



2019-2020 RCSI BAHRAIN ANNUAL REPORT



RCSI



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Message from the President, Chair of the Executive Committee



Members of the Executive Committee

At RCSI Bahrain, **our Mission to “Educate, nurture and discover for the benefit of human health”** holds greater value now more than ever, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no doubt that the 2019-2020 academic year was unlike any other year experienced at RCSI Bahrain and around the world. The pandemic has placed healthcare at the centre of the world stage and our students have chosen healthcare at a very exciting and unusual time, a time of great change, challenge and opportunity.

The need for exceptional healthcare professionals who go on to become healthcare leaders has unquestionably increased. The **health sciences** are constantly evolving and as our students move into their professional careers, they will go on in the future to provide an advanced level of care and treatment to patients, that is simply inconceivable today. They are already on this incredible journey towards a career that will be exciting, fulfilling and rewarding, and we are here to support them. We are continuously committed and focused on our responsibility to support the safety of our students, preparing them for the realities of professional practice in healthcare and supporting the delivery of healthcare around the world.

The COVID-19 situation has been handled exceptionally well by the Government of Bahrain from the outset and that effort is ongoing, with a **significant number of daily tests performed within the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO)**, to ensure cases are identified and treated. Hospital access has been challenging; as a result, we have been making special arrangements with our partner hospitals to ensure the safety of our students and our clinical colleagues.

With the aim to enhance the treatment protocols for COVID-19 patients in Bahrain and beyond, RCSI Bahrain has been conducting National Clinical Trials for the first time, in collaboration with the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF) and the Ministry of Health. This initiative comes under the directives from the Supreme Council of Health (SCH) President and taskforce head, His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa.

At RCSI Bahrain, we believe in excellence in collaboration, research and service and we strongly believe it is our duty to dedicate our knowledge, experience and resources to actively participate in the national clinical trials, in support of the Kingdom’s effort in combatting this pandemic and to all the COVID-19 patients globally who are fighting this virus.

Under these unique circumstances, we have seen a large number of **students** from the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing and Midwifery **volunteer with the Ministry of Health** in Bahrain to support the hotline call centre, testing centres, assist in contact tracing and follow-up calls. Similarly, some

students who returned to their home countries have also supported their national efforts against the pandemic. We feel very proud of all our volunteering students and we admire their dedication to helping the community, their determination in contributing to the improvement of patients' health and we are grateful to them for their substantial efforts.

After the closure of the RCSI Bahrain campus on 26 February 2020, a **Business Continuity Plan Committee** was established immediately to manage and maintain the University's operations remotely. We gave priority to supporting our students and staff, continuing to engage our students with their learning materials by strengthening the Teaching and Learning support available, as well as the Health and Wellbeing assistance provided to students.

In June, four **"Return to Campus" working groups were established to develop a physically distanced and digitally engaged learning model for the next academic year.** Students will receive partial teaching on-campus with social distancing and other protective measures in place, while their remaining education will be delivered digitally. Adoption of a combination of models - homeroom, alternating days per week and rotational teaching sessions - ensure that COVID-19 protocols will be adhered to while meeting the learning outcomes.

As the situation evolved, we have remained in continuous contact with our students, staff and stakeholders to keep them informed of any developments.

We have also been receiving the full support of the Senior Management of RCSI in Dublin to address the teaching and assessment requirements of the curriculum while we are closed, and for when we reopen. The news of **RCSI ranking first in the world for "Good Health and Wellbeing" in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2020** was an incredible achievement and a fitting recognition of the ongoing work of RCSI staff and alumni to improve health and wellbeing in communities around the globe.

At RCSI Bahrain, the highlight of this year was undoubtedly the **successful graduation of the Class of 2020** from the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing and Midwifery, thanks to the prompt transitioning to online teaching and examinations, and the acceleration of the final qualification examinations of our final year students.

As part of the 2018-2022 strategic plan, a framework to **develop our three pillars: Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Engagement** was mapped out and the opportunities generated by the academic year 2019-2020 has brought the opportunity to foster the advancement of those plans, in conjunction with the ongoing support of our stakeholders, the Supreme Council of Health, the Higher Education Council and the Bahrain Quality Authority.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I would like to sincerely thank our stakeholders, students, staff and alumni for their exceptional support and resilience throughout the 2019-2020 academic year.

Executive Committee



Professor Sameer Otoom
President



Mr Stephen Harrison-Mirfield
Chief Operating Officer



Professor Alf Nicholson
Vice President for
Academic Affairs



Professor Steve Atkin
Head of School of Postgraduate
Studies and Research



Dr Kathryn Strachan
Head of Quality
Enhancement



Dr Jean Hughes
Associate Director for
Academic Affairs



Ms Lesley Byrne
Associate Director for
Marketing, Student
Recruitment and
Admissions
(to December 2019)



Mr Gary Brady
Head of Human
Resources

Impact on Bahrain

“ RCSI Bahrain’s main contribution in the fight against COVID-19 has been in the field of Research. ”

Professor Manaf Al Qahtani, Adult Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiologist Consultant and Head of the Infection Control Unit at the Royal Medical Services of the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF), and Clinical Associate Professor, Lead in Microbiology at RCSI Bahrain

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**RCSI Bahrain
Research Projects**



1st randomised control trial in Bahrain: Convalescent Plasma Clinical Trial in COVID-19 Patients sponsored by RCSI Bahrain

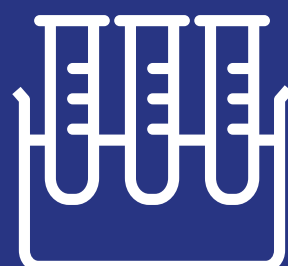


200+
RCSI Bahrain
student volunteers
with Ministry of
Health

100+ medical
students volunteering
with research
projects



1000+ Nasopharyngeal
swabs conducted by RCSI
Bahrain student volunteers





I was assigned to the drive through tents to test patients for COVID-19 and from that day, all the skills and knowledge I have gained at RCSI Bahrain were of great benefit to me and I'm very thankful for that. I feel responsible in helping and giving back to my country in this current situation.

Isa Ahmed AlShamsan
IC1 Medicine student



My role at the Exhibition Centre drive through tents is based on history taking. Spending my summer time serving my country and helping in any way possible feels like a responsibility that as a medical student I should take.

Hana Abdulla
JC3 Medicine student



I worked with the contact tracing team to trace all the COVID-19 patients' contacts. Working with people from different healthcare specialties and seeing the volunteers all united by one common goal of serving the country was the highlight of my experience.

Fajer Qasim
Year 1 Medicine student



I am in the swab team, testing hundreds of patients. I am also providing support to recovering patients. I am proud of serving my country at this time.

Mohammed Kanaan
N4 Nursing student



We decided to enroll in the volunteer's programme as soon as we had the chance to. We hope we can stay at the Exhibition Centre and fight this virus until we can all celebrate the win of zero cases in Bahrain and the world.

**Ahmed Alasheeri and
Kawther S. Nasser**
Nursing Class of 2020



The pressure is real. There are days when we wouldn't get any time to sit for even a few seconds, days when I had to do around 250 swabs in one go.

Dr Mahmood Ali
(Class of 2014)
Dermatologist, and
Dr Zainab Toorani
(Medicine Class of 2016)
Pathologist, deployed to
the Ebrahim Khalil Kanoo
Community Medical
Centre.



Not a day goes by without us admitting someone. We are under tremendous pressure, physically and mentally, just to keep everyone safe.

