

# Connecting

Summer 2007

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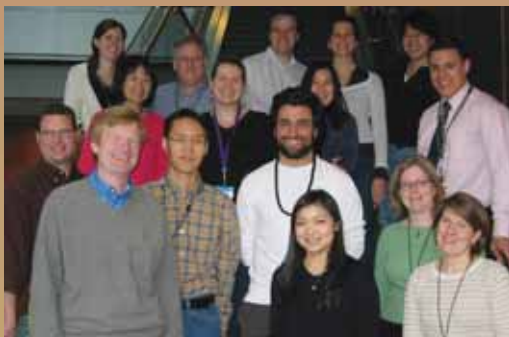
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Above, **Christopher A. Walsh, M.D., Ph.D.,** Bullard Professor of Neurology, HMS, and his team. Dr. Walsh visits Dubai to lead and education program on autism to explore genetic factors of the disease and provide clues for doctors in practice

## Message from HMSDC's Chief Academic Officer



Welcome once again to *Connecting*, the newsletter of Harvard Medical School Dubai Center (HMSDC) Institute for Postgraduate Education and Research. Despite the arrival of summer, our staff is hard at work on several upcoming events. In early June, we will be hosting Dr. Christopher Walsh, a Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, along with members of his team from Children's Hospital Boston. We are very excited by this visit because the team will not only participate in an educational symposium but also evaluate children in the UAE with autism spectrum disorder. Some of these children and their families will have the opportunity to join a research initiative designed to identify genetic causes of autism. The new knowledge they help create will lead to improved diagnosis, counseling and treatment for this increasingly prominent problem.

This program, organized in collaboration with Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC) and the Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research, brings to life the concept of "quality healthcare informed by education and research." In addition to providing these children with the chance to be evaluated by health professionals from one of the world's leading pediatric hospitals, the team will be educating local colleagues and bringing cutting-edge research from Harvard Medical School to Dubai and the UAE.

During Ramadan, HMSDC and DHCC will collaborate to present a continuing medical education program on preventive medicine and, in November, we will host international mental health experts from Harvard Medical School, the UK, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and the UAE who will participate in "Specialty Practi-Med: Mental Health for Primary Care Physicians and Mental Health Professionals." We believe that common mental health issues are frequently overlooked and under treated and we hope to highlight the importance of the recognition and treatment of anxiety and depression in primary practice and as part of the symptom complex of acute and chronic illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes.

The Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research had an eventful spring. The foundation hosted a symposium in Boston, "Partners in Research," where scientists from the region met with counterparts at Harvard Medical School and began planning collaborative medical research. The foundation's science writers program brought three journalists from the UAE to Harvard Medical School for a week of intensive training in medical journalism. HMSDC made its first Tamayoz Awards and conducted a symposium for nurses, "The Role of Nursing in Promoting Patient Safety and Quality," that attracted over 400 participants.

I'm very proud of our entire staff and I hope many of you will have the opportunity to meet and work with them. Best wishes for a pleasant summer.

Sincerely,  
Robert L. Thurer, MD



In association with Dubai Healthcare City



## Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research Updates

### Dr. Walsh leads an education program on autism in Dubai

Christopher Walsh, MD, PhD and colleagues from Children's Hospital Boston and Harvard Medical School will visit Dubai in early June to evaluate children with autism spectrum disorder and participate in an educational program. Their visit is jointly organized by the Harvard Medical School Dubai Center (HMSDC) Institute for Postgraduate Education & Research and the Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research in cooperation with Dubai Healthcare City, a member of Tatweer.

Robert Thurer, MD, Chief Academic Officer of HMSDC and Executive Director of the Foundation, said, "We are currently witnessing an explosion in knowledge and understanding of autism, including the genetic basis for the disease. At the same time, there is a critical need to provide today's clinicians with the ability to assess and treat the growing number of autism cases. The challenge of autism is a perfect example of the importance of linking laboratories with clinical practice."

