



: (: idraac

BEIRUT BLAST RESPONSE

**Newsletter 2021
ISSUE#1**



Thank You

To all donors, partners, collaborators, supporters, volunteers and friends,

To those who gave us a helping hand and made themselves available and present when we needed them the most,

You helped us rise through the ashes and supported the Lebanese community who was swamped by these terrible and unprecedented events (the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic situation and the Beirut Blast).

THANK YOU!

We would like to thank in particular : the Lebanese National Mental Health Program of the Ministry of Public Health, the Lebanese Epidemiological Association (LEA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the World Psychiatric Association (WPA), the World Mental Health Survey Initiative, the World Confederation of Cognitive and Behavioral Therapies (WCCBT), the European Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapy (EABCT), the Global Network of Psychologists for Human Rights (GNPHR), and all academic institutions from around the world who advised and supported our work during these difficult times.

Thank You

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& Many Anonymous Donors



AUGUST 4, 2020

On August 4, 2020, Beirut witnessed a devastating blast, considered by experts as the third largest blast in recorded history behind Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Beirut blast has left hundreds dead, thousands injured and hundreds of thousands homeless.

Our offices at St Georges Hospital University Medical Center (from where IDRAAC operates), were destroyed and the hospital suffered extensive damage leaving it nonfunctional for the first time in 150 years.

The psychological impact of this catastrophe is huge and came in addition to the dire economic situation that Lebanon is going through and the COVID-19 pandemic.

This newsletter highlights the response of IDRAAC and the way we have supported the Lebanese community in these challenging times.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

24/7 HOTLINE



Within the first 24 hours after the blast, IDRAAC established a **hotline** where our psychiatrists and psychologists were available to provide mental health support and referral to persons who needed it.

The hotline is operational all days of the week and helps in:

- Providing phone support to persons who need help or advice for their loved ones following the blast
- Referring persons who need mental healthcare to the walk-in clinic

The hotline can be reached on **+961 3 730 475**.

FREE WALK-IN CLINIC

One week following the blast, IDRAAC established a **free walk-in clinic** at the St Georges Hospital University Medical Center (SGHUMC) in Ashrafieh to be able to provide psychological first aid, assessment and referrals.

Persons who felt the need to seek professional help following the blast, were able to visit the clinic without prior appointment and services were offered free of charge to anyone affected by the blast.

The clinic is also receiving referrals from other organizations following the blast.



**HOTLINE & WALK-IN
CLINIC
AUGUST-DECEMBER
2020**

1750

Hotline
calls

1498

Mental Health
Consultations

TRAININGS

After the Beirut Blast, IDRAAC organized several trainings for mental health professionals and the general public:

- **Trainings and Workshops for Professionals:** which addressed the psychological responses to trauma, psychological first aid and intervention, and strategies for referral. These trainings targeted mental health professionals and allowed for a better response from frontliners and have guided the referral process to the walk-in clinic which offered the needed care to those affected by the blast.

- **Training and Workshops for the Community:** which covered topics related to trauma, coping skills, stress and anger management. In addition, these trainings raised awareness on different mental health topics such as depression, anxiety, panic attacks, OCD, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and substance use disorder.

- **Webinars and Online Trainings:** members of IDRAAC shared tips and coping techniques related to mental health in difficult times (following the blast, COVID-19 & lockdown, economic collapse) with different audiences (students and employees in different fields: education, healthcare, businesses, etc...).



RESEARCH

ACUTE STRESS DISORDER ASSESSMENT OF STAFF AT SAINT GEORGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER (SGHUMC) FOLLOWING THE BEIRUT BLAST AND PROSPECTIVE FOLLOW-UP (WAVE 1 & 2)

IDRAAC launched a prospective cohort study to describe, examine, and assess the impact of the Beirut's explosions on the mental health of SGHUMC staff, especially pertaining to Acute Stress Disorder (ASD).

This study included a baseline assessment of acute stress levels (after an average of 10 days of the explosion) with a follow-up after 3 weeks from the explosion.

Staff at SGHUMC who underwent PCR testing were approached to be enrolled in this study and were handed a self-filled questionnaire (available in two languages) that included a screening of ASD and questions related to the explosion.

A second assessment was initiated 3 weeks after the explosion. This assessment was in the form of an online survey sent to all the hospital's staff and it included a similar scale to the one used in wave 1 addressing a different timeframe.

Staff who felt the need to seek mental health support were referred to the walk-in clinic and hotline and those at high risk were contacted for further support.

Analysis is under way and will be submitted for publication in a scientific journal.



ASSESSMENT OF DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, PTSD AND SUICIDALITY IN A SAMPLE OF LEBANESE ADULTS UNDERGOING DIALYSIS FOLLOWING THE BEIRUT BLAST

IDRAAC is initiating a study which aims to assess depression, anxiety, suicidality and PTSD among hemodialysis patients. It will also examine the impact of traumatic events (COVID-19, Beirut explosion or other trauma) in addition to the financial situation, medical comorbidities, past psychiatric history, social isolation, cognitive impairment, religiosity, nutritional status, functional status in relation to depression, anxiety and PTSD occurrence.

This study will also follow hemodialysis patients longitudinally to recheck changes in prevalence rates of depression, anxiety and PTSD at 6 and 12 months.

The study will be implemented in two major hospitals: St George Hospital University Medical Center and Geitawi Hospital both of which suffered major damage during the Beirut Blast.



