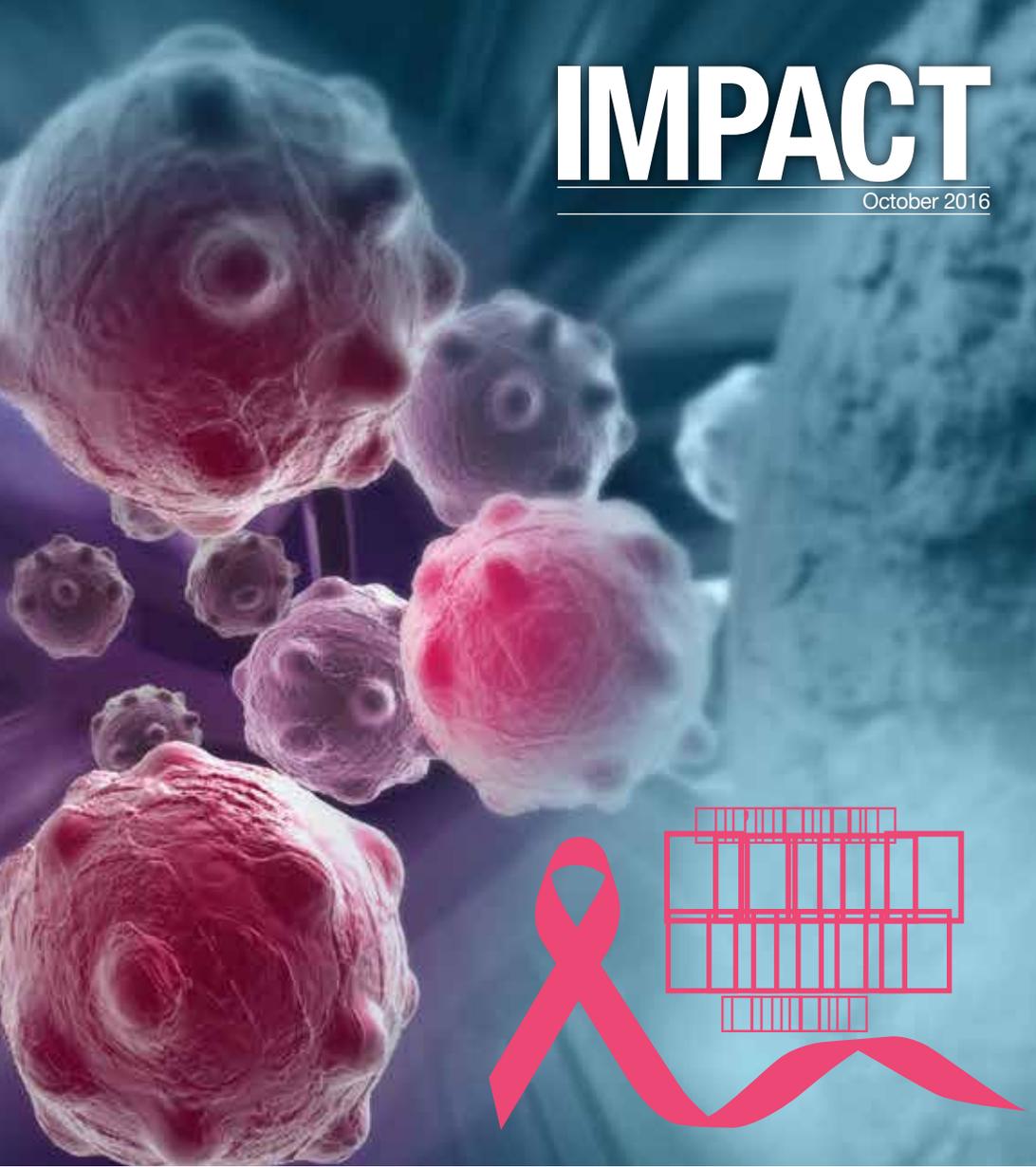


IMPACT

October 2016

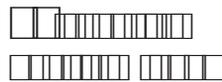


آغا خان یونیورسٹی ہسپتال

The Aga Khan University Hospital



The Patients' Behbud
Society for AKUH



THE KILLER DISEASE

Breast cancer is the most common cause of death by cancer worldwide¹. It is a disease that affects women regardless of their race, ethnicity, age, or occupation. It strikes women of all age groups, with the incidence increasing among postmenopausal women.

