



# Transforming a Medical Education System through Innovation and Collaboration

Lebanese American University/Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine

Beirut, Lebanon

FOUNDING MEMBERS



In 2005, Lebanese American University (LAU) approached Partners HealthCare International (PHI) to determine the feasibility of opening a medical school and acquiring an existing hospital.

Over the years, PHI has helped LAU develop and open an American-style medical school with a problem-based curriculum. The partnership has ultimately changed the method of teaching in Lebanon and the Middle East.

## The Challenge

LAU sought to establish a state-of-the-art medical school that encompassed a US-style curriculum. The development of a new medical school presented several challenges for the University, including:

- Attract highly skilled faculty to Lebanon
- Implement innovative education models including simulation
- Develop the physical infrastructure and facilities to support innovative education
- Build a strong reputation from the beginning as a national leader in medical education

## Our Process

With these challenges in mind, PHI and LAU worked together to develop comprehensive leadership training drawing on resources from Harvard Medical School. Specific education and training initiatives included:

- Empowerment of faculty to develop innovative programs for medical students; early clinical experiences, small group and self-directed learning and multiple forms of formative and summative student assessment
- Observations of various relevant programs and facilities in Massachusetts
- Through a two-month "Scholar-in-Residence" program, a senior member of the PHI faculty was on-site at the school's launch to help oversee and enhance the implementation of the new school's medical program and progressive curriculum
- Planning and design of a state-of-the-art health professions building housing the Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy

## Our Impact

- Launch of clinical training for the inaugural graduating class at the University Medical Center Rizk Hospital
- In collaboration with LAU teaching faculty, PHI established a standardized patient program, the first of its kind offered in Lebanon
- Longitudinal themes across the curriculum
- Social medicine program bringing students to the underserved populations of Lebanon
- Opportunities for students to participate in observerships and research projects in the USA
- First graduating class of 23 in June 2013

## Where are we today?

In 2012, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) stated that all international medical schools had to be accredited by an approved crediting body in order for its medical graduates to practice medicine in the United States. LAU, along with other medical schools in Lebanon, aims to be recognized internationally through an accreditation process by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME), enabling the university to be eligible for ECFMG accreditation.

To facilitate accreditation and help guide the integration of a medical school into a well-established university, PHI is currently collaborating with LAU on best practices and guidelines. The overarching goal is to build a cohesive academic health center by integrating the LAU School of Medicine and the University Medical Center Rizk Hospital.