



SUCCESS STORY

Taking Patient Care Home



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Zuhdiyyah,
Palliative homecare patient

Zuhdiyyah's energy was that of a child's, young and positive, and her warm radiance made us feel at home. With a perpetual smile on her face and a voice filled with hope, she welcomed us to her room. She was not alone, but sat between nurses who are part of a new Jordanian team supporting patients in their homes.

“When I was told I will be sent home for the remainder of my treatment follow-up, I was a completely different person,” she says with joyful exclamation.

If one takes a few steps in any of the hospitals in Jordan, you might hear the steady sound of a monitoring device, a groan, people rushing in all directions. The sight of a saddened family member can be inevitable as well. As a doctor, going through a patient's case, it always boils down to one thought: “can we spare them this hassle?” After receiving treatment at the King Hussein Cancer Center, the doctors advised Zuhdiyyah's family to join the homecare program, which is part of the USAID-supported Jordan National Home Care Initiative.

Zuhdiyyah's journey then took a positive course as she describes it. According to recent studies, home care promotes patient's healing and provides more safety from infections, allows more freedom and independence, is more affordable than inpatient care, caters to the needs of each individual patient, and reduces re-hospitalizations.

Seventy-six year old Zuhdiyyah had some ups and downs to her illness over the past two years. But with the care she is receiving at home the future is bright. As medical as it may sound, the term “palliative homecare” holds a deeper humane connotation beneath its technicality—“every time I see the homecare nurses coming through the door, it feels as if I was never ill!” says Zuhdiyyah, who struggled for long enough with her check-up visits to the hospital considering her old age and vulnerable body. “In the back of our minds, we would always be concerned with potential complications to her condition just by leaving the house, be it street pollution or the hassle to the hospital itself,” Zuhdiyyah's husband recalls—you could easily tell how comfortable the family was sitting around Zuhdiyyah.

Across from Zuhdiyyah sits Ahmad, her current nurse, taking care to work quietly but surely. He told us how more than 70 percent of their work is now done at the patient's home; “lab tests, medication reviews, clinical examinations, you name it!” says Ahmad. Even what had seemed to be the hardest part of her treatment, providing medication at the beginning of each month is now part of her home care program.

The program, implemented by the King Hussein Cancer Center with support from USAID aims to upscale homecare and palliative care services at the Center to serve as a center of excellence for home care service delivery, education, and training. The project works to increase supply and demand for home health care by increasing the number of specialized staff and homecare services, including by establishing new home care teams and services in private and public sectors. By providing professional development and training opportunities for nurses from both genders, 18 new healthcare units are expected to be established at different governmental and private Jordanian hospitals, which will result in 1800 new jobs within these units to meet current home health care needs.

The Jordan National Home Care Initiative is helping people like Zuhdiyyah every day to get their day-to-day life back right where they had to leave it: at home.