

Al-Sidra Newsletter

3rd Edition - January 2016



Welcome to our Third Newsletter!

It gives me great pleasure to wish you all A Happy New Year!

It's hard to imagine that it's been less than three years since Al Sidra Centre first opened its doors to patients at KCCC. The remarkable success of this centre is due to our management and our dedicated, multidisciplinary staff members and volunteers who continue to provide warm, holistic support services to our patients and their families, going through the cancer journey, as well as the tremendous support provided by KCCC staff.

I want to personally thank Dr. Shafika Al Awadi, Founder and Head of Al Sidra Centre and all the staff for their hard work and dedication to the success of this Centre. It is heart-warming to see Al Sidra Centre go from strength to strength under her fine leadership.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to our staff member Mrs. Karen Webster, one of the initial founding members of Al Sidra who will be leaving Kuwait and wish her the very best in her new endeavors back home in England. I am looking forward to another successful year ahead. Wishing you and your families the best of health, happiness and peace in 2016.

With Best Wishes,

Sheikha/ Azza Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah
CEO of Al Sidra Association for
Psychological Care of Cancer Patients

Al-Sidra Staff

Dr. Shafika Al-Awadi
Consultant Medical Oncologist
& Head of Breast Cancer Unit
& Head of Al-Sidra Centre

Mrs. Manal Shadedd
Executive Manager

Mrs. Altaf Al-Essa
Psychotherapist

Mrs. Shebina Amlani
Clinic Coordinator

Mrs. Karen Webster
Information Officer

Mrs. Yasmeeen Mohammed
Psychologist

Mrs. Fay Basheer
Marketing & Look Good Feel
Good Program

Mrs. Esraa Al-Khateeb
Accountant

Mrs. Sameera Raheem
Administrative Coordinator

Mrs. Shaimaa Ahmed
Executive Secretary

Mr. Sherif Mustafa
Representative

Weekly Visiting Psychologists

Dr. Mahmoud Eid Bekbit
Consultant in Psychotherapy

Halemah Mused Edrees
Clinical Psychologist

Bibi Abdel-Whab AlWazzn
Clinical Psychologist

Al-Sidra Volunteers



Huda Al-Ajeel

- What made you want to become a volunteer?

I was working as a social worker and caregiver for a long time. So when I retired from my job I felt I still wanted to help others in need in my spare time.

- Why did you choose the Al Sidra Centre?

My previous experience was working with patients as a care giver child life specialist in Ibn Sina - Hospital. Regarding Al-Sidra I was asked to join by Mrs. Altaf Al Essa.

- How long have you been volunteering?

Almost 2 years.

- What do you enjoy most about it?

I enjoy being in touch with different age groups of patients helping with positive thinking and I also love the working team ,they are very active and sincere.

- What advice would you give anyone thinking about volunteering?

I would encourage them to volunteer and tell them how satisfying and fulfilling it is to help others.

- What have you learnt from your volunteering experience in Al Sidra Centre?

The most important lesson I have learnt it to appreciate your health.

- What made you want to become a volunteer?

Having arrived in Kuwait over a year ago I wished to continue nursing, instead I found myself volunteering at Al Sidra . I believe that I make a difference with the patients I meet. Through a smile, a hug, or a listening ear it gives a loving touch to people going through the hardest times of their lives. I like to give to others it gives me great satisfaction.

- Why did you choose the Al Sidra Centre?

A friend invited me to al Sidra for an orientation group for possible volunteering in the Centre . I felt right away that I wanted to be there and give patients hope in there journey.

- How long have you been volunteering?

For one and a half years. I am so happy to have this opportunity I feel I will gain life experiences that I will never forget.

- What do you enjoy most about it?

I love seeing the patients get well and strong, and return to their jobs and their lives. I enjoy the gratitude they express whilst on the journey with all staff and volunteers at the Centre.

- What advice would you give anyone thinking about volunteering?