Dr Turki Alhussaini
(Medicine Class of 2017)
Resident Physician at
BDF Hospital, covering
on calls at the COVID-19
quarantine facility in Sitra.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS



Board of Governors



Professor P. Ronan O'Connell
President
RCSI



Professor Laura Viani
Vice President
RCSI



Professor Cathal Kelly
Chief Executive Officer/Registrar
RCSI



Professor Hannah McGee
Dean
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
RCSI



Professor Deborah McNamara
Chair
RCSI Academic Council



**Major General Professor
Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa**
Director
Bahrain Defence Force Royal Medical
Services



Mr Mahmood Al Kooheji
Chairman
Social Insurance Organization



Professor Sameer Otoom
President
RCSI Bahrain



Mr Stephen Harrison-Mirfield
Chief Operating Officer
RCSI Bahrain

“ RCSI Bahrain was nominated to establish, facilitate and support the national response for all COVID-19 clinical trials.

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Head of School of Postgraduate Studies and Research
Professor Steve Atkin,

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Knowledge and
Experience

Knowledge and Experience



His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa , Chairman of the Supreme Council of Health, with Professor Sameer Ootom, RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Steve Atkin, Head of Postgraduate Studies and Research and Dr Mohamed Alamuddin.

RCSI Bahrain continues to strengthen its research framework and collaboration opportunities to expand on student involvement in research projects.

RCSI Clinical Trial Unit Implemented

Under the direction of Professor Steve Atkin (Head of School of Postgraduate Studies and Research), RCSI Bahrain was nominated to establish, facilitate and support the national response for all COVID-19 clinical trials. The initiative falls under the directives of the Supreme Council of Health Chairman and taskforce head, His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa and Chairman of the National COVID-19 Research Committee and Director of the Royal Medical Services, Major General Professor Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa. RCSI Bahrain's role has been pivotal in two clinical trials: The National Convalescent Plasma Clinical Trial in COVID-19 patients, which is now completed and the Favipiravir Clinical Trial, which was initiated in partnership with our clinical colleagues and graduates. RCSI Bahrain's contribution to the clinical trials embodies our efforts to uphold our mission of serving the global patient community and advancing human health.

Convalescent Plasma Randomised Trial

On 19 April 2020, the National Convalescent Plasma Clinical Trial in COVID-19 patients, sponsored by RCSI Bahrain, was given the green light to commence. The trial entails taking antibody-rich plasma that has been given by subjects that have recovered from COVID-19 and injecting it into patients who are severely suffering from the disease. Patients who have contracted COVID-19 and require oxygen therapy will be randomised to either the plasma treatment with supporting care, or normal supporting care, both of which will include drug treatment against the virus. The goal of the clinical trial was to see if the convalescent plasma will reduce the severity of the disease and prevent patients from needing mechanical ventilation. The trial was conducted in three centres around Bahrain, in collaboration with the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF), Ministry of Health and under the coordination and sponsorship of RCSI Bahrain. The manuscript of the trial has been submitted to a journal and is awaiting approval for publication.

Favipiravir Clinical Trial

The Favipiravir vs Hydroxychloroquine vs Standard care randomised trial is the second clinical trial being sponsored by RCSI Bahrain under the direction of Professor Steve Atkin. The study is being conducted at the Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) and Ebrahim Khalil Kanoo Community Medical Centre (EKK) with 150 patients as volunteers. The aim of the trial is to compare three approaches of treatment: Hydroxychloroquine, Favipiravir and standard care (no specific treatment), in patients infected with COVID-19. Five RCSI Bahrain alumni have been employed at the COVID-19 centres and are coordinated by a member from the RCSI Bahrain School of Postgraduate Studies and Research team.

Future Clinical Trials

RCSI Bahrain is in the process of sponsoring two local clinical trials on polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and diabetes, which will commence as soon as the Favipiravir trial is completed.

RCSI Bahrain hosts Fourth International Research Conference

Under the patronage of the Supreme Council of Health Chairman, His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, RCSI Bahrain hosted its annual Research Conference in November.

This conference showcased a series of 100 oral and poster presentations, with international representation from UAE, Canada, Egypt, USA and the UK.

The abstracts covered a wide range of topics including the impact of vaping on human health, self-management and patient understanding of diabetes among the elderly in Bahrain and the impact of physician speciality on post-surgical medical management.

The purpose of the research conference, which was attended by RCSI Bahrain students and faculty, healthcare professionals and special guests, was to exchange new knowledge that would be beneficial to patient care, develop further research collaboration opportunities between different countries and inspire more students to participate in research projects.

International Research Publications

The 2019-2020 academic year witnessed a large increase in international research publications by RCSI Bahrain faculty members. The 44 research publications covered a variety of fields ranging from Medicine, Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Nursing, Maternity and Midwifery, Health Informatics, Pharmacology and Public Health, to Environmental and Occupational

Health. Many of the publications appeared in reputable international journals including the British Medical Journal and Diabetes Care. Additionally, four COVID-19 related publications have been issued so far, with an additional five submitted for publication.

RCSI Bahrain Biomolecular and Clinical Centre with King Hamad University Hospital

In an effort to increase the research prospects in the Kingdom, RCSI Bahrain and King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH) signed an agreement in the summer of 2020 to establish the RCSI Bahrain Biomolecular and Clinical Centre. The centre aims to integrate clinical and laboratory studies for translational research.



Major General Dr Salman bin Ateyatalla Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Chief Executive Officer of King Hamad University Hospital

RCSI Bahrain and University of Bahrain Joint Research Retreat

The RCSI Bahrain School of Postgraduate Studies and Research hosted the RCSI Bahrain and University of Bahrain (UOB) joint research retreat on Saturday 8 February. The retreat showcased a total of 11 presentations and provided the opportunity for researchers and faculty members to discuss prospects for current and future research collaborations between the two universities.

First Dilmun Scholar

The Dilmun Scholarship is a PhD hosted by RCSI Dublin to facilitate an innovative collaboration launched on RCSI Bahrain's 10 year anniversary. Its aims are to strengthen the research partnership between RCSI in Dublin and RCSI Bahrain and enhance the training of the students from Bahrain.

The first Dilmun Scholar, Dr Ashang Laiva worked diligently both in Dublin and Bahrain on his research project which aimed to develop a gene-activated biomaterial to improve wound healing in patients with diabetic foot ulcers. He is currently resuming his role as a Postdoctoral Researcher at RCSI Bahrain, in the Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine group (TERG Bahrain). Dr Laiva's research has been successful with two publications in peer-reviewed international journals and three more are currently



RCSI Bahrain and University of Bahrain joint research retreat

under review. This successful collaboration has also led to the formation of new joint projects between the Bahrain and Dublin campuses.

Research Ethics Committee

Since Professor David Misselbrook retired in June, Dr Sally Docherty, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, has taken over his role in the Ethics Committee. A major initiative has been launched to digitalise the ethics application form which will facilitate easier completion and faster ethic application decisions. The digitalisation process is currently under trial and is expected to go live in January 2021.

Research Support

This year has witnessed an increase in support systems for our faculty members and students involved in research projects. RCSI Bahrain introduced a manuscript editing and statistical advice service, increased support for researchers submitting to open access journals and increased interlibrary loan support for publications. This has resulted in maintaining our publication record with a marked increase in the overall impact of our research. The University has implemented a new research and audit database to help in research tracking and research governance, in addition to providing an abbreviated expedited ethics form for any



Research Summer School Second place winners Saad Mallah, Omar Ghorab, Tharmegan Tharmaratnam, Pardeep Sidhu, Mina Iskandar and Jessica Sefen with Dr Edwina Brennan and Professor Steve Atkin



Poster presentations from the annual Research Conference in November

implemented external student projects. In addition, we have offered two courses for faculty members and students to enrol in the Research Integrity Epigeum Course, which allows them to receive a certificate of completion along with the Good Clinical Practice Course which provides clinical trials training.

