



Muslim Community Center News

A Publication of the Muslim Community Center for Human Services

7600 Glen View Dr. Richland Hills TX 76118

Phone (817) 589- 9165 (Metro)

Email: mcchs2005@hotmail.com

Websites: www.mcc-hs.org www.roshni-mcc.org

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M. Basheer Ahmed, M.D.

Mr. John Hammond
CEO of FunAsia and
Interim Chair MCC
Board of Trustee,
received recognition
award at Hyderabad
Society's Annual
function on
October 12th 2014.



MISSION & VISION STATEMENT

MCCHS is dedicated to empowering underserved communities residing in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex, to face complex challenges created by duality of culture and lack of appropriate medical and social services. Our long-term vision is to develop a community of people who are thriving and striving to maintain a harmonious family structure by offering counseling and education to prevent marriage discord, domestic violence and child abuse. MCC plans to offer counseling services and shelter for the victims of domestic violence from Middle Eastern and South East Asian region for whom services are currently not available due to cultural and language barriers.

October is Domestic Violence and Breast cancer Awareness month

MCC for human services is the first Muslim organization that started the breast cancer awareness and the domestic violence program in DFW area in 2001. During past 14 years we have been offering the services to indigent residents of this area. MCC received over 400 calls on Domestic violence hotline and provided counseling and referral services to over 200 clients. MCC outreach coordinator organized 5 educational programs on Domestic violence and over 70 people attended these sessions. We are very thankful to Susan G Komen Foundation for funding the organization over the last decade to spread awareness of the need to check for breast cancer. During 2014, MCC provided screening mammogram to 43 individuals in three different sessions, 7 abnormal mammograms were detected. Fortunately none of the abnormal mammogram showed evidence of cancer. Over 300 individuals attended the importance of breast cancer screening educational program at 11 different locations.

Domestic Violence and Role of Religious Leaders

The religious leaders and the Mosque can play a vital role for support, rehabilitation, and spiritual comfort for abused Muslim women. Religious leaders vary in their familiarity with the issues that are faced by victims of domestic violence. Some of these leaders are very much interested in social issues, attend seminars, and become knowledgeable about the psychodynamics of abuse. Others continue to live in denial saying that they do not come across problems with domestic violence and therefore it may not exist. The abuser may not be an evil person and he should be guided to receive appropriate treatment if he is interested in having a harmonious relationship.

An Open Letter to All Imams in DFW Metroplex:

Dear Respected Imam, As-Salaam-o-Alaikum,

Our homes should be places of safety & our children should grow in comfortable environment where they feel safe and loved. Unfortunately, many Muslim women throughout the country & in this area are victims of abuse & violence. The children are growing in unhealthy environment & if abuse is not stopped, these children will become abusive parents. Though abuse may occur in the seclusion of private homes, its effects scar the women & children involved for the rest of their lives.

The month of October is declared as the "Domestic Violence Awareness Month". We are requesting all Imams of Islamic Centers in the DFW Metropolitan area to help Muslim Community Center for Human Services to effectively deal with this serious issue. We are going through a difficult period in this country – we must make every effort to develop an ideal community to set an example for non-Muslims by getting rid of this serious problem existing in our community. Please give special Khutbah on any Friday during October on Islamic Family Life & how Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) did not hit any family member and was not known to be aggressive to women & children. Please inform the congregation not to make excuses for inappropriate violent behavior such as physical assault & continual insult towards family members. Domestic Violence is a crime – it is not a private family matter.

Please support the work of Muslim Community Center for Human Services – the social services organization helping the needy Muslims in the DFW area. Our helpline is open 24 hours a day (817-589-9165—Metro 24 hours).

Dr. Basheer Ahmed receives Community Service Award

At the annual function The Hyderabad Society of North Texas presented The Community Service Award to Dr. Basheer Ahmed. In acceptance speech Dr. Ahmed thanked Allah s.w.t for blessing him with the opportunity to serve humanity. He thanked HSNT for selecting him for this award. He recognized the MCC Board, physician and non physician volunteers and supporters of MCC for making this a successful medical and social service organization offering medical and social services to indigent residents of DFW area.