Volunteering is something which is very satisfying allowing me to act in a way that is consistent with my principles. Also it changes your life from being purely self-centered to be something with meaning to others .

- What have you learnt from your volunteering experience in Al Sidra Centre?

That I am reminded that we are all in this together and we need to remember to support each other. It continuously teaches me something new about people, about compassion, and about myself . Life has so much to offer if we remember to look beyond ourselves.



Eileen Howard

- What made you want to become a volunteer?

The main motivation for volunteering is the desire to gain reward without material gain. God will see the good you are doing, and you get a sense of satisfaction, happiness and fulfilment doing this role.

- Why did you choose the Al Sidra Centre?

Because it embodies my past experience serving patients with psychological and emotional support. Also taking a holistic approach in all aspects of the patient's needs.

- How long have you been volunteering?

Since May 2014.

- What do you enjoy most about it?

I enjoy seeing the impact it has on patients and their families. I love to see the team spirit of the Centre, and its positive effect on the patients.

- What advice would you give anyone thinking about volunteering?

It is valuable to serve the patient and their family, and feel happiness, satisfaction and self-esteem when you are doing this wonderful work. In this work don't think about yourself, you enjoy giving to others.

- What have you learnt from your volunteering experience in Al Sidra Centre?

I have learnt a lot and I am still learning every day. The most important thing I have discovered is to be aware of oneself and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Soad Al-Manee

Al-Sidra In The Pink Health Day

The Al Sidra Centre launched its October Breast Cancer Awareness month activities with an “**In The Pink Health Day**” on Wednesday, October 7th 2015. This event was designed to challenge peoples understanding of pre-disposing risk factors of cancer. The aim was to educate patients, colleagues, and the general public, and improve their knowledge about cancer.

Our focus was to inform people about how healthy eating, stress, obesity and lifestyle can all impact on the risk of getting cancer. The event was attended by patients, staff, and Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi (Director of KCCC). Six Senses Spa offered free neck and shoulders massages and painted patients nails in a lovely pink color to match the decorations in the centre! This activity was organized to display how stress could be managed, and patients really enjoyed getting a mini massages.

Also present and offering the most amazing healthy foods were Swiss Belhotel Plaza Kuwait, Prime Bites and organic juices from Mr. Fahad Sultan and Mrs. Khaleedah Al-Essa and supported the event.

All these companies helped and supported the event as a part of their corporate social responsibility.

We expected 50 - 60 people to come however 200 people attended the event. The atmosphere was buzzing with joy and excitement.

The feedback was very positive. Everyone had fun while learning about healthy living. Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi thanked all the staff of Al Sidra for their professionalism and for working really hard along side the KCCC staff, and said how Al Sidra was making a big difference.



Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi-KCCC Director



Six Senses Spa Massage Sessions



Lovely food from Swiss Belhotel Plaza



Patients and staff of KCCC



Pink Nails for Patients

Al-Sidra Breast Cancer Awareness Day

Despite the torrential down pour of rain, thunder and lightning on Wednesday October 28th, nothing could keep people from attending the second annual Breast Cancer Awareness Day organized by Al Sidra Association for Psychological Care of Cancer Patients under the patronage of Sheikha/ Azza Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah. Over 300 people attended the well-organized, information-packed event held in Al Hashemi Grand Ballroom of Radisson Blu. The key message that Dr. Shafika Al Awadi Founder and Head of Al Sidra wanted participants to take away from this day was “Early Detection Saves Lives”. The event featured three inspirational speakers Dr. Rosol Bourisli, a Consultant Psychiatrist who spoke about Effects of Stress on Cancer, Dr. Rania Al Azmi, founder of the “Survive and Thrive Initiative” and Mona Ja’affar, a Cancer Survivor who spoke about her courageous journey through cancer. Then Dr. faisal Al-Turkait - Breast oncologist at KCCC- moderate the discussion between the lecturers and the audience. The event honored survivors, carers, volunteers and supporters of this cause There were a variety of information booths in the foyer from various departments of Kuwait Cancer Control Center and Palliative Care Center and many other community cancer support organizations who provided valuable information for the public. In the heart of the foyer, for a second year was the incredible art exhibition by the talented members of the Makulay Pilipino Artists Guild of Kuwait. The event was a tremendous success and even bigger than the previous year.

