

Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Foundation



Winter 2025 Newsletter

Provider Spotlight: Mahmoud Abdelhay, Director of Nursing at the Aswan Heart Centre



At the heart of every world-class medical institution lies a team of dedicated nurses who provide not only expert care but also unwavering support to patients and their families. Mahmoud Abdelhay, the Director of Nursing at the Magdi Yacoub Aswan Heart Centre, plays a crucial role in leading this team. As the Centre prepares to expand with the soon-to-open Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Centre in Cairo, his work has become even more critical. We spoke with Mahmoud about his responsibilities, challenges, and vision for the future of nursing at the Heart Centre.

A Role of Leadership and Advocacy

As Director of Nursing, Mahmoud is responsible for overseeing the nursing team and nutritionists, supervising department managers, recruiting and training staff, and ensuring the highest standards of patient care. He also serves as a bridge between the nursing staff and hospital administration, advocating for nurses' needs while shaping strategic decisions.

"The role is very challenging and requires patience," he explains. "We work in a high-stress environment, constantly improving our approach to provide the best care possible. And now, with the new Magdi Yacoub

Global Heart Centre, we need an even larger, highly qualified team to continue and enhance our mission."

Currently, nearly half of Mahmoud's work is dedicated to preparing for the new Centre. Three groups of newly recruited nurses have already begun training, with a fourth batch set to start soon. The process includes extensive induction, rotations across departments, and skill-building to ensure flexibility and excellence in patient care.

Achievements in Nursing Excellence

One of Mahmoud's proudest accomplishments is the development of the Centre's first nursing-specific strategic plan, outlining objectives for both patient care and staff development. Under his leadership, the Centre has also launched Egypt's first master's degree in cardiac nursing, in collaboration with the British University in Egypt and Queen Margaret University in the UK.

"Our nurses now have access to specialized education that was never available before," he says. "We're also an American Heart Association-certified training center, providing instruction in basic and advanced life support, including pediatric care."

Stories of Impact

One patient story has stayed with Mahmoud for years. A two-week-old baby with a severe congenital heart defect, born after a decade of his parents' hopes and prayers, was brought to Aswan Heart Centre in critical condition. The baby's survival was uncertain, and his parents had been told the prognosis was grim. After extensive care, the infant made a full recovery and went home with his family.

"I cannot forget the family's words of appreciation for what we had done for their child," Mahmoud recalls. "We see cases like this often, but this family's joy and relief remind us why we do what we do."

Preparing the Next Generation of Cardiac Nurses

With an average nurse age of just 25, Mahmoud

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Provider Spotlight: Mahmoud Abdelhay, Director of Nursing at the Aswan Heart Centre (Continued)

emphasizes the importance of mentorship and leadership training. The Centre has implemented a shared governance model, where nurses participate in councils that shape policies and training programs.

“Developing leaders takes time and patience,” he explains. “We’re guiding a new generation of nurses who are eager, motivated, and fast-paced. We balance their enthusiasm with structured training and mentorship to ensure they grow into skilled professionals.”

Technology and continuing education play a vital role in this process. The Centre offers a mentorship program from induction onward, encourages nurses to participate in research, and keeps staff updated on global advancements in cardiac care.

Looking to the Future

With the upcoming Global Heart Centre, Mahmoud envisions even greater achievements in patient care and nursing excellence. “Our goal is to provide even better care than we do now. The new hospital is three to four times the size of Aswan Heart Centre, and we aim to achieve Magnet accreditation—an international standard of nursing excellence—making us the first hospital in Egypt to do so.”

Mahmoud’s leadership and vision continue to shape the future of nursing at the Magdi Yacoub Heart Foundation. Through strategic planning, advanced education, and an unwavering commitment to patient care, his team is not only transforming lives but also setting new standards for cardiac care in Egypt and beyond.

Celebrating 15 Years of Excellence at Aswan Heart Centre



Aswan Heart Centre marked a major milestone in 2024, celebrating 15 years of transformative care, innovation, and education. This year was particularly special as we continued to expand our impact and reach new heights in cardiovascular excellence.