The HEalth caRe wOrkErS Study: HEROES- LEBANON



IDRAAC is taking part in a multinational study which will allow the understanding of the COVID19 pandemic, the economic situation and the Beirut Blast effects on health workers in 8 major hospitals in Beirut and Mount Lebanon (American University of Beirut Medical Center, Bellevue Medical Center, Hôpital Libanais Geitaoui, Hôtel Dieu de France, LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital, Mount Lebanon Hospital, Rafik Hariri University Hospital, St George Hospital University Medical Center).



RAFIK HARIRI UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL



مستشفى رفيق الحريري الجامعي



SAINT GEORGE HOSPITAL
UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

The HEalth caRe wOrkErS Study: HEROES- LEBANON

This study is conducted in coordination with the National Mental Health Program at the Ministry of Public Health in Lebanon (MOPH) and is the largest study to be done in Lebanon among health workers addressing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut Port Blast and the economic situation.

The study is a prospective cohort study including a baseline assessment and three follow up assessments (after 3, 6, and 12 months). Collaborators from 32 countries in 5 continents (America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania) will participate in the study which is coordinated by both the University of Chile and Columbia University.

Participants will answer an online questionnaire including a screening on psychiatric symptoms, questions on several emotional and social factors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and questions on their economic situation and previous stressors. The study in Lebanon has been adapted to assess the particular stressors and psychological adversities of the Beirut Port blast.

IDRAAC HEROES STUDY COORDINATION TEAM



AIMEE
NASSER
KARAM,
PHD



ELIE
KARAM,
MD



DAHLIA
SAAB,
MPH



JOSLEEN
AL BARATHIE,
MPH



GEORGES
KARAM,
MD



RITA
KHOURY,
MD

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

IDRAAC launched a nationwide television campaign to raise awareness about mental health following the blast and reach out to persons who might need to seek help and support from our hotline and walk-in clinic.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AFTER THE BEIRUT BLAST - دعم الصحة النفسية بعد انفجار بيروت - IDRAAC



These messages were also shared on our social media platforms Facebook, Twitter & Instagram.

In addition, IDRAAC's members participated in several media interviews to discuss mental health following the blast, coping and support measures.

Our psychologists & psychiatrists are available to answer any questions you may have following the horrendous Beirut Port explosion, whether you are dealing with stress on a personal level or having to talk about it to your loved ones.

You can call our hotline
+961 3 730 475
everyday including weekends

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

عيادة الصحة النفسية المجانية
مستشفى القديس جاورجيوس الجامعي

الإنترنت- الجمعة 9:00-5:00
السبت 10:00-5:00

مبادرة من قسم الطب النفسي وعلمه في
مستشفى القديس جاورجيوس الجامعي
بالشراكة مع إدراك

IDRAAC

One month after the deadly Beirut port explosion, how is Lebanon coping?

المرحلة الثانية

One month after the deadly Beirut port explosion, how is Lebanon coping?

Dr. George H. Haddad, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology at Saint George Hospital, was in the Dounayeh neighborhood last night when the explosion took place, causing him to be injured. The blast, which caused more than 200 deaths and 100 injuries, was the deadliest in Lebanon's history.

mfu

Hotline: 03- 73 04 75

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

RUN FOR MENTAL HEALTH



: (: idraac

RUNNING
21.1 KM
FOR OUR
CAUSE ONE
MORE TIME

NOV 8

TO SUPPORT
OUR FREE
CLINIC

IDRAAC.ORG/DONATE



Dr. Georges Karam and a group of runners from the Beirut Marathon Association ran a half marathon on November 8, 2020 in order to raise funds for IDRAAC's free mental health clinic.

He was joined by 6 other runners who ran with him for IDRAAC.

We would like to thank everyone that supported us!

To support the free clinic which is still operational, you can donate any amount you wish on: idraac.org/donate

TESTIMONIALS

“

"IDRAAC with the help of its psychiatrists helped me so much. I always knew the importance of mental and emotional health but always considered myself fine until the explosion happened. IDRAAC provided me with a safe space to talk and express myself. I could express myself freely without the fear of being judged and without having to worry about anything. And with time visiting my psychiatrist became something i look forward to and enjoy. Thank you! Thank you for being here and understanding when no one else could!"
T.H., 20 Female

"Being able to have help from the walk in clinic of IDRAAC was very helpful for my mental health, and especially so I do not suffer on my own. The healing process is a long journey to take, but it was great to do the first step and ask for the help needed."
G.M, 32 - Male.

"Tuesday, August 4, 2020, 6:08 pm was a turning point in my life. In few seconds, a massive explosion, a disaster in every sense of the word, came to my home and workplace, took my happiness and destroyed the joy of what I call life. As a survivor, I felt so lucky, but I was dead inside. Screaming, shouting ,panicking, having flashbacks and difficulties to sleep, I lost my inner peace. Hopeless, I decided to seek guidance from other survivors, with the IDRAAC team, who helped me gain the skills I needed to start a new life with courage to move on no matter the circumstances."
M.F., 27 Female



**If you feel you would like to
share your mental health story
(even anonymously)
reach out to us on idraac@idraac.org or
76 10 05 76 as we have an exciting
project to share with you!**

THANK YOU!

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR FRIENDS, SUPPORTERS AND DONORS FOR JOINING FORCES WITH US IN SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH.

IF YOU WISH TO DONATE, YOU CAN VISIT:
[IDRAAC.ORG/DONATE](https://idraac.org/donate)

www.idraac.org



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