Future Plans

As we believe that continuous research is at the heart of enhancing patient care, RCSI Bahrain is planning on reopening and expanding its laboratories. This expansion will include opportunities to engage in both clinical and basic science research in collaboration with King Hamad University Hospital, to support the delivery of quality teaching and first class patient care. These will be implemented with further risk assessment and implementation of the recommended health and safety measures. The University is also planning on expanding its Clinical Trials Unit to facilitate and support further national clinical studies and encourage student support and participation.

Research Summer School (RSS)

This year the RSS hosted a literature review competition under the guidance of the School of Postgraduate Studies and Research, that was open to all undergraduate students from the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Students, individually or in groups of three to five, were invited to submit a literature review on a topic of their choice with the purpose of potential publication. Mentorship from an RCSI Bahrain academic, alumni or an external mentor guided the students with their research submissions. There were a total of 33 final review submissions.

The first place was awarded to Khadeja AlHoussani for her literature review on 'Modified CRISPR/Cas9 Conditions and Refined Donor Constructs to Achieve Precise Heritable Recombination in Zebrafish'; the second place to Saad Mallah, Omar Ghora, Sabrina Al-Salmi, Tharmegan Tharmaratnam, Pardeep Sidhu, Mina Iskandar and Jessica Sefen for their review titled 'COVID-19: Breaking Down a Global Health Crisis'; and the third place to Hajar Abdulla, Hind Abdulla, Rawan Ebrahim and Zainab Fadhul for their review on 'A Novel Inflammatory Syndrome or A Subtype of Kawasaki Disease?: A Literature Review of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) With A Focus On Cardiac Dysfunction'.

Professor Steve Atkin, Head of School of Postgraduate Studies and Research, along with Dr Edwina Brennan, Director of the Medical Commencement Programme, congratulated and awarded the competition winners with monetary prizes. All submissions receive a Certificate of Participation signed by RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom.

In light of the COVID-19 circumstances, some RCSI Bahrain students participated in a six week online research programme offered by Keele University, through which they were presented with a range of systematic review projects to choose from and were provided with expert one-to-one supervision. The students received online training in systematic reviews and research training lectures. At the end of the six week programme, our students are to present their work and are invited to present their research projects in an online research conference hosted by Keele on 25 November 2020.

RCSI Bahrain and King Hamad University Hospital signed an agreement to establish the RCSI Bahrain Biomolecular and Clinical Centre.

“ By the end of the 4-year programme with AdvanceHE, RCSI Bahrain aims to have in-house Train-the-Trainers for the Certificate in Learning & Teaching in Higher Education (CLTHE), demonstrating our commitment to pedagogy and expert training in Learning & Teaching.”

Fatema Frutan, PDU Specialist

04

Global
Leadership
and Quality
Enhancement

Global Leadership and Quality Enhancement



RCSI Bahrain Senior Executives with American Mission Hospital Chief Executives

RCSI Bahrain aims to continually enhance the level of career pathways support provided to medicine, nursing and postgraduate students and offer further prospects for clinical and research opportunities globally.

Global Health Initiative

To expand the University's global reach, RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom along with Professor Martin Corbally, Head of Department of Surgery in the School of Medicine, met with the Head of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) in Cairo, Egypt, in October 2019. The meeting featured a discussion on the opportunities for collaboration and partnership with RCSI Bahrain in relation to Global Health Initiatives.

Further collaboration with American Mission Hospital

In November 2019, Professor Sameer Ootom and senior officials from RCSI Bahrain explored collaboration opportunities with American Mission Hospital (AMH) Chief Executive/Chief Medical Officer, Dr George Cheriyan and Group Chief Executive Officer, Mrs Julia Tovey, in preparation for the completion of the latest branch of the hospital in A'ali, expected to open in March 2022. The new AMH branch will offer teaching spaces for our medical students as well as a dedicated medical education

centre, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities, internships and research opportunities, and designated spaces for examinations and conferences.

Partnership with AdvanceHE

Continuously developing our learning and teaching methods is a priority for us at RCSI Bahrain. In October 2019, RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom and Head of Quality Enhancement, Dr Kathryn Strachan met with AdvanceHE International Partnership Manager, Kristian Rumble and Assistant Director of Knowledge, Innovation and Delivery, Mrs Cathy Wright.

The meeting resulted in a four year collaboration in three areas to be developed: international membership of AdvanceHE (offering member benefits to RCSI Bahrain and staff), support to the development of best practice in learning and teaching and a partnership with AdvanceHE to develop staff trainers (through a Train the Trainer model) for the delivery of the AdvanceHE Certificate in Learning & Teaching in Higher Education (CLTHE). The outcome of this development model is for RCSI Bahrain to be accredited by AdvanceHE to deliver



AdvanceHE first module delivery training session

and award the CLTHE and to support experienced teachers in applying for Fellowship through dedicated Fellowship Writing Workshops.

In January 2020, the AdvanceHE project was launched and the first cohort of CLTHE including Train the Trainers started, with the first module delivering training sessions on campus and two more modules to be delivered remotely during the first semester of academic year 2020-21.

RCSI Bahrain supports the First Bahrain Emergency Medicine Conference

As a health sciences university, RCSI Bahrain was keen on being a main stakeholder and supporter of the First Bahrain Emergency Medicine Conference which was held from 9-11 October 2019. The conference, organised by the Bahrain Medical Society (BMS)

and the Bahrain Association of Emergency Medicine (BAEM), focused on the growth and advancement in Emergency Medicine, primarily in the areas of Pre-hospital, Trauma, Cardiovascular Emergencies, Paediatric Emergency, Critical Care, Emergency Research, Emergency Nursing and other areas related to the field of emergency medicine.

RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Otoom, attended the opening ceremony and received an award for the university's support, from His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Health and the representative of the conference Patron, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister of Bahrain.

Senior Student attends the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions

RCSI Bahrain Senior Cycle student, Tharmegan Tharmaratnam, travelled to Philadelphia, United States of America in November 2019 to attend the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions, which is considered one of the world's prestigious cardiology conferences. Tharmegan presented two research abstracts in the form of two poster presentations entitled 'Cardiologists' Use of Low-value Transthoracic Echocardiography with Care Utilisation and Clinical Outcomes for Patients With Coronary Artery Disease' in addition to 'Physicians' Appropriate Use of Echocardiography and Subsequent Health Care Utilisation and Outcomes in Heart Failure Patients.' Both abstracts have been successfully published in the Circulation and Journal of the American Heart Association.

RCSI Bahrain Senior Cycle student, Tharmegan Tharmaratnam, travelled to Philadelphia, United States of America in November 2019 to attend the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions, which is considered one of the world's prestigious cardiology conferences.



'The Novel 2019-nCoV Coronavirus' Lecture by Professor Manaf Al Qahtani

Institute of Leadership participation in Arab Health Expo

A series of workshops for Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC) Professional Development Program at the Arab Health Expo, held in Dubai from 27-30 January 2020, was delivered by a group of RCSI colleagues from the Institute of Leadership (IOL) in Bahrain, Dubai and Dublin. The sessions covered the topics of 'Women in Leadership', 'Developing the Collaborative Mindset for Growth and Innovation in Healthcare' and 'Big Data and Healthcare: Opportunities and challenges for policy development in the GCC'. The event witnessed the formal launch of the Professional Diploma in Clinical Leadership and Innovation - an RCSI & DHCC co-sponsored programme.

Participation in Mediclinic Middle East Nursing and Midwifery Conference

The Mediclinic Middle East Nursing and Midwifery Conference, was held in January 2020 in Dubai, and Dr May McCreaddie, Senior Lecturer in Nursing, attended on behalf RCSI Bahrain. Dr McCreaddie delivered her presentation on Emerging Trends in Nursing and Midwifery, which was warmly received by over 350 Mediclinic nurses and midwives, as well as other delegates.