One such laboratory where the understanding of autism is taking shape is that headed by Christopher A. Walsh, MD, PhD, a pioneer in the genetic analysis of diseases that disrupt the development of the cerebral cortex. Walsh, Chief of the Division of Genetics at Children's Hospital in Boston and Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, is also a member of the Dubai Harvard Foundation's Scientific Advisory Committee.

"In recent years, researchers have focused their efforts on identifying genes that, when altered, may lead to autism. Our laboratory is actively searching for these genes using a variety of techniques," said Walsh, who will present a lecture on the genetics of autism at the event. "Identifying these genes will help us to better understand the mechanisms underlying autism and lead to additional research focused on improved diagnosis and treatment of autism disorders." diagnosis and treatment of autism disorders."

## Three Journalists Selected for Overseas Training

Dubai Healthcare City, a member of Tatweer, and Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research, in collaboration with Dubai Press Club, selected three journalists who traveled to HMS Boston, USA, to receive a five-day extensive training -May 14 to 18- in science and medical reporting under the Science Writers Fellowship Program.

The three winners; Abrar Samih Mikkawi, from Gulf Today, Alia Al Theeb from Gulf News and Nadeya Ibrahim from Al Bayan were chosen as their articles demonstrated strong writing skills, and a high interest level in healthcare. This fellowship focused on the importance of science writing and writing style when using terminologies to report healthcare raising issues and medical research.



### Useful Links

Harvard Medical School Dubai Center  
[www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu](http://www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu)

Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research  
[www.dhfmr.hms.harvard.edu](http://www.dhfmr.hms.harvard.edu)

Harvard Medical International  
[www.hms.hmi.harvard.edu](http://www.hms.hmi.harvard.edu)  
[www.hmiworld.org](http://www.hmiworld.org)

Dubai Healthcare City  
[www.dhcc.ae](http://www.dhcc.ae)

## Our Educational Programs

### CME GRAND ROUNDS

*These lectures are given by DHCC-licensed physicians and each is accredited by HMSDC for one hour of continuing education credit. These credits are recognized by CPQ and contribute towards the CME credits requested for renewing the DHCC professional license. HMSDC accreditation is also recognized by the UAE Ministry of Health and the Dubai Department of Health and Medical Services.*

Please contact **Maha Maisari** at 043622797 or [maha.ali@dhcc.ae](mailto:maha.ali@dhcc.ae)

**Date:** 1st Tuesday of every month  
**Time:** 7pm-8pm  
**Location:** Mayo Clinic Conference Center, 1st Floor, B Block

**July 3:**  
Dr. Klaus T. Kallmayer  
*Topic: Acute Coronary Syndrome*

**August 7:**  
Dr. Tasnim Khan and Dr. Alya Ahmad  
*Topic: Shots heard around the World: CPD and ACIP Immunization Update 2007*

**September 4:**  
Dr. Thomas Pfeiffer  
*Topic: Common problems of the knee (Conservative and operative therapy)*

**October - Ramadan Observed**

*Our monthly Educational Programs are free and open to all DHCC and community healthcare professionals.*

## Research Updates

### HMSDC Research Updates

We are a step closer in achieving our mission of establishing a governing infrastructure for conducting research, in particular research involving human subjects, within Dubai Healthcare City. In the next few months, the Office for Research Administration and the DHCC Interim Research Council will appoint the members of the permanent DHCC Research Council and the Research Ethics Review Board.

*More information and updates can be found on our website at <http://www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu/research.html>*

### DHFMR “Partners in Research” Conference



The first Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research Partners in Research conference held on May 10-11, 2007 at Harvard Medical School and the Harvard Club in Boston hosted candidates for 2007 Research Center Awards and Fellowship

Awards along with their Harvard Medical School counterparts.

