

Abu Dhabi Health Authority to continue 'rational approach' to drug selection and related therapies

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The Abu Dhabi Health Authority will continue to take a 'rational approach to drug use', says its advisor on drugs and medical products, in an effort to bring the emirate's residents the best possible medical care at the fairest cost.

Cancer therapies are the authority's top priority, as they are being developed at a lightening quick pace and carry the potential to dramatically stem the tide of mortality associated with the world's most deadly diseases - to include breast and lung cancers.

'Abu Dhabi Health Authority is committed to providing its residents with the world's class healthcare, and that means our cancer centers, for example, must continue to introduce and comply with internationally-developed cancer treatment protocols.'

said Mohammed Abuelkhair, Pharma.D, Advisor on Drugs and Medical Products for the Abu Dhabi Health Authority.

'Our interest in governing drug use in Abu Dhabi goes beyond safety and efficacy, we want to see truly positive patient outcomes. We measure benefits against costs, but the goal is to extend and improve the lives of patients.'

Dr. Abuelkhair spoke on the sidelines of The First Oncology Pharmacy Practice Summit in the Middle East which took place in Beirut, Lebanon on 28 and 29 November.

The summit, supported by Novartis Oncology, brought together hundreds of regional and international HCP members of the Middle East Oncology community.

The forum was the first educational scientific program dedicated for pharmacists.

'There is a 'Tsunami' of new cancer drugs in various stages of development which will come onto the Middle East market over the next few years. Accordingly, many treatment protocols which exist today will be outdated next year,' said Pierre Anhoury, MD, Senior Vice President Europe, with Paris-based healthcare consultancy, MattsonJack, who spoke on day one of the oncology summit.

Summit speakers told the regional audience that early diagnosis not only improves treatment options, it greatly reduces healthcare costs.

Cost reduction is a central concern for healthcare bodies across the Middle East as the incidence of cancer will more than double moving forward.

'Treatment advances have moved faster than the world's ability to cope with their commercial implications. Still, many Middle East health authorities are taking active leadership roles in the responsible, ethical provision of healthcare to cancer suffers,' said Kalo Zoltan, PhD, an internationally-recognized authority on the economics of drug purchase, who conducted a workshop for regional physicians and pharmacists on day two of the oncology summit.

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