Participation in the First Bahrain International Obstetrics & Gynaecology Conference

Under the Patronage of His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Chairman of Supreme Council of Health, the First Bahrain International Obstetrics and Gynaecology Conference was held from 9-11 January 2020 with the scientific theme of 'Recent Advances in Women Health'. RCSI Bahrain was represented by Professor Anthony Dempsey, former Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, who delivered a presentation on the Management of Premature Ovarian Failure.

'The Novel 2019-nCoV Coronavirus' Lecture

In February 2020, RCSI Bahrain hosted an open lecture on preventative measures for COVID-19 delivered by Professor Manaf Al Qahtani, Adult Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiologist Consultant, and Head of the Infection Control Unit at the Royal Medical Services of the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF) and Clinical Associate Professor, Lead in Microbiology at RCSI Bahrain. Professor Al Qahtani's informative and time-sensitive presentation covered the threat of infectious diseases along with a detailed analysis of COVID-19 and its clinical and epidemiological risk factors. He stressed the importance of complying with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health's recommendations for controlling the spread of the virus. The lecture highlighted the Kingdom's plan to combat COVID-19, which incorporates significant resources such as a multi-disciplinary taskforce, an algorithm for treatment and dedicated testing and quarantine facilities.

RCSI Bahrain's President, Professor Sameer Otoom acknowledged Professor Al Qahtani for his support in thoroughly informing our students, staff and alumni about COVID-19 and commended the BDF and Ministry of Health on their rigorous clinical pathway to addressing the spread of COVID-19 in Bahrain.

Clinical Mentor Workshop

In January 2020, members from the School of Nursing & Midwifery held a workshop for 61 Nursing Mentors from our partner hospitals. The attending mentors from KHUH, BDF, SMC and the Cardiac Centre received guidance on the necessary skills for good mentoring practices and clinical facilitation for student learning.

The workshop was conducted by our Lecturers, Ms Sumaya Faraj, Ms Danah Smith and Ms Eman Fateel and was organised by Ms Rachel Hughes, Clinical Placement



Nursing Careers Day with Professor Zena Moore, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery from RCSI Dublin, Dr Hussain Ali Nasaif, Senior Lecturer in Nursing, Fadi Ghosn, Recognition, Careers and Alumni Manager, and nursing students

Officer. High standards of clinical teaching and learning are a central component of nursing education at RCSI Bahrain and are monitored by the Clinical Teaching and Learning Committee, whose membership includes RCSI Bahrain staff and staff of the teaching hospitals.

Nursing Careers Day

To ensure that our students are well-informed of the career opportunities they can pursue, the School of Nursing and Midwifery, in collaboration with the Careers and Alumni Office, held the annual Nursing Careers Day in January 2020. This year's keynote speaker was Professor Zena Moore, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery from RCSI Dublin, alongside speakers from the National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA), Tamkeen and RCSI Bahrain faculty members and alumni. Professor Alf Nicholson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Head of the School of Medicine, RCSI Bahrain, delivered the Welcome Note, while Dr Hussain Ali Nasaif, Senior Lecturer in Nursing, gave a

presentation on 'Developing your Nursing Career' and Dr. Maryam Alaradi, Lecturer in Nursing, presented key information on the Fulbright Scholarships to the students. Ms. Asma Al Najjar, Nursing Alumna, and recipient of the Inspiring Excellence Award, shared her personal experience with the soon-to-be graduates, while Mr Ahmed Faraj, Nursing Profession Registrar for the NHRA, talked about the Nursing Licensing Examination in Bahrain, and a representative of Tamkeen shared information on opportunities available to the students after graduation.

New Elective Opportunities

The Careers and Alumni office works closely with external partners to ensure that students across all years have access to high-quality clinical and research elective opportunities outside of the academic year. The University recommends and encourages medical students to take a four to eight week clinical elective before entering their final medical year. These electives offer students the opportunity to observe health professionals delivering care in different settings and to experience specialties prior to making career choices. Students are free to choose the specialty and the location of the elective. The University has formal or informal agreements with institutions in many countries across the world where students can complete their clinical and research electives.

In addition to existing relationships, this year the Careers and Alumni office secured new clinical elective opportunities at the University of Alabama, Yale University and Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi.

The Careers and Alumni office secured new clinical elective opportunities at the University of Alabama, Yale University and Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi

“ I was impressed by all the measures taken by the university and all the innovative teaching methods used after the pandemic broke out. ”

Zainab Fadhul, President of 2019-20 Student Council



Transnational Education and
Technology Enhanced Learning

05

Transnational
Education and
Technology
Enhanced
Learning

Transnational Education and Technology Enhanced Learning



Dr Declan Gaynor, Senior Lecturer in Chemistry, delivering a lecture using Blackboard Collaborate

RCSI Bahrain is keen on continuously evolving the quality of its transnational education by using Technology Enhanced Learning to support the delivery of a medical curriculum aligned across three continents and healthcare degrees recognised around the world.

Introduction of Classroom Charter

To nurture a culture of self-development in our University, in January 2020 we developed a Classroom Charter in collaboration with our students and faculty members, this collaborative working style helped to promote awareness on mutual expectations. The student representatives confirmed that this charter was very well received by the student body. The Classroom Charter is displayed in all teaching spaces in RCSI Bahrain and is available online on the RCSI VLE.

Technology Enhanced Learning

To safeguard the health and wellbeing of our students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, RCSI Bahrain transitioned all teaching online commencing at the end of February 2020 and for the remainder of the academic year. All software and IT systems were evaluated to adapt to the needs of our programmes and research projects. Our IT department worked to ensure that all systems were efficiently maintained and that a reliable network connectivity is available for staff,

students and alumni. However, to guarantee that our staff were in a position to deliver engaging teaching materials and that our students could experience a digitally engaged learning experience, we further enhanced our IT resources and technology right from the onset of the pandemic.

Microsoft Teams is a unified communication and collaboration platform integrated into Office 365 and was the initial choice for rapid recording and lecture delivery. However, this platform has limitations in creating a truly engaging online classroom experience. Therefore, during the second semester, RCSI Bahrain deployed Blackboard Collaborate, a virtual classroom solution, which facilitates interaction and streamlines the process for lecture capture (session recording). The University rolled out a training programme and online tutorials to staff to help them use the full functionality of this product.



IC3 students in the library

The catalogue of e-learning platforms and facilities available to students during the second semester consisted of:

- Moodle Virtual Learning Environment
- Blackboard Collaborate (Virtual Classroom Solution)
- Microsoft Teams Live interactive sessions
- Recordings of interactive sessions
- Lecture and tutorial recordings
- Videos related to course work
- Class meetings
- Online question and answer sessions
- Online revision sessions
- Online feedback sessions
- Live streaming of teaching sessions
- Worksheets for tutorial sessions

With regard to examinations, various approaches for proctoring examinations have been investigated to ensure examination integrity. The method of testing used for knowledge examination mainly consisted of Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ) and Extended Matching Questions (EMQ). All examinations were delivered in a secure examination environment (local computer locked), in addition, "high-stakes" examinations were conducted online and proctored (video recording to allow remote invigilation of students). For clinical skills, we conducted a number of Direct Observed History (DOH) examinations using simulated patients, and manikins for examination skills.

Graduation of the Classes of 2020

We use a number of assessment techniques to evaluate the skills, knowledge and attitudes of our students. One of the high-stake examination components of our Final Year Medicine programme is the Direct Observed History (DOH). The DOH allows the students to demonstrate their competency on being able to take a thorough accurate history and to conduct a proper physical examination. Additionally, during a DOH, the students can demonstrate their ability to interpret a patient's history/examination findings by integrating all of their skills/knowledge from an accurate differential diagnosis.