One of the most significant achievements of the year was the commissioning of our new catheterization building, now home to two state-of-the-art catheterization suites, each equipped with a brand new catheterization machine provided by the Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Foundation thanks to your support! This expansion has enhanced our

capacity to deliver life-saving interventions and cutting-edge procedures.

Education and training remained at the core of our mission. In 2024, AHC welcomed 26 fellows across various disciplines, 36 nurse trainees, and hosted 5 specialized training workshops, benefitting more than 300 young doctors. We were also honored to host the second candidate from the State University of New York for a rotation at AHC, further strengthening our global collaborations.

On the clinical front, our team achieved remarkable numbers, performing 1,095 surgical operations and 3,258 cardiac catheterizations, the majority of which were interventional procedures. Additionally, we provided over 40,000 outpatient consultations, ensuring that thousands of patients received world-class cardiac care.

As we reflect on 2024, we celebrate these milestones with gratitude for our dedicated team, generous supporters, and the patients whose lives we touch every day. With your continued support, we look forward to even greater achievements in the years ahead.

Delivering Hope: Essential Medical Supplies Arrive at Aswan Heart Centre

The Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Foundation continues its commitment to providing life-saving care by ensuring the Aswan Heart Centre has access to critical medical supplies. On January 5, 2025, the second airfreight shipment of the year arrived at AHC, valued at approximately \$193,000.

This shipment, containing donations from **Edwards Lifesciences Foundation** and provided by **MAP International**, included essential cardiac valves and medical devices—key resources that support the Centre’s mission to deliver world-class cardiac care to patients in need.

In addition to this delivery, the Foundation is coordinating a 20-foot container shipment of medical gloves, scheduled for shipment in the first quarter of the year. These ongoing efforts reflect our dedication to equipping AHC with the necessary tools to continue saving lives and expanding access to high-quality cardiac treatment.

With every shipment, we are reminded of the generosity of our partners and donors who make this work possible. **Thank you for being part of our mission to transform heart care in Egypt and beyond.**



A selection of some of the recently delivered medical supplies on display at Aswan Heart Centre.

Aswan Heart Centre: A Year in Review

As we reflect on the past year, the Aswan Heart Centre has made remarkable strides in sustainability, education, and quality care, further cementing its position as a leader in global healthcare. From groundbreaking sustainability initiatives to prestigious certifications, 2024 has been a year of progress and achievement.

Sustainability Initiatives: A Greener Future

Guided by the Planet, People, Profit philosophy, AHC has taken significant steps toward becoming a model of sustainability. Aligned with the **United Nations**

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we have implemented eco-friendly practices that optimize resource utilization, reduce waste, and minimize our environmental footprint.

Our efforts were recognized with the prestigious **Golden Level Green Excellence Certificate from GAHAR**, a testament to our leadership in integrating sustainability into healthcare. These initiatives not only ensure a healthier environment but also pave the way for a more sustainable and efficient healthcare system that benefits both patients and the broader community.

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Aswan Heart Centre: A Year in Review (Continued)

Excellence in Training and Knowledge Sharing

Education remains a cornerstone of AHC's mission. In addition to our extensive medical training workshops, we have expanded our programs to include **Quality Management and Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) workshops**.

Beyond our own institution, we are actively educating other hospitals on how to implement sustainable healthcare practices and use resources more efficiently. This commitment to knowledge-sharing strengthens the entire Egyptian healthcare system and promotes a culture of continuous improvement.

Celebrating Our People: Milestones That Matter

This year, we celebrated two meaningful occasions that underscore the human side of healthcare:

- **Patient Experience Day** focused on enhancing the patient journey with activities such as music therapy and nutrition education, reinforcing our core value of Patient First.
- **International Nurses Day** provided an opportunity to honor our dedicated nursing team, whose skill, compassion, and commitment are the foundation of the exceptional care we provide every day.

ISO Certifications: Setting the Standard for Excellence

AHC continues to lead in quality and safety, achieving several ISO certifications this year:

- **ISO 21001:2018 for Nursing Education** – AHC's Nursing Education Department became the first hospital in Egypt to receive this certification, highlighting our leadership in healthcare education.
- **Health & Safety, Environmental Management, and Food Safety ISO Certifications** – These certifications ensure that AHC operates at the highest international standards, further reinforcing our commitment to delivering free, world-class cardiac care to all.

