



Muslim Community Center News

A Publication of the Muslim Community Center for Human Services

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Refugees from Iraq coming to Dallas Fort Worth

Aftab Siddiqui

Human and social service agencies and organizations are scrambling to plan for the arrival of an estimated 500 refugees from war torn Iraq. These refugee families have been living in Syria for some time and are in dire need of all kinds of assistance. Most of them are traumatized due to devastating experiences in Iraq – their home country where they had living for years and generations and then had to flee the war zone. They lost everything and became totally dependent on the Syrian Government and people who have been taking care of almost two million refugees for the last few years.

Muslim Community Center for Human Services is among the agencies that met recently to coordinate efforts to help the refugees settle in the area. The needs of this group of refugees will include housing, schooling of children, health care including psychiatric care, English language skills, employment and many more. Government agencies will help in documentation, initial housing, and healthcare. The Muslim community will have to pitch in to provide them a sense of comfort and security. Many including children are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); a number of women are expecting; the families are shattered and have lost everything. The community will have to reach out to these unfortunate families and help them to make their transition in a foreign environment smooth and easy. MCC has been working with local mosques to organized activities supporting financial and social needs of the refugees. Many individuals are supporting financially and providing house hold items, clothing and Qurbani meat. If you or your organization is interested in helping, please contact Aftab Siddiqui or Talaun Thompson at mcchs2005@hotmail.com and 817-589-9165.

Memoon Siddiqui earned the honor of Eagle Scout

An Eagle Scout has always carried with it a special significance, not only in Scouting but also as he enters higher education, business or industry, and community service. The award is a performance based achievement whose standards have been well-maintained over the years. Not every boy who joins a Boy Scout troop earns the Eagle Scout rank; only about 5 percent of all Boy Scouts do so. This represents more than 1.7 million Boy Scouts who have earned the rank since 1912. Nevertheless, the goals of Scouting-citizenship training, character development, and personal fitness remain important for all Scouts, whether or not they attain the Eagle Scout rank.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, the highest advancement rank in Scouting, a Boy Scout must fulfill requirements in the areas of leadership, service, and outdoor skills. Although many options are available to demonstrate proficiency in these areas, a number of specific skills are required to advance through the ranks-Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. The Eagle Scout rank is approved by district local council and finally the national council.

Memon has completed the project of resurfacing the parking lot of MCC's Offices at Glenview Drive. He recruited volunteers and purchased all the necessary items to complete the project. This community project did also help him in becoming **Eagle Scout**

MCC Activities July-September 2008

Al-Shifa Clinic -The clinic has served **300 patients**. Eye Clinic is opened in July. Dr. Shama Deen and Mr. Osama Nachawatti are providing services at the clinic.

MCC Domestic Violence Program - Roshni - MCC has assisted and followed up with 18 clients during past three months. The number of referrals is increasing gradually during the past few months.

Breast Cancer Outreach - MCC has provided 8 Breast Education Programs; the programs were held in various Islamic centers and libraries in Fort Worth and Arlington. **96 women** participated in the educational program. **38 women** received screening mammogram. MCC staff participated in coalition meeting at Susan G. Komen Foundation with agencies serving women in providing breast cancer education to learn about the demographics of women and communities that were underserved and the ways to reach these populations.

Tarrant County and Dallas County Medical Societies - MCC has participated in the indigent care committee monthly meetings of Greater Dallas Charitable Clinics with other area of physicians, medical and professional staff representing agencies, clinics in Tarrant County providing free medical care.

Healthy Marriage Healthy Family Coalition - MCC has joined approximately 40 individuals, who represent social service agencies in Tarrant County and surrounding areas in the monthly meetings. MCC staff also participated in HMHF Family Violence training prgm.

Tarrant County Community Planning Committee - MCC participated in the monthly meetings with 20 leading organizations to discuss the services needed and provided by local agencies and we informed about MCC's Domestic Violence program (Roshni).



Mr. Mameon Siddiqui with his father Noor Siddiqui (MCC Board Member) & Boy Scout at MCC parking lot.



EID MUBARAK

The Board of Directors and the staff extend their greetings to our supporters.

May God bless you & your family.

Economic Distress and Health Care in America

In 2007, 47 million Americans do not have the insurance and 25% of Texas residents are not covered under any insurance plan and they are not eligible for public medical services. With recent economic crises and 5 millions unemployment the number must have gone far higher this year. Over quarter million illegal immigrants reside in DFW Area, who do not have insurance coverage. Unfortunately, people who live without health insurance are sicker and die at a relatively younger age. Due to lack of insurance, they delay seeing the physicians and receiving medical care for common medical problems such as hypertension and diabetes until they develop full blown symptoms or complications. It is sad to see this happening in a country which offers the best medical care in the world. Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO), which sprang all over the country in the 1990s with a promise to offer affordable health care to a large number of populations, did not keep its promises. These publicly traded companies make the stockholders rich and its CEOs millionaires but fail to provide the affordable medical care to millions. Even the physicians have to file lawsuits to these health care providers for payments of the compensation for their services. Another sad fact is that hospitals and physicians agree to bill and receive the negotiated discounted prices for their services from HMOs and government health care providers such as Medicare and Medicaid but bill the full amount to the individuals who do not have any insurance coverage and this has resulted in financial crisis for the uninsured. Many uninsured individuals shy away from receiving health care and in an emergency situation have to give the entire life saving to have the surgical treatment or inpatient treatment in intensive care units. For uninsured having access to health care is becoming an impossible task. Uninsured residents forego medical care until they become very sick and go to ER and seek more expensive care which they cannot afford and do not pay. But this has resulted in increase in the overall cost of the health care.