As teaching hospitals were inaccessible during the COVID-19 pandemic, we obtained special permission from the Health and Education Ministries to permit us to conduct on-campus clinical examinations for the School of Medicine students. We also made the difficult decision to move the exam dates forward to allow for on-time graduation. Faculty members worked to redevelop our examinations to comply with the social distancing regulations, while ensuring that students were able to demonstrate an attainment of all learning outcomes including being deemed competent to become an intern. In doing so, we were able to graduate the class of 2020 on time and support the increasing demands on the healthcare system globally.



Nursing student in the Clinical Simulation Centre

The School of Nursing and Midwifery held discussions with the Health and Education Ministries to allow our final year nursing students to recommence their placements in the teaching hospitals and complete their training. This enabled our students to graduate on time and join the local workforce as soon as possible. The placements were allocated so that our students would not be working in COVID-19 wards, but their presence would allow more experienced colleagues to be deployed to critical care wards.

Those who graduated this year have succeeded in overcoming many difficulties and in the most challenging of times, and we feel extremely proud of our classes of 2020. The current events have demonstrated that the RCSI Bahrain graduates of 2020 are resilient and equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitude to meet the challenges of tomorrow. They have already inspired future cohorts of RCSI graduates and we have no doubt that this cohort will continue to inspire as alumni. We sincerely wish them the very best on their journey.

Physically distanced Digitally Engaged Learning

To support the health and wellbeing of our students for the coming academic year, RCSI Bahrain evolved its teaching platforms further to meet the requirements of social distancing and other safety measures, while still delivering a high standard of teaching in a blended learning experience (both face-to-face and online).

Although the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform was an existing system, over the summer months we expanded its features to enable our faculty members to deliver an online curriculum. To plan for future developments and allow for closer integration across all RCSI campuses, a single instance of the VLE was created to support a number of activities across Dublin and Bahrain. This project aimed to integrate all technologies to support campus-based face to face teaching, a 'flipped classroom' approach and the ability to record lectures. Such enhancements ensure a rich blended learning experience for our students for years to come.

RCSI Bahrain was also keen on implementing detailed return to campus plans with key innovations to be delivered before the students returned in the new academic year. The new initiatives included **a blended education model**, to maximise students' on-campus engagement and discussion with their academics and fellow students. We worked to adapt the timetables to facilitate this new modality of teaching. In addition, we applied the 'flipped classroom' blended learning approach, which focuses on student participation through active learning and engagement.

Another initiative was the introduction of '**Learning Communities**', this was a key initiative from THEP (Transforming Healthcare Education Programme) that was brought forward to support students. In the Learning Communities, classes were split into small



Refurbished library engagement area

groups and each group had dedicated on-campus hours each week. This allows us to control the number of students on campus at any one time and to comply with social distancing regulations in all campus facilities (tutorial rooms, lab, simulation training, etc).

Since laboratory practicals, anatomy and professional practice experience are essential parts of our students' first-year experience, we restructured these activities to provide students with high quality and safe learning experiences. We converted the HUB sports hall into simulation facilities with a new range of high-fidelity manikins and this has initiated the development of a Simulated Patient Unit. RCSI Bahrain supplied Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all students as part of the academic programme and students are being educated on the correct use of PPE.

Enhanced Library Services and Resources

Creating a more accessible and discoverable library has been the forefront of the customer service charter of the Library. In coordination with the Estates Department, the Library added six new study rooms and user engagement areas this year. Based on the demand from students, the library has extended its opening hours to 16.5 hours per day during weekdays and 14 hours per day during weekends. By February 2020, the occupancy of the library soared to an average of 70%.

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library extended its online services to continue serving the

students and staff community. Teaching & Learning Support, Research Support, Information Point and Reference Services were all supported by librarians through different virtual platforms. All staff members remained available to answer queries during weekdays through the virtual Libchat service.

For the 2020-21 academic year, the Library & Learning Resource Centre aims to actively support students through a number of newly developed virtual library services. Students who are due to come on campus can book a study space for a maximum of two hours by using the 'Find a seat service'. The library reading rooms will be accessible to our students through scheduled timetabled hours allocated for specific learning. Book stacks will no longer be accessible; however, students will be able to reserve books online via the 'Click & Collect service' and collect them at the Information Desk at an allocated time slot.

Library's Collaborative Events

The Library worked in partnership with the School of Postgraduate Studies and Research to host two library workshops delivered by library experts in the region. Ms Linda Ostlundh (Library Director, The National Medical Library, UAE) conducted a workshop on 'Searching and reporting methodologies for systematic reviews and meta-analysis'. Mr. Mohammed Ba-Essa (Manager, Preservation and Digital Services, KAUST, Saudi Arabia) delivered an impactful workshop on 'Increasing your visibility and impact of your research'.

“ My education at RCSI has given me a solid foundation in clinical practice, as well as the essentials with regards to ethics. ”

Dr Manaf Yusuf, winner of the Intern Award



Healthcare Environment
Development and Employability

06

Healthcare
Environment
Development
and
Employability

Healthcare Environment Development and Employability



Inspiring Excellence Award winner Dr Sabrina Berdouk with RCSI and RCSI Bahrain officials

RCSI Bahrain cultivates an environment where fulfilling one's aspirations and becoming a future healthcare leader is celebrated and is central to the journey of our students and alumni.

Official Launch of the President's Honours List

In recognition of our students' remarkable academic achievements, RCSI Bahrain launched its President's Honours List in October 2019. A total of 48 students from countries including Bahrain, Canada, Kuwait, the United States and Pakistan, across both the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing and Midwifery, achieved inclusion on the Honours List. The List honours the top six academically ranked students across its programmes on an annual basis with a financial reward, and this achievement is included on their transcripts.

RCSI Bahrain Alumna receives Prestigious Award

Dr Roaya Khalaf, RCSI Bahrain class of 2014 alumna, who is currently a Radiology Resident at Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), was the first Bahraini to be invited to the Fifth Annual Stanford 25 Skills Symposium, which focuses on promoting the culture of bedside medicine. Dr Khalaf was presented with the Margaret Rock Memorial Award for Best Presentation along with a prize for the Best Presentation in the Medical Education Curriculum category.

Inspiring Excellence Awards and Dr Henry Hutchinson Stewart Prizes

More than 90 guests visited the RCSI Bahrain campus in November for the annual Alumni Reception event, which was attended by representatives of graduating cohorts down the years, as well as RCSI fellows and members.

During the event, Emergency Medicine Consultant/ Emergency Residency Program Associate Director at Shaikh Khalifa Medical City, Abu Dhabi and 2013 School of Medicine valedictorian, Dr Sabrina Berdouk received the latest Inspiring Excellence Award from Immediate Past President of RCSI, Mr Kenneth Mealy and RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom. Dr Berdouk's portrait is now hanging proudly alongside her fellow Inspiring Excellence awardees in the RCSI Bahrain campus atrium. The event included the presentation of the National University of Ireland (NUI) Dr Henry Hutchinson Stewart prizes to senior students Manar Husain and Nalin Mathur and 2019 graduate, Dr Yousef Abousedu, for third prize in Microbiology, second prize in General Practice and third prize in Surgery, respectively.



