

POEM Group Newsletter



Quarterly Newsletter of the Pediatric Oncology East and Mediterranean (POEM) Group

ISSUE 02 August 2017



Welcome Note from Chairperson

On behalf of POEM Board of Directors, welcome to the second edition of the Pediatric Oncology East & Mediterranean group (POEM) newsletter. As we continue to grow with now above 350 members from 81 centers in 23 countries including pediatric oncologists, hematologists, scientists, nursing and allied health professionals we continue to strive to work together to prevent childhood cancer and optimize treatment and cure for children in the Eastern and Mediterranean region.

Since the last communication of the Board via our newsletter in August 2016, POEM First Scientific Meeting "Childhood Cancer Reach Out to Heal" was held in Muscat, Oman On January 26, 2017 with a rich scientific program covering Hematologic Malignancies, Solid Tumors and Neuro-oncology in addition to nursing workshops targeting key areas of nursing care for childhood cancer catering for the prime needs of pediatric oncology in the region. With your support, contribution and participation this meeting was a successful and memorable event. We look forward for your continued support and participation in our future meetings.

Over the last few months POEM community suffered great loss by the passing away of two leading members of the group Dr. Azzam Al Zoeibi, Senior Consultant at the Department of Pediatrics and Chief Pediatric Hematology & Oncology Division at Shaikh Khalifa Medical City United Arab Emirates and Dr. Khaled Shaaban, Lab Director and Flowcytometry Specialist at Children Cancer Hospital Egypt-57357 and Chair of POEM MRD Working Group. Their work and dedication in fighting childhood cancer will continue to inspire us in our journey to care for children with cancer. We extend our heartfelt condolences to their families and friends. May God give them eternal rest and their families and friends the strength to bear the great loss.

POEM group is committed to building capacity in field of pediatric oncology in the region through established fellowship and short-term training grants. I am pleased to share with you that 5 new grants have been approved (3 fellowships and 2 short term training) in addition to the 2 ongoing fellowship grants. Furthermore, we are in the final stages of preparation to start a one year pediatric oncology nursing training program which will be piloted in several POEM centers. Of notice is the monthly Case Discussion Forum has been reformatted to be based on tumor category and include educational cases with continued support from experts from the region and St. Jude Children's and Research Hospital. We will continue to organize specialized workshops. A Palliative Care Workshop will be planned in Spring 2018.

Finally, I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Dr. Amani AlKofide (immediate ex-president), Dr. Hassan El Solh (immediate ex Vice president) and Dr. Hussain Al Mukharraq (immediate Ex- treasurer) for their dedication and leadership which put POEM Group on the right tract. Furthermore, I would like to extend our appreciation to all POEM members and St. Jude Children's and Research Hospital (SJCRH) for their continued support, dedication and contribution to POEM activities. With all their valuable support, POEM Group will continue to achieve its goals.

POEM Group Meeting

POEM Group held its meeting in Muscat-Oman at Al -Bustan Hotel from January 26th-28th, 2017. This meeting included a Nursing Workshop, First Scientific Meeting, and Fifth Business Meeting for the Board of Directors.



Highlights of POEM First Scientific Meeting and Fifth Business Meeting

Nursing Workshop

A Nursing Workshop was held on January 26th, 2017. The workshop was attended by 33 nursing staff from POEM countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, India, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and United Arab Emirates. The workshop included lectures about pediatric oncology, chemotherapy and extravasation, febrile neutropenia, role of nurses, palliative care and central line access. It also included a Hands-on Practice station.

During this workshop, certificates were provided and a survey about the overall activity was filled by the 33 attendees with input regarding their general interest, content of the workshop, quality of the schedule, promptness of the educational offering, teaching-learning environment, registration and overall organization. 90% responded that the workshop was very beneficial and 35% suggested having the workshop organized for more than one day.

POEM First Scientific Meeting

The conference was attended by 148 registrants from different disciplines including General Pediatricians, Pediatric Hematologists/Oncologists, Nurses, Pharmacists, Pathologists and Laboratory Medicine Specialists. During the meeting, several lectures in hematology oncology were presented. The conference included an Exhibition of 100 submitted abstracts. During the conference, the four winning abstracts were presented.

Working Groups Meeting

On January 28th, the Scientific Director held a meeting with the present chairs of the working groups to discuss progress, challenges, responsibilities and plans for upcoming projects.

Fifth Business Meeting

The Business Meeting was held on January 26th, 2017. During the meeting, presenters gave an update on achievements, scientific activities, future and strategic plans, as well as plans for member institution, agreements and registry. Chairs of working groups also presented progress, achievements, challenges and proposals for future projects.

The Board of Directors, in a closed meeting, discussed the presented progress of the working groups and decided to have regular assessment of the groups in addition to prioritizing the needed groups at the current stage while restructuring current groups where needed.