The number of uninsured Americans has been rising inexorably over the past eight years due to a variety of reasons: High premiums for insurance due to ever increasing health care costs. Many employers reduced their share of contribution to premiums and employees are unable to pay the high deductibles. Many employees who are not covered by employers are unable to purchase affordable insurance. In 2007 and more so this year in 2008, the number of uninsured has risen sharply due to financial crises. During the last two years the number of uninsured children also jumped sharply reaching over 9 million due to decline in government funding.

The families who have good insurance may lose their insurance if the bread-winner loses his/her job. Individuals who are earning more than poverty level are not eligible to receive care of public hospitals and clinics. Illegal residents are not eligible for the care at the public hospitals or the clinics and similarly the visitors to the United States do not have such privileges.

Regardless of age, legal status, or insurance coverage, immigrants receive much less health care than native born Americans. A high percentage of immigrants are uninsured and they consume 55% less services comparative to non-immigrants. Financial, cultural, and language difficulties make it hard for immigrants to afford the care. Immigrant children had 74% lower per capita health care expenditures than U.S. born children.

They also have difficulty in following directions and often are non compliant. Many immigrants do not understand the significance of elevated blood pressure or high cholesterol as long as they are not experiencing any symptoms. Comparing to the non immigrant, the immigrants pay little attention towards preventive measures such as diet and exercise. Many elderly immigrants who have not worked in the U.S. are not eligible for Medicare coverage.

In view of the health care issues discussed above the Al-Shifa Clinic was opened in October 1998. The clinic is a private not for profit agency providing culturally appropriate primary care to medically under

served population. Indigent patients and visitors from overseas without insurance coverage also come to the clinic. The weekly clinic provides services for general medical problems such as diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and minor infections. If these problems are not treated at an early stage, this may lead to more serious problems such as heart disease, stroke, or kidney failure, which can result in more serious consequence on the patients and their families. All surgical and complicated medical cases are referred to public hospital in this area. Fifteen area physicians come on rotation on Saturdays and donate their time. In addition to free consultation, generic or free medications (donated samples) are also prescribed or dispensed. In 2002, discounted rates were negotiated for lab work, and now laboratory services are also provided. Most of the physicians at the MCC clinic are internists, and primary care physicians. Some area specialists see patients for free consultation in their own offices when referred by Al-Shifa Clinic. Students from local medical school also help at the clinic, getting credit for their work at our Center. Foreign medical graduates applying for residency program also attend the clinic as "observers" and work under supervision of the attending physicians. Initially the clinic was opened every Saturday for four hours. However, many Muslim women prefer to see female physicians due to religious and cultural modesty; therefore in 2007 the clinic is also opened on Sundays for women and children only. Female physicians and a pediatrician volunteer their time at the women's clinic.

Eye Clinic & Dental Clinic: In July 2008, an eye clinic is opened once a month for minor ophthalmologic problems and glasses for visual correction. We are also planning to open a dental clinic in the middle of 2009.

The health care for the indigent in this area specially minorities, and Muslim immigrants depends upon your financial support and volunteer work at the clinic. Please consider your donation to MCC for this purpose. **Please send your check to MCC for Human Service PO Box 152658 Arlington Texas 76015. Volunteer physicians please contact M. Basheer Ahmed M.D. at 817-907-6080. We sincerely appreciate your support**

Current & Future Projects

Dr. Ahmed was invited in October 2008 to make a presentation at **Islamic Association at Little Rock, Arkansas** about establishing the free medical clinic to serve the indigent resident in the area. Dr. Ahmed also met with a group of physicians who are committed to develop this program.

Dr. Ahmed, Ms. Thompson and Ms. Lubna made a presentation on Family Harmony and Domestic Violence at **MSA Austin College, Sherman, Texas** and at Islamic Society of Collin County.

Ms. Thompson and Ms. Lubna have attended a seminar on **Parenting at University of Texas, Arlington** and current efforts to insure uninsured children.

Ms. Nuha has presented MCC program at **University of North Texas, Dallas** and has organized several educational programs on Breast Cancer, Domestic Violence and Parent Child Issues at local Islamic Centers.

MCC is participating in Health Fair as a part of **Kwanza Festival in Dallas, Texas** on Dec 13th, 14th 2008. Over 50 thousands participants are expected to attend. Several Muslim area physicians are participating in the event.

MCC is organizing an 8 hour seminar on **Healthy Marriages** on January 17th, 2009 at Arlington Central Library. If you want to attend please contact MCC Human Services at 817-589-6915. No registration fee but early registration is strongly recommended.