RCSI

President's Honour List

Foundation Year:

1. Maryam Sadiq Ahmed Ali Mohamed Alrabeea
2. Ahmed Sadeq Abdulridha Al-Hindawi
3. Omar Samir Mohamed Megahed Saleh Elmitwalli
4. Walaa Reyadh Hasan Abdulla Ali Sanad
5. Eyadh Ebrahim Shaikh Rashed Almeraikhi
6. Fajer Sayed Nadhemi Salman Mustafa Qasim

Junior Cycle 1 - Junior Cycle 2

1. Walaa A.Hadi Ahmed Mohamed Albaqali
2. Ahmed Sameer Abdulaziz Qaedi
3. Zaynab B N A Maqwar
4. Shaikha Khaled Salman Mohamed Hasan Alqasimi
5. Manar Jaafar Saeed Abdali Mansoor Almansoor
6. Fathima Afira Faleel

Junior Cycle 3 - Intermediate Cycle 1

1. Taibah Hussain Mohammed Hasan A.Aziz Aladraj
2. Tarek Tabbah
3. Fathi Mahmoud Mohamed Abdelhai Moustafa
4. Fatema Osama A.Karim Mahmood Majed
5. Ahmed Rashed Ahmed Rashed Ali Alaradi
6. Obada Mohamad Said Kholoki

Intermediate Cycle 2 - Intermediate Cycle 3

1. Ali Mohamed Ali Sabah Mohamed
2. Manar Sayed Qasim Husain Qasim Husain
3. Mina Maher Maurice Amin Iskandar
4. Rula Jamal Hasan Mohamed Ali Naqi
5. Hajar Sayed Saad Abdulrazaq Abdulla
6. Marya Waleed Mohamed Ahmed Alhammadi

Senior Cycle 1

1. Bassam Ibrahim Abdulla Ali Alhamer
2. Nalin Mathur
3. Reem Hamed Abdulla A.Aziz Abdulla Althawadi
4. Aadil Amin Rajwani
5. Minahil Khan Shahid
6. Mohamed Ramzi Mohamed Rashed Almajed

Nursing Year 1

1. Sara Mohamed Abdulla Alharmesi Alhajeri
2. Fatema Salah Mohamed Husain Ali Alnofaei
3. Kashwer Abbas Mohamed Hasan
4. Noor Al Ain Najam Bukhari
5. Nawraa Sharif Hasan Ali Tulefat
6. Maryam Waleed Yusuf Ahmed Shaheen

Nursing Year 2

1. Zainab Sayed Ahmed Abdulla Salman Husain
2. Hawra Abdulla Isa Yusuf Hasan
3. Mahmood Khalid Mahmood Husain Ali
4. Ismaeel Mustafa Ismaeel Alawadhi
5. Haya Isa Hamad Salman Shareeda
6. Noor Abdulla Mohamed Isa Abdulla Aljasim

Nursing Year 3

1. Hawra Abdulshaheed Merza Husain Saeed
2. Ahmed Mohamed Jawad Radhi Hasan Alasheeri
3. Ghadeer Ebrahim Hasan Mohamed Husain
4. Shooq Khaled Hamad Khalifa Mejren Alkawari
5. Bashayer Farhan Farhan Juma Salem
6. Hamad Rashed Ahmed Sultan Dhaen Alkawari



Manar Hussain SC1 student, winner of Dr Henry Hutchinson Stewart prize (NUI) with RCSI and RCSI Bahrain officials

These prestigious awards are based on examination results in the corresponding faculties and schools of the constituent universities of NUI which include RCSI campuses in Dublin, Bahrain and Malaysia.

Intern Award Winner

The RCSI Bahrain Intern Award, introduced in 2015, is presented to one RCSI Bahrain intern who has demonstrated excellence in professionalism, communication skills and collaboration during their year of internship. The selection of the Intern Award winner is based on the information received by consultants, residents, co-workers, colleagues, and fellow peers through the Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) evaluation. The winner of 2019-2020 RCSI Bahrain Intern Award, Dr Manaf Yusuf, is an intern at the Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) and was also a member of the Coronavirus Unified Call Centre (444) team. From the feedback obtained, Dr Yusuf has received unanimous approval from his peers, the nursing staff, and consultants for his work as an intern, which is a wonderful achievement. We are extremely proud to have him as an RCSI Bahrain alumnus and look forward to watching him progress further in his career path.

Virtual Match Party

RCSI Bahrain hosted its first virtual match party in April 2020 to celebrate the successes of students and alumni who matched into postgraduate training programmes and jobs in the US and Canada this year. The party was hosted by RCSI Bahrain

President, Professor Sameer Ootom and other senior officials. This virtual celebration was an opportunity for students and alumni to share their updates since graduation and details of the specialty they matched to. Of the seven participants, two matched to Canada and are Canadian nationals, while the remaining five who matched to the US are Jordanian, American, Bahraini, Canadian and Pakistani.

Our Careers and Alumni Office is keen on supporting students who are preparing for the USMLE Step 1 exam and PLAB exams by providing different resources as part of a structured programme to help them succeed on the exam. Students who are interested in applying to the US and Canada are provided from the start of their medical journey with Alumni pathway sessions, one-to-one careers advice, as well as access to board exam preparation courses and question banks. Students are also able to access resources on interview preparation and receive personalised support during their match process.

Postgraduate Training Update

To match to postgraduate training in North America and as part of the application process, students are required to sit the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) exams. This year the USMLE Step 1 pass rate of RCSI Bahrain students and graduates was 77%. In 2020, 21 students and graduates matched to universities in US and six to Canada.



10x10 Alumni Reunion in Dubai

To work in the UK, graduates are required to register with the UK General Medical Council and sit through the Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board (PLAB 1 and PLAB 2) exams. A total of 23 graduates from different nationalities received offers this year for postgraduate training and core surgical or medical training jobs in the UK.

Of the 2020 medicine graduates, 89 secured a post to complete their internship in Bahrain at our partner hospitals - King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH), Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF) and Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), all students who applied were offered places. The remaining graduates were offered postgraduate training or research opportunities in Kuwait, Jordan, Qatar, UAE, Egypt, Kenya, US and Canada.

10x10 Alumni Gatherings

The RCSI Bahrain 10x10 Alumni Gatherings were planned as a series of ten events in ten countries to mark the tenth anniversary of RCSI Bahrain's inaugural Conferring Ceremony in June 2010. We were delighted to host the first three events in Nigeria, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait in January and February.

The event in Abuja in January was the University's first official visit to Nigeria and saw graduates from the medicine classes of 2013, 2017, 2018 and 2019, join RCSI Bahrain staff members, as well as graduates of RCSI in Dublin, for a networking dinner. During the

gathering, our alumni shared stories of their time at university, their life experiences since graduation and return to Nigeria, while staff provided updates on the latest developments on campus and opportunities available to alumni. The success of the inaugural event set the tone for the event that followed in Dubai and with the number of attendees steadily growing, excellent discussions were held on the subjects of research and professional development in particular.

Due to the pandemic, the events scheduled in Jordan, UK, Germany, Ireland, US, Canada and Bahrain have been postponed.