Looking Ahead

The achievements of this past year reflect the dedication of our medical professionals, staff, and supporters. As we look to the future, we remain committed to advancing sustainability, education, and healthcare excellence for the benefit of our patients and the greater community.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we continue to save lives and shape the future of cardiac care.



International Nurses Day at Aswan Heart Centre

Building the Future: Preparing for the Launch of Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Centre Cairo



Actual site photos of the new Global Heart Centre, as of December 2024.

Excitement is building as the Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Centre Cairo moves closer to its grand opening in the summer of 2025. The commissioning committee has been working tirelessly, ensuring that every detail is in place to bring this world-class facility to life.

A major milestone in this journey has been the procurement of essential medical equipment, with most of the heavy machinery already purchased and scheduled for timely arrival. These cutting-edge technologies will play a critical role in equipping the hospital to provide the highest standards of cardiac care from day one.

At the heart of this endeavor is our staffing committee, which has been actively laying the groundwork for Phase One of operations. Careful planning is underway to assemble a dedicated team of healthcare professionals who will uphold the legacy of excellence that defines the Magdi Yacoub Foundation.

As we approach this historic opening, we remain committed to our mission of providing world-class, free cardiac care to those in need, while advancing education, research, and innovation in the field of cardiovascular medicine.

Stay tuned for more updates as we count down to this monumental achievement!

Paddle for Egypt 2024: A Journey of Endurance, Awareness, and Heart



In November 2024, Dutch kayaker and heart health advocate Rob van der Aar completed an extraordinary 1,000-kilometer solo kayaking expedition down the Nile. Over the course of 25 days, he paddled from Aswan to Cairo, braving the elements and pushing his limits—all in support of the Magdi Yacoub Aswan Heart Centre’s life-saving work.

Rob’s journey, **Paddle for Egypt 2024**, was more than just a personal challenge. Having undergone open-heart surgery in 2012, he understands firsthand the importance of accessible, high-quality cardiac care. Inspired by his own experience and the mission of the Aswan Heart Centre, he dedicated this expedition to raising awareness for heart health while showcasing the beauty of kayaking on Egypt’s iconic river.

This ambitious effort was made possible with support from key partners, including the Egyptian Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Tourism, the Egyptian Canoe & Kayak Federation, and the Dutch Embassy in Cairo. Throughout his journey, Rob faced strong headwinds, long hours of solitude, and the mental challenge of paddling for hours each day. Yet, his determination never wavered.

Reflecting on his experience, Rob expressed deep admiration for the work of the Aswan Heart Centre. “Underprivileged patients often don’t have access to the care they need. What the team at the Foundation

is doing is truly incredible,” he shared.

With Paddle for Egypt 2024 successfully completed, Rob is already looking ahead to future challenges. He remains committed to raising awareness for heart health, promoting kayaking in Egypt, and supporting the mission of AHC.

Rob’s journey is a testament to resilience, purpose, and the power of turning personal challenges into a force for good. We extend our deepest gratitude to him for his remarkable effort and unwavering support. Thank you, Rob, for paddling with heart!



Rob poses with Hospital Director Mohamed Zakaria and others in front of the Aswan Heart Centre

A Heartfelt Thank You: Celebrating Two Remarkable Fundraising Events

This past October, the **Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Foundation** hosted two unforgettable fundraising events—one in **Arlington, VA**, and another in **North Bergen, NJ**—bringing together supporters committed to transforming cardiac care for those in need.

On October 6, we gathered at the **Top of the Town restaurant** in Arlington for a special luncheon. We were honored to have **Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub** join us in person, along with **His Excellency Egyptian Ambassador Motaz Zahran**, as we shared our vision for the future of heart care in Egypt. Thanks to the generosity of our attendees, we are one step closer to making the **Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Centre** a reality.

Just a few days later, on October 12, we came

together once again at **Waterside Restaurant** in New Jersey. With breathtaking views and an outpouring of support, this event was another resounding success. **Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub** joined us virtually, inspiring guests with his dedication to saving lives.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who attended, donated, and helped spread the word. Your support fuels our mission and makes life-saving surgeries possible—**free of charge—to those who need them most.**

Together, we are building a future where **no heart is left behind.** Thank you!





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