Among Asian countries, especially in Pakistan, there has been an alarming increase in the incidence of breast cancer. It was responsible for 30.8% of all cancer related deaths among women². The incidence of breast cancer in Pakistan is among the highest in any Asian population and is 2.5 times higher than in neighboring countries such as Iran and India. This is reflected in the sheer volume of breast cancer patients seen at the Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH).

Many patients who visit AKUH are unable to afford the diagnostic tests and costly treatment for breast cancer. Moreover, women from various socio-economic backgrounds remain unaware of the risk of this disease or its potential treatment. This leads to immense emotional trauma for the patient and their family members and eventual loss of life.

In order to tackle the gaps in access and awareness, AKUH has launched a Breast Cancer Campaign, which will be implemented in October each year.

AKUH extends access to women from the poorest sectors

The Patient Welfare Programme and Patients' Behbud Society at AKUH provide financial assistance to women who are fighting breast cancer and need support. This assistance extends access to quality care to women from the poorest sectors in the country. The Hospital is helping patients through its own revenues and medical research programmes. As more funds are collected, more needy patients can be offered care.

We appeal to our generous donors to help women who are less privileged than themselves. Cancer treatment includes consultations, diagnostic tests, surgery and chemotherapy. For amounts ranging from Rs 100,000 to Rs 850,000, you can help a cancer patient through their treatment, assisting in one or more steps towards full recovery.

Women: You can protect yourself against breast cancer

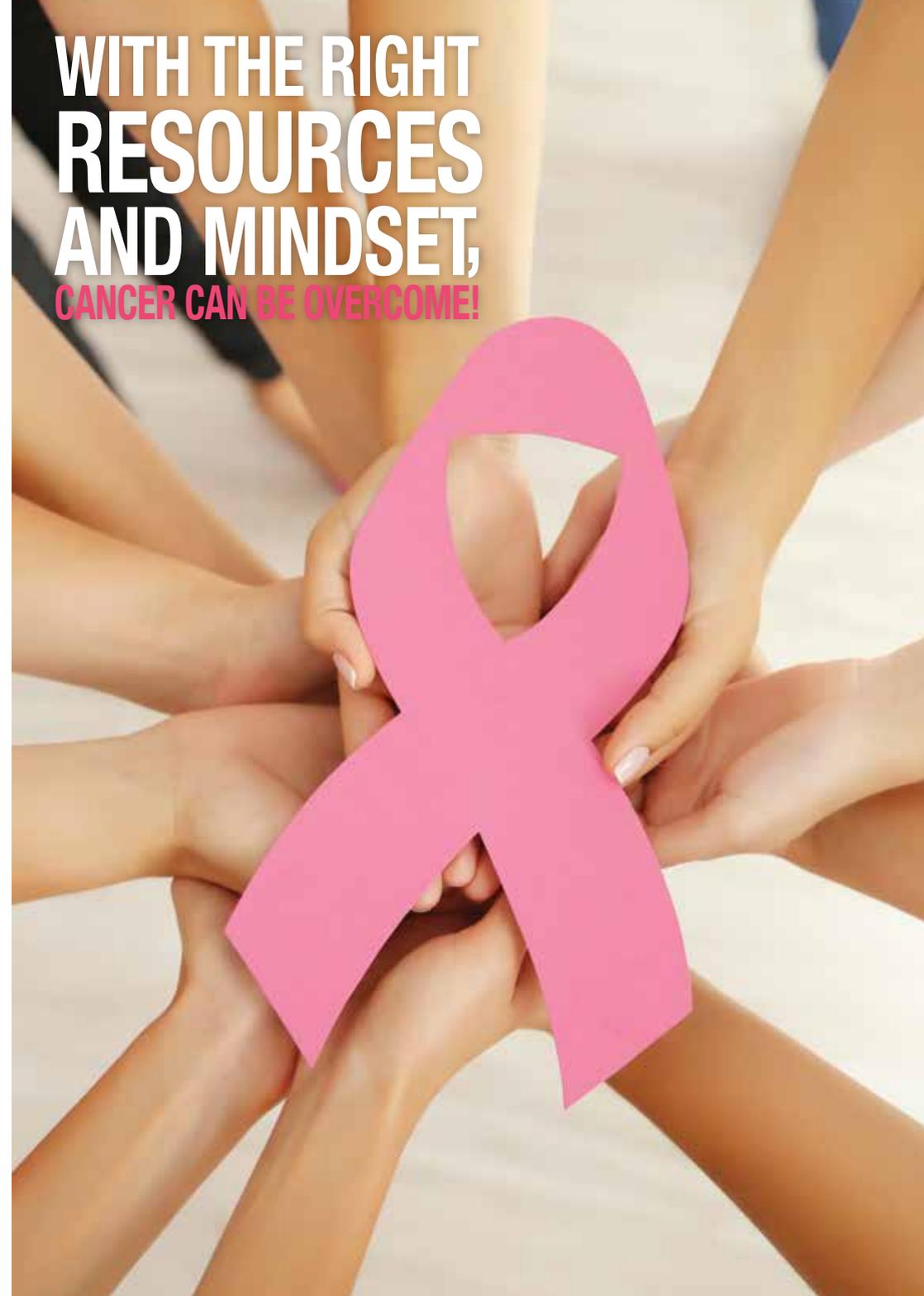
A few proactive measures can significantly improve the chances of survival and quality of life:

- Seek professional help as soon as abnormal symptoms are noticed. Early detection often reduces the time, cost and complexity of treatment.
- Overcome fear and follow through the course of treatment.
- Provide emotional and psychological support to patients during and after treatment.
- Guidance for the patient's family members and care givers.

¹ World Health Organisation, Cancer statistics 2014

² World Health Organisation, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs297/en/>

**WITH THE RIGHT
RESOURCES
AND MINDSET,
CANCER CAN BE OVERCOME!**



COURAGE FROM THE HEART

"Come to the Aga Khan University Hospital and get a check-up done. The excellent facilities here are available to everyone." Sadaf Ahmed

Sadaf Ahmad was having a shower one day, when she felt a hard growth in her breast. Sadaf had heard about the importance of having an immediate check-up through awareness raising health programmes on television, and she discussed the situation with her mother. Her mother and other female family members encouraged her to obtain professional help and after some tests, she was eventually referred to the Breast Clinic at the Aga Khan University Hospital.

Sadaf had always believed that AKUH was too costly for people like herself. However, she was pleasantly surprised at the caring attitude of the doctors at the Breast Clinic and the welfare programme officers at the Hospital. She was impressed with the excellent system in place for patients such as herself who needed both medical and financial assistance.

"The treatment for this disease is very expensive. However, all the breast cancer patients here are treated equally. The doctors are very cooperative and understanding: they work with the patient to provide her the best options and a way forward."

Sadaf's family was shocked to hear her diagnoses, as she was the first woman in her family to have breast cancer. However, they were very supportive and helped her as she was increasingly unable to perform her regular role in the household.

For three years, Sadaf underwent treatment for breast cancer. She underwent surgery, followed by seven sessions of chemotherapy and nineteen sessions of radiotherapy.

"Dr Tayabba told me never to let my will-power fail, or I would become weak." Sadaf recalls.

During the time she was ill, Sadaf's greatest concern was for her daughters, now aged thirteen and eleven years. Her daughters missed many days of school while Sadaf was unwell. They would become frightened when she returned home after chemotherapy and suffered from the after effects such as loss of hair and darkened nails. Fortunately, her husband was understanding and supported her and the children's needs.

Her faith in God and the support of her family and doctors gave Sadaf the courage to survive the ordeal. Today, she is fully recovered from breast cancer and leading a normal life.

"I became closer to God during this entire experience. God gave me this disease, and He also helped to cure me." she says.

"During my difficult times, I also became closer to people as I realised who was really helping me and who were my true friends." she adds.



DIAGNOSIS, EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT OF BREAST CANCER AT AKUH

For a holistic approach to a breast cancer patient, it is essential that multidisciplinary care be developed from the time of initial consultation. We at AKUH have been successful in establishing a cohesive breast cancer team comprising of breast surgeons, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists. This team works in unison with the ancillary services provided by radiologists, pathologists and nurses for comprehensive breast cancer care with a patient centered approach.