President Professor Sameer Otoom with RCSI alumni in the annual Alumni Reception

“ I believe that the nursing graduates of 2020 are truly admirable for continuing their clinical placement and finishing their education in order to serve their country in the time of need. ”

Hawra Saeed,
Nursing Valedictorian Class of 2020

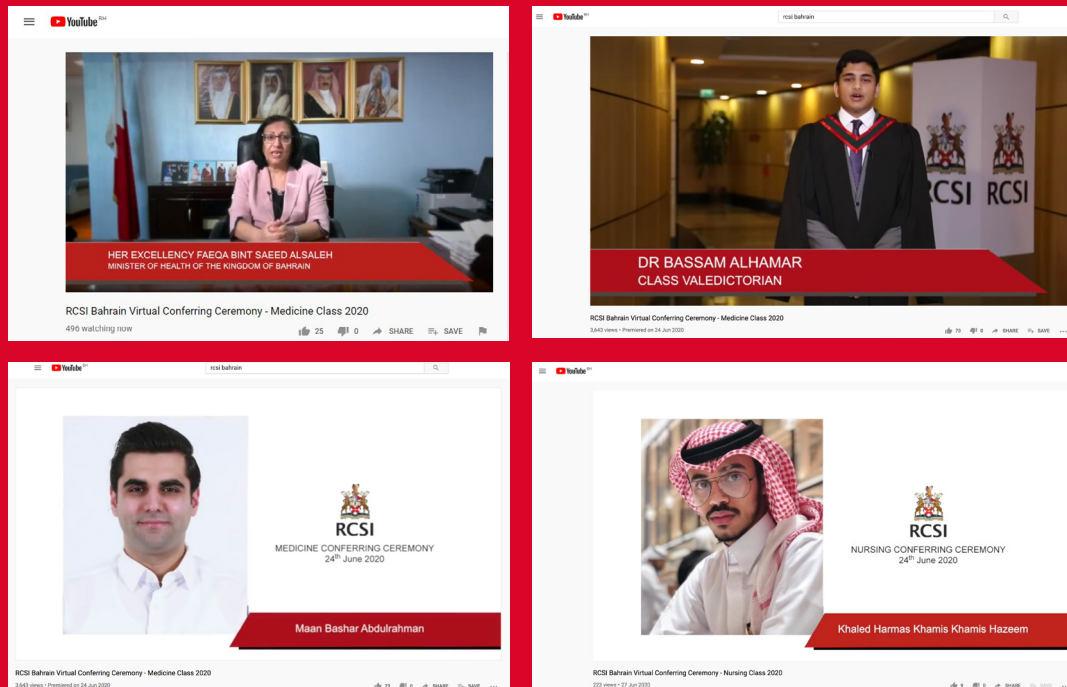


07

Student
Life and
Experience

Student Life and
Experience

Student Life and Experience



Screenshots from the virtual conferring

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, RCSI Bahrain placed health, safety and wellbeing at the heart of our student experience, ensuring that our support system would cover all students' needs at this challenging time.

Virtual Conferring Ceremony

In June 2020, RCSI Bahrain celebrated its first Virtual Conferring Ceremony for the class of 2020, with 152 graduates from the School of Medicine, 44 graduates from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, along with 13 Master of Science in Nursing graduates from the School of Postgraduate Studies and Research.

The two virtual conferring ceremonies featured congratulatory and supportive messages to our graduates from His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Health, and from Her Excellency Faeqa bint Saeed Al-Saleh, the Minister of Health. The President of RCSI, Professor P. Ronan O'Connell and Chancellor of the National University of Ireland, Dr Maurice Manning, also addressed the class of 2020, praising them for their resilience during these challenging times and expressing their eagerness for the graduates to join the ranks of healthcare leaders around the world.

On this occasion, awards were presented to the high achieving students from both undergraduate schools. The School of Medicine class valedictorian, Dr Bassam Alhamer won the Professor James Finucane Prize in Medicine, Degree Award Marks Gold Medal and Senior Cycle Silver Medal. Dr Mohamed Almaged was awarded with the Highest Aggregate Marks Gold Medal and the Senior Cycle Bronze Medal, while Dr Reem Althawadi was awarded with the Professor Niall O'Higgins Prize in Surgery.

In the School of Nursing and Midwifery, the class valedictorian Hawra Saeed was awarded with both the BSc Nursing Gold and Silver Medals. The MSc Nursing Gold Medal was presented to Bisma Singh and the BSc Nursing Bronze Medal was awarded to Abier Anfos. The Rufaida Alaslamia Prize in Nursing was awarded to Marwah Sayer.

The Student Development and Wellbeing Department redesigned numerous programmes and activities to support students throughout this challenging period

Student Engagement and Support

As part of RCSI Bahrain's efforts to support the containment of COVID-19 in Bahrain, we implemented a comprehensive action and communications plan to highlight to our students the importance of adhering to national guidelines, inform them of the safety measures taken by the University to protect their health, safety and wellbeing, and our commitment to maintaining the quality of their educational experience. We also regularly provided our students with information updates as the situation unfolded.

The shift towards online learning in the COVID-19 situation has brought a greater challenge over time, for students to remain successfully engaged in their studies. Since student engagement is essential for academic progress, the Student Development and Wellbeing Department redesigned numerous programmes and activities to support students throughout this challenging period. The emphasis of the support provided to students was threefold:

- The safe return home, safe arrival to Bahrain (for early return) and overall health, safety and wellbeing of our students
- The preparations for the 20/21 academic year along with the creation of a new learning environment, both on campus and through platforms of technology
- Engaging students with their selected programme of study

The RCSI Bahrain Student Services team enhanced students' social experience towards a combination of online and virtual activities, and daily exercise classes continue to be delivered by the RCSI Bahrain HUB team online.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The safety of our students was at the centre of our planning from the onset of the pandemic and throughout the remainder of the academic year. We developed numerous procedures and protocols to assist our students as follows:

- A set of COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Shared accommodation guide
- Advice for students during self-isolation
- Self-help resources
- Protocol for the health management of vulnerable students
- Advice for students who tested positive for COVID-19

All the information was made available on a dedicated COVID-19 Advice to Students page on the University's Moodle VLE, as well as on the RCSI Bahrain website.

Counselling services delivered by the Student Health and Wellbeing team have been available throughout this period from our dedicated staff, as well as from our external counsellors. The Student Health and Wellbeing team have supported students with health advice and follow-up support for students who are in self-isolation.





RCSI Bahrain Virtual Conferring 2019/2020 Award Winners of School of Medicine



Dr Aadil Rajwani



Dr Bassam Ibrahim
Abdulla Ali AlHamer



Dr Mohamed Ramzi
Mohamed Almajed



Dr Reem Al Thawadi

To assist students with their travel needs, whether for their return home or arrival to Bahrain for an early return, we shared regular updates on visa and entry requirements into Bahrain along with flight status and travel regulations, as provided by the relevant institutions in Bahrain.

From 21 July 2020, passengers arriving in Bahrain have been charged for the first COVID-19 test and a second COVID-19 exit test after a period of 10 days. To support the health and safety of our international students, RCSI Bahrain has been reimbursing the expenses of these two COVID-19 tests for students on their first trip to Bahrain.

Return to Campus Preparations

To prepare all students for the return to campus and their new learning environment, we developed a wide range of tools, from a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), booklets, online inductions, weekly newsletters, a 'Welcome to RCSI Bahrain' video, as well as two Town Hall meetings focused on undergraduate students. The information provided covered the following topics:

- Overview of the return to campus plans and the actions implemented to ensure the safety of all students and staff on-campus



Example of signage on display for the return to campus

- Overview of the new student experience, including services, activities and information on the new Learning Communities which have been formed to provide students with a more meaningful learning experience, as well as complying with Health and Safety regulations
- Overview of the new systems in place to support blended learning, the technology adopted, and an update on clinical placements

RCSI Bahrain adapted its regulations to support all students at this challenging time, by adjusting the 'Exceptional Circumstances' framework for students unable to return to campus either for an early return or to start the new academic year.

Specific protocols were implemented to support students' safety, health and wellbeing, and a dedicated university email address was created specifically to support students and respond to their wide range of queries, in anticipation of the start of the new academic year.

Registration for the academic year 2020-21 was moved online with a dedicated website page and tailored online forms for students to submit their documentation, including:

- An online Registration portal was opened in order for students to submit documentation as per Higher Education Council (HEC) requirements
- Student health records could be uploaded
- Student ID Card could be requested
- A university provided laptop could be requested, and collection arranged

Health Insurance for International Students

In agreement with the Higher Education Council (HEC), RCSI Bahrain arranged for the introduction of a mandatory health insurance scheme for all non-GCC students to ensure they are appropriately covered for healthcare services, including COVID-19 treatment, during their stay in Bahrain. The group insurance scheme is favourably priced and beneficial to supporting the health and wellbeing of all international students.



