University aims to play a leading role in the fields of higher education and community service within Oman and to be internationally distinguished by the quality of its innovative scientific research, its graduates and its strategic partnerships. In 2011, and since then, the unit has been providing diagnostic services for children with developmental disorders and disabilities in Oman, in addition to research participation and various community services.

Tuesday 30th of April 2024 05:49:14 PM