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Diabetes awareness programme brings relief to underprivileged patients



Participants in the Micro-Clinic Project, supported by the Ministry of Health and the Royal Health Awareness Society, on Monday (Photo by Laila Azzeh)

By Laila Azzeh

AMMAN -- Jamila Fudaili was 39-years-old when she discovered that she had diabetes.

"I used to suffer from tiredness and dizziness all the time. When I went to the doctor, I was diagnosed with type II diabetes," Fudaili told The Jordan Times.

The Ain Al Basha resident, now 42, was one of over 100 beneficiaries who received training on managing the disease under the Jordan Micro-Clinic Project, which seeks to reach out to pre-diabetic and diabetic patients in the Ain Al Basha and Jabal Naser areas.

Fudaili's husband, a diabetic who also participated in the three-month training programme, said he noticed an immediate improvement in their quality of life after learning how to better manage the disease.

"Before the training courses, we were careless and knew nothing about the disease. Now we've started to adopt healthier life habits," the 60-year-old noted.

He added that even his relationship with his wife has improved after enrolling in the programme, saying they are now "less stressed" and more physically active.

The three-month-long courses acquaint participants with the types, effects and dangers of the chronic disease, as well as diet and lifestyle changes needed to help manage it, according to organisers.

The training courses also include workshops and social support groups, which aim to provide participants with the opportunity to share their experiences and encourage each other to follow healthy lifestyles.

Pharmacist Yara Musleh, the project's officer, said the initiative seeks to promote well-being and provide a "model public health approach" to the management of diabetes in economically depressed areas.

During a ceremony marking the completion of a training programme on Monday, she noted that a total of 750 diabetic and pre-diabetic residents in Jabal Naser and Ain Al Basha have benefited from the training programmes.

"The project targets underprivileged areas as they are usually densely populated and suffer from high rates of

diabetes," Musleh highlighted.

The community-based programme is implemented by the Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS) in cooperation with the Health Ministry and the Global Micro-Clinic Project, a US-based nonprofit organisation aimed at providing better access to diabetes education through local outreach.

The project, which was launched in April 2008, also aims to establish 300 micro-clinics across the Kingdom, according to the RHAS.

According to studies conducted by the Health Ministry in 2007, 16 per cent of Jordanians live with diabetes, while 23.8 per cent are at risk for the disease.

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