

الاستاذ الدكتور علي بازرباشي، العميد المشارك، ممثلا عميد كلية الطب في الجامعة الامريكية في بيروت

الدكتورة تاليا عراوي، المديرية المؤسسة لبرنامج سليم الحص للأخلاقيات الاحيائية والاحتراف في كلية الطب في الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت

زملائنا من الجامعة الأمريكية في بيروت والمحاضرون الكرام
ضيوفنا الاكارم المشاركون في المنتدى

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته و صباح الخير

بداية باسمي واسم اسرة جامعة الخليج العربي نرحب ونتشرف بكم جمعيا في رحاب الجامعة للمشاركة في مؤتمر اخلاقيات أبحاث الخلايا الجذعية تحت عنوان "الخلايا الجذعية: بين الوعود والجدل" و الذي تم اعداده بالمشاركه مع برنامج سليم الحص للأخلاقيات الاحيائية و الاحتراف في كلية الطب بالجامعة الامريكية في بيروت.

Ladies and gentlemen, our guests, presenters, participants, and colleagues

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all at the Arabian Gulf University to participate in the regional conference entitled: **Stem Cells: Promises and Controversies**, organized by the Salim El-Hoss Bioethics and Professionalism Program at the American University of Beirut.

The ethical controversy concerning stem cell research started following the first report of the development of human embryonic stem cell lines in 1998 by Thomson, et al which was made possible by the earlier successful development of the technique of human in vitro fertilization by Robert Edwards.

The potential for human therapy using embryonic stem cells was recognized early on, however, the source and methods of obtaining these stem cells stirred ethical controversies that continue to be debated.

In recent years, the findings of adult stem cells, although less pluripotent, yet less controversial, has directed much stem cell research in that direction. A search in PubMed for the year 2015 shows 6,129 publications on the subject of “Stem Cells”, out of which only 7% are on “Embryonic Stem Cells” and only 2% which are on “Human Embryonic Stem Cells”. Thus researchers are clearly steering away from controversy and are exploring the potentials of various types of non-Embryonic stem cells.

However, the ease of obtaining adult stem cells, and their perceived therapeutic potential in various debilitating conditions, has created potential for an alternate ethical conflict, this time involving physicians who exploited patients suggesting cures that may not have been clinically proven !

These ethical dilemmas, and others, will be discussed and debated in our conference.

The Arabian Gulf University was established in 1980 as an exemplary Gulf Cooperative Council university to explore innovative solutions to issues of strategic relevance to the development of the GCC countries.

As such, AGU recognizes the potential of Stem Cell research in the future horizon of medical therapeutics, and aspires to develop basic research on stem cells, eventually leading to clinical therapeutic applications with relevance to the common ailments of the people of the Arab Countries of the Gulf.

The American University of Beirut, its Medical School, and Medical Center occupy a position of prominence among universities in the Middle East.

We appreciate the partnership of the American University of Beirut with AGU in organizing this conference. The AUB has been a welcome developmental partner in many GCC countries. In Bahrain, AUB has made a significant contribution to the development of modern health services. We at AGU have also benefited from the contributions of several ex-AUB faculty members in the initial years of establishment.

We look forward to develop stronger relationships with AUB and hope that this conference will be the starting point of other collaborations between our colleges of medicine in the areas of medical education and research.

In closing, I would like to thank all those who worked hard to make this conference possible, and I would like to specifically recognize Dr. Thalia Arawi and her team from the AUB and Prof. Randah Hamadeh and her team from AGU for their efforts and distinguished organization.

I would also like to thank our distinguished speakers who have come from far to enrich this conference.

Finally I would like to thank the many AGU staff who have organized the logistics to insure that we have a productive meeting.

I wish you all a fruitful and enjoyable stay in Bahrain