In some written feedback received from one cancer survivor attending the event:

“Awareness Day for me spoke volumes about cancer being everyone’s business. The message relayed at this event by Al Sidra Family to the Kuwait community was inspiring and tried to reach out to all strata of society with so many guests and booths participating. Through the speakers we heard the much needed reminder that early detection saves lives and valuable information was shared during that day about modifiable lifestyle factors including increasing physical activity, eating a healthy diet, regular check-ups and reducing stress and chemical exposure.



Sheikha/ Azzah Al-Sabah



Display and Art Exhibition in the foyer



VIPs attending Awareness Day

Al Sidra’s Awareness event showed us that together we can make a difference every day in the lives of people touched by cancer and rekindled the hope that one day the fight against breast cancer will end.” ---S. G. Cancer Survivor, Al Sidra Client

We look forward to making Breast Cancer Awareness Month even bigger and better next year!

Early Detection Saves Lives



Talk by Dr. Rosol Bourisli



Full Audience



Talk by Ms. Mona Jaffer



Mrs. Altaf Al-Essa & Mrs. Shebina Amlani



Talk by Dr. Rania Azmi



Students from Indian Community School in Kuwait



Art exhibition by Makulay Filipino Artists Guild of Kuwait

Upcoming Events

- Harmony House Workshop “Knowing and Loving Yourself” January 20th, 2015.
- World Cancer Day event February 4th, 2015.
- Nurse training the second Monday of each month at Al Sidra.
- Al-Sidra monthly support group for the patients.
- Al- Sidra monthly educational lecture.
- Reiki therapist Mrs. Altaf Al-Essa

We look forward to seeing you!



For more information, please call us

Our address:

Sheikha / Badreyah Al-Ahmed Hospital

Opening Times weekdays

7:30 am - 1:30 pm

+965 24620859

+965 51550689

Al-Sidra KWT

@Alsidra_KWT

@Alsidra_KWT

Please check out at our newly updated website by

Qusay Al- Khateeb

www.al-sidra.net

Fighting Cancer with Attitude



Three years ago in October 2012, I was invited to attend an event on breast cancer during which I listened to two breast cancer patients sharing their experience with treatment. I felt sorry for them but I never thought that one day I would be telling my story! Like most people I never thought it would happen to me, I always thought I'm too young to have breast cancer.

Two years later in October 2014, as I was driving, I saw a banner promoting breast cancer awareness and on that same day I decided to do the home self-exam and that is when I found the lump. I spoke to a friend who is an oncology breast surgeon, she examined me and referred me for a biopsy telling me there was a 50% chance that the lump was cancerous, I panicked straight away and went for the biopsy. A week later I got a call from my friend confirming my worst fear! I went to London for the mastectomy but decided to have the chemotherapy in Kuwait because I was told that it is important to be around family and friends for help and support. I was so scared and worried, I didn't fear the treatment but I thought of my four little children and kept thinking that I have cancer which means death and yet they still needed me.

I didn't come to terms with the disease and feel strong until after the mastectomy and after I met my great oncologist. He explained the course of treatment and the common side effects that I will encounter. During this time I met many survivors and realized that there is a life after breast cancer and that there is hope. I had to be strong to get through this and to look after my children too. I chose not to tell them, because they are young and would not understand. I had to always look strong and healthy even when I wasn't. Here I found Al-Sidra Centre where I can share everything was that happening with me and where I was given so much support by the team there.

Chemotherapy was tough, the worse part was losing my hair, but as one survivor told me before, if losing the hair is the price to be alive then let it be!

Finally, I want to ask every woman to spread the word about early detection to help educate the public. You might save a life by doing this.

Dr. Dalia Al-Henawy