

Assalaamu alaykum

Dear IMANA Members and JIMA Readers:

The scientific presentations at the last IMANA conference, held in Istanbul, Turkey, were very informative. Approximately 170 members attended the meeting and benefitted from these presentations. What about the remainder of IMANA membership? Should not the presenters spend a little more time and effort and put their presentations in the format of manuscripts to be published in JIMA so that they will be available to all members and enable them to benefit from the expertise of their colleagues? This will also make their presentations accessible to all those who explore the internet, as the articles are posted online on at the JIMA web site, jima.imana.org.

In this issue, our new president, Dr. Abida Haque, addresses the membership enumerating the achievements and future plans of IMANA. We all should express our thanks to her and the other executive committee members for their work for the advancement of IMANA and pray to Allah ﷻ for guidance and blessing their work.

We also publish a position paper issued by IMANA's Public Health Committee, under the leadership of Dr. Mohamed Haq, on the need to eliminate second-hand smoking from Islamic campuses.

In this issue, Drs. Rhami Khorfan and Aasim Padela discuss in detail the permissibility of abortion when the pregnant woman's life is in danger. Abortion for this indication is acceptable in Judaism, Catholicism, and Islam. However, in Catholicism this permissibility is limited to situations where sacrificing fetal life is an indirect result of the procedure, for example removing the fallopian tube in tubal pregnancy or abortion complicating a surgical procedure for treatment of a potentially fatal condition for example appendicitis, peritonitis.

The authors focus on the process of bioethical deliberation in these three religious traditions and discuss the different concepts that each of these faith groups uses to justify abortion in this circumstance. Islamic scholars differ to some extent on what situations make abortion before 120 days of

conception, that is 19 weeks after the first day of the last menstrual period, permissible. However, they all agree that it is prohibited after 120 days. The only exception is when the woman's life is in peril. With modern advances in maternal fetal medicine, this situation is fortunately becoming very rare. In many cases, the pregnancy can be allowed to continue to 23-24 menstrual weeks, and, with advances in neonatology, newborns delivered at this gestational age have a fair chance of survival. It is to be noted that delivery at >20 weeks is officially termed preterm delivery and not abortion.

Drs. Abdul Basit and Mohamed Hamid discuss the prevalence of mental health problems in Muslim Americans and how their incidences differ from other Americans. They state that currently all major schools of psychotherapy reflect the religious, ethical, and cultural heritage of Western society. The authors stress that, as a consequence, the methods developed in the West may not be always suitable and effective for Muslim Americans. They stress the need to establish more multicultural and multilingual centers that are tailored to address the mental health of Muslim Americans.

Dr. Thalia Arawi from Beirut, Lebanon, believes that Muslim physicians should be exemplary in the realm of medical ethics, patient care, and physician patient relationships, provided they abide by Qur'anic injunctions and the Prophet's Sunnah (tradition). She cites many Qur'anic verses regarding morality, character, and other virtues. Muslims also have the perfect example of human behavior in the person of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. She emphasizes the need to include character evaluation in admission criteria to medical schools and continuing that evaluation throughout the medical school years.

In this issue we publish an account of an Islamic charity clinic. It is the second largest Muslim-run charity clinic in the United State. The Muslim Community Center Clinic is located in Silver Spring, Maryland. Dr. Shaukat Ashai details its history and gradual growth in space, staff, and services. What started as a primary care clinic became a multispecialty facility. The original all-volunteer staff now

has part-time workers and physicians. He discusses the liability issue, the finances, grant applications, and governance of the clinic. He stresses the importance of cooperation with and making special arrangements with local health departments and neighboring health-care facilities. Dr. Ashai gives suggestions of steps to be followed for other Muslim centers to establish charity clinics.

Dr. Faroque Khan profiles Dr. Humayon Chaudhry in this issue. He details his achievements as an administrator, teacher, and especially as a public health-policy advocate.

The book selected for review by Dr. Khan for this issue is "Commander of the Faithful: The life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader: A Story of True Jihad." The Emir (prince) was born in 1808 in contemporary western Algeria. He fought the French invasion of his country in 1830. He continued to fight the occupation for several years until he became convinced that further fighting would be futile and would only cause more suffering to the people. He decided to surrender and was imprisoned for several years and finally exiled to Syria. During his lifetime he exhibited the moral characters taught by Islam. He was admired for his courage, nobility, and humanitarianism, especially for the rules he established for treat-

ment of war prisoners. He exemplifies the true meaning of jihad.

I hope that you find this issue both interesting and informative. As always I invite your comments on the articles and how we can improve JIMA and make it more responsive to members' needs.

Again I invite and welcome submissions to the journal in its various sections by all members but especially by those who present in IMANA conferences. Remember that JIMA is now online (jima.imana.org) and is widely accessible. Articles there can be cited by other authors and can receive wide exposure.

You can also follow JIMA on twitter @JIslamMedAssoc. Send us a tweet!

Happy Eid al-Adha.

Wassalaam,

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