Breast Surgery

Surgery is a vital component of breast cancer treatment. There are many surgical options available for patients, some of which allow for conservation of the breast. The choice of which surgery would be suitable is a complex one. It usually involves understanding the biology of the disease, ability of the surgeon to render the patient disease free, cosmesis (the restoring of appearance) and above all, patient preference.

AKUH has been a pioneer in establishing an exclusive **breast cancer surgery** programme in Pakistan. This initiative was started many years ago. It is now run by surgeons who have had specialty training in breast cancer surgery. A patient with a suspicious breast lump who visits the breast surgery clinic is evaluated by a breast cancer specialist and dedicated nurses. In case a **biopsy** is required, the patient is directed to radiology for an image guided biopsy. A biopsy is a procedure to remove a



piece of tissue from the body so that the cells can be analyzed to gauge the presence or extent of disease. Our experts have been successful in obtaining adequate results even when dealing with very small lesions or affected areas. This is the first step in the **diagnosis of breast cancer**.

Breast surgery also runs a very robust **post-surgery survivorship programme**. Here, patients are followed every 6 to 12 months with a clinical breast exam and mammograms, for early detection of another cancer. Another essential component is the management of late side effects of the surgical and radiation intervention, specifically lymphedema. Lymphedema is the swelling of the arm at the side of the operated breast. Various options such as pneumatic compression devices, compression sleeves and exercise techniques are delivered to patients by trained nurses. The care team also includes skilled plastic surgeons who can make a patient look and feel normal again with the latest breast reconstruction procedures.

The breast cancer surgery group has also remained academically prolific. It has an established fellowship programme and has trained one fellow per year. Additionally, Dr Nazia Riaz, who is currently completing her PhD, is establishing a **breast cancer cell line** at AKU which has been developed from breast cancer patients in our institute. This research initiative will allow us to better understand the biology and behavior of breast cancer in Pakistan.

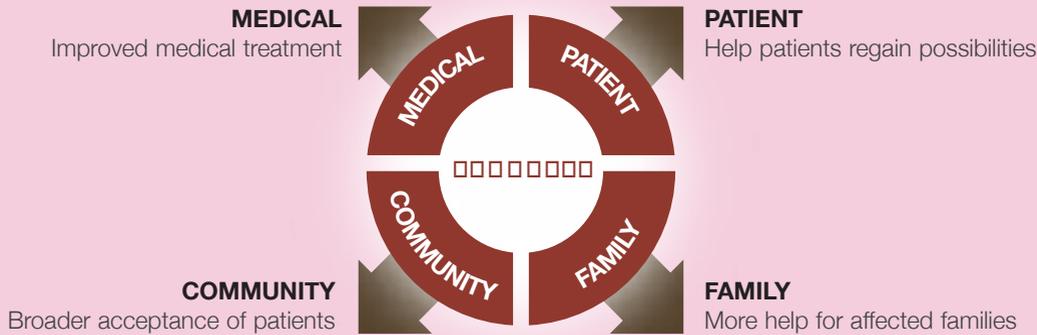
Medical Oncology

Chemotherapy is an essential part of the treatment for the majority of patients suffering from breast cancer. There are many myths and reservations regarding the risks and side effects of chemotherapy. The doctors and trained nurses deal with the complexity of the treatments and manage the side effects, while providing emotional and psychological support to the women suffering from cancer.

At our institute, chemotherapy is usually administered as an outpatient service in the day care chemotherapy suite. This allows patients to come in from home for the treatment and be sent back within a few hours. Additionally, our day care unit also serves to address any acute issues that result from chemotherapy. This helps in delivering prompt medical care and alleviating patient anxiety. In conjunction with the nutritional services, our day care unit guides patients and their care givers with vital information regarding balanced diet.

AKUH has a very dynamic and busy medical oncology programme which consists of four full-time and two part-time faculty members. Our oncologists are constantly striving to provide the latest treatments and to improve standard of breast cancer care in Pakistan. In addition, they have been very active as speakers in breast cancer education and awareness programmes throughout the country.

