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Cancer nursing education in Palestine

The first national oncology training course has been held for Palestinian nurses. Nurses in Palestine are trained with a college or university nursing programme lasting two to four years, but there is no programme to introduce newly qualified nurses to oncology treatment or prevention.

Oncology nurses working in oncology units rely on "on-the-job training" with no theoretical background as there are no formal educational courses in this specialty. A few nurses get training fellowships for advanced oncology training in neighbouring countries such as Israel or Jordan.

Because of this training need, Hanan Saca-Hazboun and Mariam Awad (lecturers from Bethlehem University) in cooperation with Amal Khlief (head nurse of oncology unit) from Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem and three Israeli lecturers initiated a cancer course entitled "Advanced Workshop for Oncology Nursing". The course was clinically oriented to help nurses working in oncology departments, from Gaza and West Bank, representing governmental and non-governmental hospitals and academic institutions. The main objective of the training programme was to improve nurses' proficiency in the care of oncology patients in their respective units.

It was held in Jerusalem and supported by the National Cancer Institute, NIH, Bethesda, US, through Professor Silbermann (Middle East Cancer Consortium).

Lecturers and a course participant