

## HEART HERO 2019: WEAM MESHA'L

Nurse, Sweileh Comprehensive Health Center, Jordan

*Nominated by Royal Health Awareness Society, Jordan*

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I have a vast experience in nursing; I have worked at different hospitals in Amman and in several departments such as ER and ICU. Currently, I work as a registered nurse at Sweileh Comprehensive Health Center.

I'm the focal point of tobacco control at the health center. One year ago, I started implementing the Healthy Community Clinic (HCC) at the facility, which gave me the opportunity to attend several trainings about cardiovascular diseases and other NCDs. Since then, we've been providing preventative health services in our center at primary care level.

As a health educator, I believe I've been able to gain my patients' trust who started to follow my guidance and recommendations after they attended a number of consecutive awareness sessions. It's important to prevent further complications after a CVD diagnosis and I'm grateful that I can provide the patients with the support, knowledge and skills needed to be able to manage their condition themselves. Changing old habits and committing to a healthy lifestyle requires a lot of courage, persistence and determination - I believe that's what makes someone a Heart Hero.

My sense of empathy is what lies behind my motivated self. I keep in mind that anybody might get diagnosed with heart disease, and when I put myself in my patients' shoes; I think about the sort and quality of service I would need. As a healthcare practitioner, I want to see my patients live their lives to the fullest even if they are diagnosed with chronic diseases. I promise to provide them with preventative health services at all times until they know exactly how to manage their disease.

In my opinion, the major challenges of preventing CVD in Jordan are related to culture, traditions and behaviors. Particularly if it is related to exercise. For example, financial status of many doesn't allow them to get a membership in a gym and the replacement is to walk regularly. Which is "culturally" unaccepted especially to females.

I myself used to live a sedentary lifestyle. After becoming a health educator, I decided to change my unhealthy behaviors. I started by lowering my consumption of soft drinks and walking as much as I could. Leading a healthy lifestyle is beneficial not only to me but also to my patients, because 'leading by example' has a greater influence on them rather than just telling them what to do!