During the meeting, the Vice Chair of the BOD announced the names of the new members of the Board of Directors 2017-2021 **while thanking the current members for all their great efforts and contribution.**

New Board Of Directors 2017-2021

Anissa Trabzi	Algeria	Siham Cherkaoui	Morocco
Gevorg Tamamyan	Armenia	Abduhakim AlRawas	Oman
Husain AlMukharraq	Bahrain	Syed Ahmer Hamid	Pakistan
Emad Ebeid	Egypt	Zehra Fadoo	Pakistan
Alaa Elhaddad	Egypt	Mahwish Faizan	Pakistan
Riham Abdel Aziz	Egypt	Mohammad Najajreh	Palestine
Atk Rau	India	Asim Belgaumi	Qatar
Girish Chinnaswamy	India	Mohammad Awad Alkhatieb	Sudan
Amita Trehan	India	Ghada Sousan	Syria
Raghad Alsaeed	Iraq	Oumaya Fawaz	Syria
Amir Mohammed	Iraq	Sihem Barsaoui	Tunis
Rawad Rihani	Jordan	Faten Fedhila	Tunis
Wasil Jastaniah	KSA	Nur Olgun	Turkey
Suleiman Alsweedan	KSA	Ahmet Demir	Turkey
Hubert Mottl	Kuwait	Muhammad Faisal Khanani	UAE
Samar Muwakkit	Lebanon	Gamal H Zain	Yemen
Amina Beayou	Libya	Hamoud Hodeish	Yemen
Mohammed Khattab	Morocco		



Election of New Executive Committee

On April 8th, 2017 a Business Meeting was held in Beirut– Lebanon for the New BOD Members who elected the Executive Committee members:

Chair: Dr. Abdul Hakim Al Rawas (Oman)

Vice Chair: Dr. Asim Belgaumi (Qatar)

Treasurer: Dr. Samar Muwakkit (Lebanon)

Ex-Officio—SJCRH: Dr. Sima Jeha (USA)

Ex-Officio—Central Office: Dr. Raya Saab and Ms. Haifaa Khalifeh (Lebanon)

Website Committee: During the Business Meeting held in Beirut, POEM Board of Directors decided to form a Website Committee to work on further developing the current website with improved content, more enhanced features for registrants and a members-only zone. Members of this committee will consist of representative members from the most active working groups, and a few junior POEM members with expertise and/or interest in IT and social networking.

Working Groups Progress

Hematologic Malignancies and MRD Taskforce

The hematologic malignancies working group put a protocol draft for patients with low risk & special LR B-precursor ALL at level 3 centers and a protocol draft for Low risk B-precursor for level 1&2 centers. The group is currently in the process of refinement of the details for implementation.

In parallel, the MRD taskforce is conducting semimonthly case discussions and MRD data analysis sharing. It also prepared a survey on the MRD usage in POEM countries/centers to help standardize MRD usage in preparation for unified protocols on the hematological working group planned protocol.

Registries and Database

The registries working group presented an abstract during the Scientific Meeting about current situation of cancer registry in POEM countries.

In collaboration with St Jude, the Registry software is expected to be available in summer 2017. The Registries and Data Management Working Group has been collecting data from all registered centers in POEM Group regarding the available resources for supporting the registry whether technical, human resources and other. Once the registry is ready, a workshop will be held for essential personnel to get the needed training in using the software. It was noted that, for the registry, guidelines for publications will be set, and individual MOUs would be executed for each research project for participating centers.



Nursing Workshop-Oman 2017

Nursing Care

The Nursing Working Group gathered information from the Nursing Educational Needs Assessment survey version 2 that was filled by 14 centers in 13 countries. Accordingly, it is working on a proposal to train members in level 1 and 2 countries

Tribute to Dr. Azzam Al Zoeibi and Dr. Khaled Shaaban:

POEM community received the sad news of the great loss of leading members of the group Dr. Azzam Al Zoeibi, Senior Consultant at the Department of Pediatrics and Chief Pediatric Hematology & Oncology Division at Shaikh Khalifa Medical City United Arab Emirates and Dr. Khaled Shaaban, Lab Director and Flowcytometry Specialist at Children Cancer Hospital Egypt-57357.

Dr. Al Zoeibi is one of the founding members of the Pediatric Oncology East and Mediterranean (POEM) Group, representing the members of the United Arab Emirates from 2013-2017.

Dr. Khaled Shaaban was the Chair of POEM MRD Working Group.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to their families and friends. May their souls rest in peace.



Dr. Azzam Al Zoeibi



Dr. Khaled Shaaban

POEM Training Grants

Training Working Group

The training working group is in the process of preparation of new curricula for the trainees. It also prepared 2 evaluation forms: Program evaluation form and Fellow performance evaluation form.

Ongoing Grants

Two fellows on POEM Grant are currently completing their Second Year of Fellowship in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology: Dr. Rasha Al Yousef (AUBMC-Lebanon) and Dr. Haytham Al Jabour (KHCC-Jordan)

New Grants

Five pediatricians were selected for POEM Grant for Long term and Short term Training.



Dr. Dania Al Tabesh
Pediatric Hem/Onc
Fellowship at AUBMC
-Lebanon



Dr. Islam Al Mubarak
Pediatric Hem/Onc
Fellowship at CCHE-
Egypt



Dr. Azza Fahmy
Pediatric Hem/Onc
Fellowship at CCHE-
Egypt



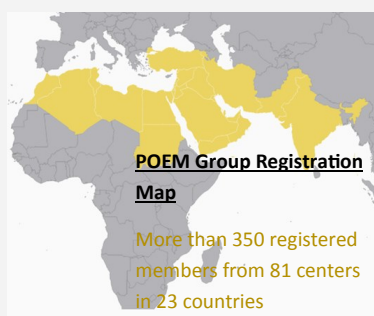
Dr. Alyaa Al Shahouni
Pediatric Hem/Onc Short
term Training at KHCC-
Jordan



Dr. Ehab Hanafy
Pediatric Hem/Onc
Short term Training at
EGE-Turkey

**Grant Applications for Training are available
on POEM Group Website:**

www.poemgroup.org



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