The event, chaired by Dr. Robert Thurer highlighted the importance of inter-institutional and collaborative research to translate the most recent medical discoveries into effective medical and health practices. “It was wonderful to see a large number of exceptional scientists from the Middle East and the Harvard Medical School at the event

### Specialty Practi-Med Mental Health for Primary Care Physicians and Mental Health Professionals

Specialty Practi-Med: Mental Health for Primary Care Physicians and Mental Health Professionals is an innovative continuing medical education program organized by Harvard Medical School Dubai Center (HMSDC) and Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC). This program is designed to review state-of-the-art information for Healthcare Professionals on the diagnosis and management of Mental Health disorders. The course will focus on anxiety and depression. Topics include: Recognition of Anxiety Disorders in the Primary Care Setting, Cultural Issues in the Management of Anxiety Disorders, Pharmacotherapy of Anxiety Disorders, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Different Diagnosis and Treatment Approaches, Management of Anxiety during Pregnancy, Depressive and Anxiety Disorders in Adolescence, Depressive Disorders, Psychological and Medical Burden of Depressive Disorder, Treatment Resistant Depression, Assessment and Management of Suicides, Evidence-Based Psychotherapies for Depressive Disorders. Through didactic lectures, case discussions, and interactive sessions, participants will have the opportunity to learn from distinguished faculty and have personal interaction with leaders in Mental Health.

Participants who complete this educational activity will receive up to a maximum of 12.0 CME credit hours as well as a Harvard Medical School Dubai Center (HMSDC) certificate of attendance.

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### Welcome Our New Joiners

*Get to know our newest employees by visiting [www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu/who we are.html](http://www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu/who_we_are.html)*

**Natasha D'Souza** - Senior Executive Research  
Harvard Medical School Dubai Center

**Marlene Hilal** - Senior Executive CPD  
Harvard Medical School Dubai Center



Our Past Events

**HMSDC Tamayoz Award**  
*April 19, 2007*

The HMSDC Tamayoz awards, each recognizing achievements in clinical care and medical research, were presented during a ceremony at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Dubai. The winners each receive a one-month observership at a Harvard-affiliated hospital or laboratory in Boston, Massachusetts.

The awards for Nursing and Healthcare Professional were presented to Miharū Yamakawa, BSc, a graduate physical therapist specializing in orthopedics and pediatrics and Einas Al-Eisa MSc, Ph.D, a graduate physical therapist.

The Trainee Awards were given to Nabeela Ahmed, MClint Dent, BDS, a Senior Registrar in Pediatric Dentistry at the Department of Health and Medical Services in Dubai and Subhi J. Al' Aref, a third year medical student at Cornell Medical School in Qatar.

The Young Physician Awards went to Ali Al-Obaidli, consultant Nephrologists and Chief of Transplant Services at Sheikh Khalifa Medical City in Abu Dhabi and Khawla S. Al-Kuraya, MD, Director of Research Centre at KFNC&R in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

**DHCC/HMSDC Nursing Development Conference**  
*The Role of Nursing in Promoting Patient Safety and Quality*  
*April 20-21, 2007*

The Harvard Medical Center Dubai School (HMSDC) and Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC) organized a two-day initiative promoting the quality of nursing in the region.

**Occupational Medicine**

The Wellington School of Medicine and Otago University, New Zealand in collaboration with HMSDC are offering a CME-approved program in Dubai for occupational medicine specialists, trainees and primary medical care professionals engaged in occupational medicine practice.

Occupational Health Seminars:

- 1 March, 2007 - Promoting Return to Work
- 17 May, 2007 - Mental Health and Substance Abuse in the Workplace
- 10 September, 2007 - Disability Assessment & Management
- 7 November, 2007 - Shift-Work & Fatigue

**Specialty Practi-Med**  
Mental Health for Primary Care Physicians and Mental Health Professionals  
November 8-9, 2007

**EDUCATION SERIES**

**Date:** Monthly  
**Topic:** Various medical topics  
**Time:** 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

For more information, please contact:  
**Adrienne Gibbons or Ajmal Hassan**  
Academic Affairs department



Our Upcoming Events

For more inquiries on our upcoming events, CME and Education Series, please contact Ms. Badriya Amir - Client Services  
E-mail: info-hmsdc@hms.harvard.edu - Telephone: 04-3622794 or visit our website at [www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu](http://www.hmsdc.hms.harvard.edu)