Drs. Basheer and Shakila Ahmed with Mr. Azhar Azeez President ISNA and Mr. Aslam Khan



Ayyaz Qureshi President HSNT with Drs. Basheer and Shakila Ahmed, Mr. Azhar Azeez President ISNA and Mr. Aslam Khan

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

MCCHS has been working on the issue of educating and informing the community on breast cancer. While most people are aware of breast cancer, many forget to take the steps to have a plan to detect the disease in its early stages and encourage others to do the same. Breast cancer is the second most common kind of cancer in women. About 1 in 8 women in the United States will get breast cancer at some point. The good news is that many women can survive breast cancer if it is detected and treated early. A mammogram – the screening test for breast cancer – can help find breast cancer early when it is easier to treat. National Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a chance to raise awareness about the importance of early detection of breast cancer.

What is new in Breast cancer Studies on the best use of genetic testing for BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations continue at a rapid pace. Scientists are also exploring how common gene variations may affect breast cancer risk. Ongoing studies are looking at the effect of exercise, weight gain or loss, and diet on breast cancer risk. Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) is the most common type of non-invasive breast cancer. Ductal means that the cancer starts inside the milk ducts, carcinoma refers to any cancer that begins in the skin or other tissues (including breast tissue) that cover or line the internal organs, and in situ means "in its original place." DCIS is called "non-invasive" because it hasn't spread beyond the milk duct into any normal surrounding breast tissue. DCIS is not life-threatening, but having DCIS can increase the risk of developing an invasive breast cancer later on. Researchers are studying with the help of computers and statistical methods to estimate the odds that a woman's DCIS will become invasive. So far, though, it has not been studied well enough to predict how much someone would benefit from radiation after surgery for DCIS.

Scintimammography (molecular breast imaging) a slightly radioactive tracer called technetium sestamibi is injected into a vein. The tracer attaches to breast cancer cells and is detected by a special camera. This technique is still being studied to see if it will be useful in finding breast cancers. Some radiologists believe it may be helpful in looking at suspicious areas found by regular mammograms. Current research is aimed at improving the technology and evaluating its use in specific situations such as in the dense breasts of younger women. **This test, however, will not replace your usual screening mammogram. (Taken from American Cancer Society Publication Sep 2014)**

Domestic Violence- M. Basheer Ahmed, M.D

Three to four million women are beaten annually and every 15 seconds a woman is abused in her home in US. Nationally, domestic violence has become the number one cause of death among women. Media reports frequently about the high incidence of domestic violence in our society and Congress renewed an act on violence against women in October 2013. Many Muslims think that it only occurs in U.S. and Western culture. The reality is that the incidence of family violence may be higher in Pakistan and other Muslim countries. Home is supposed to be a safe place where one should see an equality of partnership of two spouses and a loving and nurturing environment for children. It is sad to see that millions of individuals face violence at home by the hand of their loved ones. Family violence and domestic violence appear to be civilized terms but they are characterized by the most uncivilized forms of behavior. Family violence includes all violence occurring within the family unit: child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse. Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of behavior that occurs between two people who are or were in an intimate relationship (wife and ex-wife) with the intent to achieve control and dominance through emotional, psychological, physical and sexual mistreatment. The abusive behavior includes emotional abuse, psychological abuse, sexual and physical assaults. Emotional abuse is characterized by cursing, screaming and degradation by constantly criticizing spouse's thoughts, feelings and opinions. Psychological abuse consists of threats of bodily harm, taking away children and killing spouse or himself. Perpetrator also controls finances, food and medication and places restriction on socialization even with the family members. Physical abuse occurs when perpetrators actually hit, kick, punch, choke or burn causing laceration and fractures. Forcing unwanted sexual activity is also a form of sexual abuse.

Unfortunately, despite Islamic teachings of compassion, justice and kindness, many Muslim women in United States experience these tragedies. According to Muslim women activists in US, approximately 10% of women are abused emotionally, psychologically and physically by their husbands. In communities where there are no services available, people do not even speak about such a problem. Therefore, it will be difficult to get the correct data. However, the actual numbers of abused women are usually much higher than the reported numbers.

