

Preface

Note from the Editor- in- Chief: Need for Invigorating Medical Research

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Medical research plays an extremely important role in advancing medical knowledge, improving patient care and improving the overall health of the population. The local health conditions, pattern of disease, variation in population norms and pathology as well as the epidemiology and environmental factors affecting our health can be best studied by proper medical research.

Without medical research we are extremely handicapped in taking informed decisions related to major health policies, health budget, and future directions in health care. Since health care is an expensive undertaking, we need to invest in medical research and invigorate it to answer many pressing questions related to our health, health care institutions and our diseases.

Over the years, medical research in Jordan has been driven mostly by regulations that require publications for promotion. Most of the publications as well as the research came from young teaching faculties from medical schools. More recently, military doctors and doctors in MOH are required to publish in order to be promoted. Once the promotion takes place, then research and publication of that individual cease; with few exceptions. The private health sector had no or very little contribution to medical research and publications in Jordan.

As a result, the medical research had very little impact on major issues in health care in Jordan. The publications are usually a collection of fragmented observational works and frequently they lack continuity.

With few exceptions, these publications are not widely quoted by the international community nor published in first class journals. As perceived by the medical community, medical research in Jordan is an exercise with very little rewards other than promotion.

We need to change this if we want to improve on our status of medical research. New incentives need to be made, more money need to be invested and more “team” work incentives need to be created. The medical researcher needs to feel that he is getting enough financial incentives and his projects are properly reviewed and funded. He needs to be given more time to complete his work, including a relief from day-to-day routine work. The infrastructure needs to be improved including; literature availability, statistical help, technicians and help from “non-medical” research scientists especially those assigned to research projects.

The funding needs major revision and more money to be put in research projects. The attention has to be focused on public institutions, particularly medical schools and other health care institutions in public universities.

Unless serious measures to invigorate medical research are taken, medical research will remain stagnant and will contribute very little to our national health care reforms. That is, our contribution to world medical literature will remain insignificant and our country will remain obscure in the world map of medical research.

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