

# Middle East HEALTH

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July-August 2015

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## Bridge to peace

Leaders meet in Cairo to promote health diplomacy

### Iraq's healthcare on brink of catastrophe

Humanitarian response  
plan launched by WHO

### Medicine for kids

Prescribing antimicrobials for  
children has special requirements

#### In the News:

- World Health Assembly: The resolutions
- AIDS: Starting antiretroviral treatment early improves outcomes
- Millennium Development Goals end this year. How have we fared with the health-related goals?



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# Prognosis

## Refugee crisis

Lebanon's healthcare system is taking tremendous strain under the weight of a massive influx of refugees from Syria. According to the UNHCR, registered Syrian refugees number more than 1.3 million, more than 20% of the population. The UNHCR says "an effective display of international solidarity and support is vital for Lebanon". In an effort to assist, the European Union has mobilised its Instrument for Stability to provide humanitarian assistance through the WHO in Lebanon. Read the report on page 52.

In our section on paediatrics we look at the special requirements for treating kids with antimicrobials. Guest writer Thomas Omogi outlines the requirements for prescribing various antimicrobials in the face of very few studies producing pharmacokinetic data for antimicrobial agents in children and adolescents. Also in this section we publish a number of reports and case studies from specialist paediatric hospitals. See page 34.

The WHO recently issued an appeal for funds to assist healthcare in Iraq. The public health system in the country is on the brink of collapse. If this happens, more than 3 million refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities will stop receiving health care, the WHO says. Health facilities are overloaded and medicines and supplies are running short, even at large referral hospitals, Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General, pointed out during the appeal. Read the report and Dr Chan's statement on page 26.

Also in this issue we look at an initiative by the WHO in Syria to establish a network of non-specialist health workers who can help the estimated 600,000 people in the war-torn country who are suffering from severe mental health disorders and another 4 million from mild to moderate mental disorders. Read the report on page 29.

As in each issue, you will find a wealth of healthcare news from the region and the world as well as an update of select medical research taking place at some of the world's leading academic institutions.

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22



## NEWS

- 6 Middle East Monitor
- 12 Worldwide Monitor
- 16 The Laboratory

## NEWS FEATURES

- 22 World Health Assembly
- 25 Millennium Development Goals
- 26 Iraq report
- 28 Action to help Syrians suffering mental health illness
- 29 Health diplomacy – the cover story
- 30 AIDS update
- 32 MERS update

## FEATURES

- 34 **Paediatrics:** Antimicrobials for kids
- 52 **Lebanon report:** Refugees put strain on healthcare
- 60 **Imaging – MRI:** Free online tool to analyse images of the brain
- 62 **Imaging – MRI:** Siemens introduces 7T MRI for clinical use

## COLUMNS

- 64 Roche
- 65 Durbin

## CONFERENCES & EXPOS

- 66 Seoul: KIMES 2015

## THE BACK OF THE MAG

- 68 On the Pulse
- 70 The Back Page
- 71 Agenda

42



52





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