■ **Islamic perspective:** Under no circumstances violence against women is encouraged or allowed in Islam. There are many examples in Quran and Ahadith that describes the behavior of Muslims towards their husband and wife. The relationship should be one of mutual love, respect and kindness. Allah (swt) says in Quran, "O believers treat women with kindness even if you dislike them; it is quite possible that you dislike something which Allah might yet make a source of abundant good (An Nisa 4:19). Arabian society at the beginning of Islam sanctioned appalling violence towards women. Far from giving permission for wife beating Allah Subhanahuwatala prohibited violence against women. Allah (swt) repeatedly says in the Quran to show love, kindness and warns that they should not harm their wives even after divorce. Allah (swt) has even forbidden us to call each other by bad names and to humiliate. The abusive behavior does not reflect the kindness and love for their spouses. Still, some men justify their behavior knowing that they are disobeying Allah's guidance. How clear does the message have to be regarding the prohibition of ill treatment towards women. Allah (swt) mentions "when you divorce women and they have reached the end of their waiting period (iddat), either allow them to stay with honor or let them go with kindness. You should not retain them to harm them or take undue advantage." Abusive men are absolutely disregarding the Islamic teaching of kindness, mercy and forgiveness. Aisha (RA) narrated that the messenger of Allah PBUH never hit a woman or a servant with his hand. He only raised his hand in Jihad in Allah's way (Muslim). Islam teaches high moral and family values. Muslims are proud of their family values but unfortunately we are hearing countless stories of atrocities of Muslim men on their wives. **Quranic verse 4:34 is often quoted to justify husband's abusive behavior to make "wife" obedient. Abusive behavior towards women was prevalent before Islam and medieval translations and explanation of Quranic word Dharba (beating) is still used by "modern" scholars to justify beating. Under no circumstances does the Quran encourage, allow, or condone family violence or physical abuse. The purpose of the verse 4:34 is reconciliation in a dignified manner without coercion and intimidation. The translation of the word "dharba" (beating) leads to humiliation due to suffering and physical pain to make the spouse obedient by force. This behavior contradicts the Islamic principles of equality, respect and justice. The compulsion or physical "chastisement" can never be a means of maintaining the spirit of affection between spouses. The word "dharba" appeared in the Quran in 17 different verses and it is also used to mean 'to isolate', 'to separate' or 'to depart'. Therefore, dharba is used here for separation, as a final step after admonishing her and refusing to share her bed. This will give the wife an opportunity to re-evaluate the whole situation and this may result in reconciliation or divorce (Abu Sulayman, Abdulhamid, "Marital Discord" published by IIIT, USA 2003).** **Deviation from Islamic teaching is the major cause of domestic violence in Muslim families.** Perpetrators do not manifest any tolerance and compassion against women in spite of strong Islamic teachings. They turn to violence to resolve conflicts and gain power and control. Respecting the rights of each other and emotional support are the key to the tranquility of home. When power and control becomes a major theme and husband engages in emotional abuse, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, threats and economic abuse, the tranquility of home is shattered and it leads to long term effects on wife and children. Battered women seldom complain and are hesitant to seek help. Lack of support system, fear of retaliation, shame, humiliation, fear of destruction of the family unit and low self-confidence prevent many women from seeking help. It is to be noted that community regards domestic violence as a private matter between husband and wife and this also discourages women from seeking help.

Effects of the Domestic Violence on Children: Domestic violence between parents is psychologically destructive to children. Violence is a frightening experience and most children do not know the distinction between anger and violence. A child who watches a parent being injured frequently develops typical symptoms of depression, crying spells, bedwetting, thumb sucking, withdrawal behavior or aggressive behavior. Sometimes they develop an identity with abused parent and later with abuser. Both boys and girls may identify violence as a gender role and later on in their life accept the role of abuser or victim. These children need treatment, which should be focused on providing a safe environment and developing rules that teach them how to manage their anger without restoring to violence against others. Domestic violence is a crime. It is not a private family matter. If religious leaders, health care professionals and community at large are not aware and involved, women and children will remain in a victims role for many years.