It is imperative to understand that along with medical treatment, patients also need **psychological and emotional support** to be able to deal with and accept the disease and its impact on their lives. We have a volunteer-run cancer support group for women



who have self image issues after the treatment of cancer. 'I will stay beautiful' has been successfully spreading its message for the past two years and is gaining momentum. For more information, please email oncology@aku.edu or visit us on Facebook ('I will stay beautiful').

Radiation Oncology

Radiation therapy is the third component in breast cancer management. The main goal of this treatment is to prevent recurrences of breast cancer at the site of surgery. Additionally, short courses of radiation can help in the control of pain and bleeding from tumour sites.

The radiation oncology unit consists of four full time faculty and eight residents along with a large staff of medical physicists, technicians and nurses. This team is trained to deliver precise care to the patient.

The Patient Welfare Programme and the Patients' Behbud Society for AKUH

Cancer treatment can be a heavy financial burden. AKUH has a financial programme whereby breast cancer patients may be eligible for support from the patient welfare fund or zakat fund. For more information, contact us at: ahmeds.mansoor@aku.edu or 3486 2970.

Aga Khan Hospital's approach to breast cancer is more than just treatment. The Breast Centre offers each breast cancer patient the personalized attention, diagnosis and treatment options, and follow-up care required for the best outcome and quality of life. For an appointment with a consultant, call: 021 3486 1030. For mammogram, call: 021 3486 6240.

"WHENEVER I CAME HERE, THEY SUPPORTED ME AND ENCOURAGED ME TO BE BRAVE DURING THIS WHOLE JOURNEY OF MY TREATMENT."

SAYS MRS TAZEEN MEHKARI

Mrs Tazeen Mehkari's association with the Patients' Behbud Society at AKUH started in 2008, when she was undergoing treatment for cancer at the Hospital. While undergoing chemotherapy sessions, she noticed a number of people from the interior of Sindh also receiving chemotherapy. When she enquired, she was informed that these patients were receiving support from the Patients' Behbud Society for AKUH in order to complete the costly sessions. In particular, she observed the number of children who were receiving assistance from PBS.

Inspired by this, Mrs Mehkari started giving donations to these poor patients. She also started 'spreading the word' and encouraged people, including her relatives who visited her at AKUH, to give zakat to underprivileged patients.

The care she received from the nurses and staff at the Oncology Department left a strong impression. After her recovery, Mrs Mehkari has become a source of advise and support for other women suffering from breast cancer. She encourages them to seek professional help and benefit from early detection and treatment.



"The nursing staff at the Hospital is very polite." she says. "They understand the patients well. Cancer patients need sympathy from the staff and guidance on the right and wrong steps to take."

Comparing AKUH to other institutions, Mrs Mehkari points to the comprehensive, specialist services offered.

"If you have any complications, all the departments are here at AKUH under one roof. You can be immediately referred to all the other doctors to treat your complications."

From her own observation, Mrs Mehkari also knows that AKUH does not reject any cancer patient, no matter how advanced a stage the disease is at. Instead it helps to alleviate suffering and improve the quality of life.

Mrs Mehkari highlights how patients suffering from cancer are receiving the best, life-saving treatment at AKUH, as well as post-treatment care. It is important to support patients and help them beat cancer.

Cancer can be cured and overcome.

OUR MEMBERS

Executive Committee Members

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S. M. Pervez, *Vice President*

Sheikh Ali Hussain, *Honorary Secretary*

Abdur Rahim Tariq

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Please Contribute Your Zakat To PBS

I wish to contribute PKR/USD _____ *as zakat to
The Patients' Behbud Society for AKUH.

Mode of Payment: Cheque Wire Transfer

Cheque/Wire Transfer Transaction #: _____

Bank: _____ Date: _____

Donor's Name: _____ Address: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

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Funding Options:

General Paediatrics Congenital Heart Disease

Cardiology Oncology Breast Cancer Treatment

Please make your zakat contribution in favour of "Patients' Behbud Society for AKUH" and send to:

Resource Development Department,

Room # 13, Pink Office, Aga Khan University Hospital, Stadium Road, Karachi

Tel: +92 21 3486 3000; Cell: +92 300 072 3000

Email: patients.behbud@aku.edu Website: <http://pbs.akuh.org/>

 www.facebook.com/zakat.akuh

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Kindly let us know when the payment is made by sending an email at patients.behbud@aku.edu