

# Middle East HEALTH

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January-February 2015

## Heart failure breakthrough

New combination drug  
set to become  
next gold standard

## Changing perceptions

Viewing obesity as a disease state  
and the role of bariatric surgery

## Organ donation?

The Islamic moral code, death  
and organ donation: Eminent  
medical ethicists discuss the issue

## Afghan heroin and HIV

An HIV epidemic is emerging  
among injecting drug users  
in the MENA region

### In the News:

- First Universal Health Coverage Day launched by global coalition
- Clinical study shows evidence of Near Death Experience
- Sanofi opens production facility in King Abdullah Economic City



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# Prognosis

## Drug Discovery

We have a big issue for you as we head into 2015, filled with many interesting news stories, research and product news. Perhaps most important is the release of very positive results from the PARADIGM-HF trial which tested a new heart failure combination drug. The co-lead author of the study, Milton Packer, MD, says the results "are extraordinarily powerful and compelling; they are destined to change the management of patients with chronic heart failure for years to come". Read more about this breakthrough for patients with heart failure on page 48.

In local news, the biannual Grand Hamdan awards for medicine and medical research were announced, with the main award going to Professor Magid Abou Gharbia, the Associate Dean for Research, Professor of Medicinal Chemistry and Director of the Moulder Center for Drug Discovery Research at the School of Pharmacy, Temple University, for his work with drug discovery. Find out about all the award winners and other regional news in the Middle East Monitor on page 10.

Of particular concern, largely because it is being ignored by most health authorities in the region, is the growing epidemic of HIV among people who inject drugs through the sharing of needles. This comes on the back of the escalating Afghan opium poppy production in recent years and the subsequent increased supply of heroin in the region. In a comprehensive report published in *PLoS Medicine* the researchers noted that concentrated HIV epidemics have emerged in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt and Morocco. You can read more about this issue on page 32.

And on a more esoteric note, the results from a four-year international study looking objectively at the possibility of awareness during resuscitation has found evidence that some people who are clinically dead prior to being resuscitated have so-called near-death experiences and out-of-body experiences. You can read more about this fascinating study on page 46.

This is just a taste of what we have in store for you in this issue. Read on and be informed.

We thank the great support of our advertisers without whom we would not be able to produce this magazine. And we wish you all a happy, prosperous and healthy new year.

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Middle East Health is published by Hurst Publishing FZE,  
Creative City Fujairah, Licence Number: 3910/2013 FBCC.

### Middle East Health website

[www.MiddleEastHealthMag.com](http://www.MiddleEastHealthMag.com)



Middle East Health is printed by Atlas Printing Press.  
[www.atlasgroupme.com](http://www.atlasgroupme.com)

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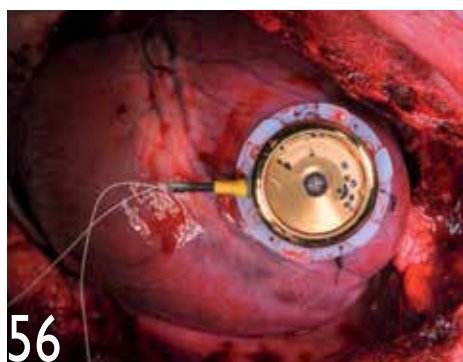
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ISO/EN 15189  
CUA #99D2049715

