



KUWAIT: Dr Ziad Al-Alyan, General Manager of Central Circle Company (second from left) is pictured with other Central Circle Company staff. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



A general view of the audience.

## MINISTRY HOSTS 3RD KUWAIT NORTH AMERICAN NEUROLOGY CONFERENCE DIAPHRAGM PACING SYSTEM SAVED MILLIONS OF LIVES

By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** The 3rd Kuwait North American Neurology Conference (KNANC) was held on Friday at the Sheraton Hotel in Kuwait City. This is the largest neurology conference in the Middle East and was held under the patronage of former minister of health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi. "We have brought expert neurologists from Canada and the US to share their latest knowledge and information about neurological diagnoses and treatments," Chairman of the Neurology Department at Ibn Sina Hospital Dr Jassem Al-Hashel said. He noted that the KNANC program offered impressive lectures in different fields of neurology. The program is designed to deal with the most common neurological problems faced in daily practice. It is an extensive course held over three days. Hashel noted that over 1,000 doctors have

registered. "It is the biggest registration we have achieved so far. Because of the reputation of the conference, doctors are applying from all over the world. Kuwait is being noticed," Hashel added many doctors applied to be speakers at the conference, but they could not accept them because of visa issues. "The challenge that we face is getting visas for people. If we didn't have this problem, the attendance would be double. We cannot get people from Syria, Iraq, Yemen, etc that are known for their large number of neurologists. But the attendance is good - more than 400 people attended the conference on Friday morning."

### Saving lives

Hashel pointed out that the Central Circle Company has saved millions by providing the diaphragm pacing system, one of the most

extraordinary medical devices available to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) patients. It is FDA-approved and available from Synapse Biomedical. "More than 24 devices have saved patients and saved the money that they would've paid outside Kuwait for treatment," he said.

About the diaphragm pacing system, Raymond Onders, Remen Chair in Surgical Innovation at University Hospitals, added: "The diaphragm pacing system helps people who have both ALS and breathing problems. A patient's diaphragm must show its ability to respond to stimulation. It will help ALS patients breathe longer without the aid of a ventilator."

The device is implanted using a device with a camera at the end of it (laparoscope) in an outpatient procedure. The system consists of four electrodes that are implanted in the

breathing muscle (diaphragm), a fifth electrode that is implanted under the skin, an electrode connector which groups the five electrodes exiting the skin into a socket, a holder to hold the electrode connector in place on the skin, and a battery-powered stimulator box (an external pulse generator - EPG).

The stimulator box sends electrical signals to the diaphragm replacing the signals normally sent by the brain along the nerves. The signals cause the diaphragm to contract, which helps to condition and exercise the muscle. The physician adjusts the EPG settings to match the patient's normal breathing pattern. The patient controls the EPG by turning it on and off by pressing two buttons in front of the EPG.

The KNANC event began in 2012, and is held every two years. The organizers have worked diligently to improve the event to bring it to an



Chairman of the Neurology Department at Ibn Sina Hospital Dr Jassem Al-Hashel speaks to Kuwait Times.

international standard. The three days of the conference will provide a great learning and networking experience with world-renowned experts in the field of neurology.



Chairman of the Neurology Department at Ibn Sina Hospital Dr Jassem Al-Hashel visits Central Circle Company's booth.



The diaphragm pacing system.



Raymond Onders, Remen Chair in Surgical Innovation at University Hospitals (left) shows off the diaphragm pacing system.

## MINISTRY HOSTS 7TH ANESTHESIA AND CRITICAL CARE CONFERENCE

'WORLD NOW CARES MORE ABOUT EVENTS BEFORE, AFTER SURGERY'



KUWAIT: A group photo of officials and participants in the conference. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait council of anesthesia, critical care and pain management and the health ministry organized the 7th anesthesia and critical care conference at Courtyard Marriott. The annual meeting gathered delegates from all government and private health institutions in Kuwait and the region. "What is distinguished about the conference is that it is the first conference of its kind that focuses on heart patients, and the evolution of internal medicine for the heart and heart surgeries," said Dr Abdulrahem Al-Qattan, head of the council of anesthesia, critical care and pain management.

Qattan pointed out that current developments have made the world begin to pay attention to the role of the anesthesiologist and to care more about events before and after surgery. "There will be many workshops and a simulation system that allows doctors to practice several surgeries in a safe way and handle different situations," he said.

Dr Huda Al-Foudri, chairperson of the organizing committee and head of department of anesthesia, critical care and pain management, noted that many years ago there was a big risk for patients during cardiac anesthesia, but with changes and developments, it has become less risky. "We are facing more and more cardiac patients choosing elective surgery, whether in pediatrics, obstetrics or general surgery, a number of whom would have been refused surgery in the past due to the high risk they may be subjected to. Improved assessment and optimization of cardiac patients, intraoperative cardiac monitoring and post-operative care in the critical care unit are all factors that have led to the reduction of perioperative risks of these patients and therefore improved patient care and safety," she said.

### Live demonstration

Foudri added there would be a live surgical demonstration to show how doctors are dealing with medical conditions. "The patient doll used by the simulation system will show the audience how doctors treat patients, especially rare pathological cases. The use of the simulation system helps doctors develop their skills and update them on the latest technological and scientific developments," she explained.

She added that this conference is a great opportunity to share knowledge and experiences with experts from different parts of the world, in addition to acquiring a variety of skills through the hands-on workshops preceding the conference. It will also be a great opportunity to experience the latest, state-of-the-art medical technologies and pharmaceutical products at the conference's exhibition.

The theme of the conference this year is anesthetic and critical care management of the cardiac patient. The advancement in anesthesia and critical care management of cardiac patients due to increased experience and improved technologies has led to more cardiac patients being encountered in daily practice, with improved outcome being the ultimate target.



Health ministry officials visit the Central Circle Company's booth at the conference.



Health ministry officials listen to a demonstration at the Central Circle Company's booth.



Officials and participants pose for a group photo in front of the Central Circle Company's booth.



A general view of the audience.



Dr Ziad Al-Alyan, General Manager of Central Circle Company (left) is pictured with officials at the conference.