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# SHAUKAT KHANUM

# QURBANI



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# STORIES OF HOPE

## Faiq & Ardil

"My sons, Faiq (12 years old) and Ardil (5 years old) had fever for a week and swelling on their necks when we brought them from Jhang and took them to a hospital in Lahore. They underwent diagnostic tests, including biopsy. We were told to take the biopsy specimens to Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre where we received life-altering results: both of my sons were diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, a type of cancer. It was a huge shock and that moment instantly changed my priorities.

At Shaukat Khanum Hospital when I was told that my children's cancer was treatable, I felt as if a huge weight was lifted off my chest and I could breathe again. Their treatment started with chemotherapy, which lasted for around eight months. Everyone was professional and compassionate. In early April, during Ramzan this year, our paediatric oncologist gave us the good news that the scans were clear. It was the best Eid that I have ever celebrated with my family without any stress! Despite this challenging situation, my sons made me proud by doing well in recent school exams. The resilience of these children is awe-inspiring.



Ardil and Faiq during a chemotherapy session

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Nothing can prepare you for being told that one of your children has developed cancer, let alone both children!

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Faiq and Ardil with their father

After serving for twenty-one years in Punjab Police, I had already witnessed a lot of suffering faced by people. Police training teaches you how to deal with pain and fear and you virtually become immune to these. But nothing can prepare you for being told that one of your children has developed cancer, let alone both children! Seeing them lying side-by-side, receiving chemotherapy, was heart wrenching. I am extremely grateful to Allah for giving my children a second chance at life. Every time I meet my friends and family, I ask them to send an SMS to 7770, which means donating to Shaukat Khanum Hospitals and saving someone else's child."

- Arbab Ahmad Samijah, father of Faiq & Ardil



“

It is highly unusual that children of different ages in the same family are diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma at the same time. First-degree relatives (a parent, sibling or child) of people with Hodgkin's lymphoma may have 3-6% increased risk of being diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma as compared to the general population. It is not clear if this is because of a genetic predisposition or shared lifestyle factors. It is extremely challenging for a family to have one child with cancer, let alone two children with cancer at the same time. Fortunately, Shaukat Khanum Hospital takes care of all aspects of care to help ease the burden of cancer for families. Along with all the various modalities of treatment, we also provide psychological counselling for children and parents, meals for admitted patients, play therapy and education through our schooling programme. As part of survivorship care, we also have a long-term follow up clinic to ensure well-being of children who have completed cancer treatment. Faiq and Ardil have now completed treatment and, Masha'Allah, there is no evidence of residual disease.

-Dr Najma Shaheen

Consultant Paediatric Oncologist at SKMCH&RC, Lahore

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# WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2024

Smoking among youth remains prevalent and according to one estimate, 38 million boys and girls aged 13-15 are using some form of tobacco and nicotine products. The theme selected by WHO for this year's World No Tobacco Day is "Protecting children from tobacco industry interference" to bring attention to the tobacco industry's marketing strategies targeted towards youth and to protect our future generations from harmful effects of tobacco use.

Reflecting on this challenge, Dr Faisal Sultan, CEO of Shaukat Khanum Hospitals, says, "Anti-tobacco laws exist in Pakistan but implementation remains a challenge, which can be addressed with awareness. We have credible scientific evidence of the harmful effects of tobacco. We should be wary of the tobacco industry's marketing efforts, which preferentially target people in low- and middle-income countries. The majority of our population is young and where technology makes them vulnerable to misinformation, it also presents an opportunity to intervene for creating awareness. We need to engage our youth using modern technology to fight the tobacco epidemic that kills around eight million people each year. Through our hospital's social media platforms, we highlight the harmful effects of tobacco and we also engage school children in a poster competition each year."



## SKMCH&RC, KARACHI

Help us move a step closer to providing high-quality cancer treatment to the people of Sindh and Southern Baluchistan

### #ZimmaHamaraHai

At one million square feet, SKMCH&RC, Karachi will be twice the size of our first hospital in Lahore, with over 400 beds and latest technology for diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

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Donate Now > [www.shaukatkhanum.org.pk/skmch-karachi/](http://www.shaukatkhanum.org.pk/skmch-karachi/)



# NEWS & ACTIVITIES

## Carnival Organised to Mark World Cancer Day

To mark World Cancer Day this year, Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre organised a carnival in Lahore for children currently undergoing treatment as well as for survivors. Such events play an important role in providing psychological relief for young ones going through a challenging and stressful time in their lives, creating moments of joy, and promoting their mental wellbeing along with their physical health.

The fun-filled day featured entertaining activities for paediatric cancer patients, including games, jumping castles, rides, magic show and a puppet show. Generous supporters from different corporate organisations offered free of charge merchandise for children, including clothing and food.

Actor and social activist Nadia Jamil joined the event and brought smiles to children's faces with her story-telling. She also shared her experience of fighting cancer, bringing strength to parents that they should never lose hope.



Nadia Jamil meeting Zarmala, a young girl battling cancer who had recently spent 16 days in the ICU



Children received gifts and enjoyed a magic show, among other activities, at the carnival

## World Health Organization Workshop on Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer

In 2018, the WHO launched the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (GICC) with the aim of reaching at least 60% survival rate for children with cancer. In the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR), Pakistan was chosen as a focus country. In March this year, the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region Workshop on Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer was organised in Egypt. Representing Pakistan were Dr Alina Sadaf, a paediatric oncologist from SKMCH&RC and a board member of Pakistan Society of Paediatric Oncology, and Dr Qudsia Uzma, Technical Officer for Reproduction, Maternal, Newborn, Child & Adolescent health (RMNACH) from the WHO Representative's Office in Pakistan.



From left to right:  
Dr Qudsia Uzma with Dr Alina Sadaf



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