Student Development and Wellbeing Buddy programme team



RCSI Bahrain Virtual Conferring 2019/2020 Award Winners of School of Nursing and Midwifery



Abier Abboud Haj
Khalefa Anfos



Bisma Jabaraja Singh



Hawra Abdulshaheed
Merza Husain Saeed



Marwah Ehmoood
Khulaifa Sayer

“ The Diabetes Mobile Unit has reached over 4,800 children and conducted more than 80 school visits to raise awareness and provide education on diabetes, one of Bahrain’s most predominant health issues. ”

Victoria Ham,
Community Outreach Manager



008

Community
Engagement

Community
Engagement

Community Engagement



Beach clean up activity organised by Community Engagement

An aim of studying healthcare is to enhance the health and wellbeing of communities. At RCSI Bahrain both students and faculty members are actively encouraged to pursue this goal by supporting their local communities.

Minister of Health receives RCSI Bahrain Delegation

The Minister of Health, Her Excellency Faeqa bint Saeed Al Saleh, received a delegation of senior officials from RCSI Bahrain led by RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom, other senior officials and RCSI Council Member, Professor Laura Viani, to present a donation to the Paediatrics Oncology Ward at Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) on behalf of the University. The funds were gathered through the University's Charity Challenge organised by the Community Outreach Department.

Student Volunteers

Hundreds of RCSI Bahrain students from the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing and Midwifery volunteered to support the Ministry of Health in its combat against the COVID-19 pandemic in Bahrain. Our students held different roles, from supporting the call centre, to conducting follow-up calls with infected patients, participating in contact tracing efforts and performing swabs. RCSI Bahrain's international students who returned to their home countries also contributed to the fight against the pandemic by providing support to their local communities.

An additional one hundred medical students also volunteered to support the 23 research projects undertaken by RCSI Bahrain. The students were supervised by Professor Steve Atkin, Head of Postgraduate Studies and Research, and Professor Manaf Al Qahtani, Adult Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiologist Consultant and Head of the Infection Control Unit at the Royal Medical Services of the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF) and Clinical Associate Professor, Lead in Microbiology at RCSI Bahrain, and were directly involved in the research process, including writing the research manuscripts.

We salute the contribution made by the hundreds of RCSI Bahrain students who chose to support their communities at this challenging time, and we welcome their research contributions towards leading the world to better health.

Donation to Bahrain Red Crescent Society

Secretary General of the Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS), Dr Fawzi Amin, attended a meeting on campus in September to receive the annual donation from the Community Outreach

Department, as part of an existing Memorandum of Understanding with the Society. The donation was granted to support the ongoing maintenance of a school which serves over 1,300 students in a remote area in Tajikistan.

Donation to Bahrain Diabetes Society

In September, RCSI Bahrain invited the Head of Bahrain Diabetes Society and Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health, Dr Mariam Al Hajeri, to a meeting where she was presented with a donation to the Society, from funds raised by the RCSI Bahrain Charity Challenge event. The meeting included discussions on the success of the Diabetes Mobile Unit and plans for developing initiatives for the future.

Diabetes Awareness Event

In our mission to spread awareness about health matters in our community, RCSI Bahrain, in partnership with private healthcare provider American Mission Hospital (AMH), hosted a Diabetes Awareness event in Seef Mall, Muharraq. More than 20 staff members and students from RCSI Bahrain participated in the event along with healthcare professionals from AMH. Organised by the University's Community Engagement Department, the awareness campaign provided our nursing and medicine students with the opportunity to work as part of an inter-professional team alongside AMH nurses and doctors, to help educate the public on type 2 diabetes, its risks, symptoms and preventative measures. Over 200 individuals visited the event, where 2% were newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and 3% were also newly diagnosed with hypertension.

Diabetes Mobile Unit

RCSI Bahrain started its Diabetes Mobile Unit programme for the 2019-2020 academic year with a trip to Safiyya bint Abdul Muttalib Primary Girls School in Hamad Town. The visit was the first in a series of similar trips to schools around the country and featured students from the University's senior nursing class, raising awareness of type 2 diabetes and how to prevent the disease through a number of interactive educational games and activities.

Under the patronage of the Governor of the Southern Governorate, His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Khalifa, the Diabetes Mobile Unit supported the 'Combat Obesity and Diabetes Project' driven by the Bahrain Petroleum Company along with Bahrain Diabetes Society, which aims to combat the challenge of obesity and diabetes among children.

Our Diabetes Mobile Unit also attended the annual Shurooq Camp, organised by the Bahrain Diabetes Society, which aims to help educate children, recently

diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, on how to manage their condition while living a fulfilled and healthy lifestyle.

To date, the Diabetes Mobile Unit has reached over 4,800 children and conducted more than 80 school visits to raise awareness and provide education on diabetes, one of Bahrain's most predominant health issues.

Blood Donation Drive

A total of 69 RCSI Bahrain students and staff made donations at the two blood donation drives organised on campus this year. Donations were for the Central Blood Bank, which provides blood to the Salmaniya Medical Complex and other government and private hospitals. RCSI Bahrain has been collaborating with the Central Blood Bank for the past seven years and has so far made a total of 616 donations. Our partnership with the Central Blood Bank is integral under our commitment to promoting health awareness and health education to support the needs of the community.

Community Engagement Awareness Drive

During the month of September, the Language and Culture Unit (LCU) collaborated with the Smile Initiative, developed by the Future Society for Youth, to help raise awareness and support for children with cancer. Under the Smile Initiative 'Kids 'R' Golden' campaign, our RCSI Bahrain staff, with the support of first year nursing students, organised a week of activities which included guest lectures, foosball tournaments and raffles. The Smile Initiative received a donation from the University, as a part of the campaign. The partnership with Smile Initiative is part of the LCU's commitment to integrating community engagement and service within its programme, and focuses on the importance of encouraging volunteer participation in community outreach activities amongst the younger students of RCSI Bahrain.



Blood donation drive held in the Clinical Simulation Centre

“ The discussions with Executives from the Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi emphasised the value and importance of our ongoing partnership, as well as its significance across the region in terms of provision of leadership in the education of nurses and healthcare professionals. ”

Professor Maura Pidgeon, Associate Professor in Nursing - Director for Masters in Nursing



09

Focus on our
Partners

Focus on our Partners

RCSI Bahrain is keen on fostering an internal culture of development and enhancement, supported by close collaboration with its national and international partners, as well as regular benchmarking against global standards.



President Professor Sameer Ootom, the British Ambassador His Excellency Roderick Drummond and RCSI Bahrain COO Mr Stephen Harrison-Mirfield

British Ambassador Visit

The British Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Excellency Roderick Drummond, visited the RCSI Bahrain campus in November to meet with RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom, along with senior officials. RCSI Bahrain delivered a presentation to the Ambassador which included information on local and international opportunities available to students through the RCSI Bahrain Research Summer School, including Keele University in the UK and the new partnership with the Higher Education Academy.

Due to an increased interest from students on postgraduate training opportunities in the UK, the University regularly invites alumni from the UK to speak to students on training opportunities, as more than 40 RCSI Bahrain graduates are currently training and employed in the UK. His Excellency Ambassador Drummond noted that he looks forward to future possible collaborations to expand postgraduate training opportunities for RCSI Bahrain graduates in the UK.

New PG Dip/MSc Intensive Care Nursing receives HEC approval

In January 2020, RCSI Bahrain received approval from the Higher Education Council (HEC) for the new Postgraduate Diploma/ Master of Science in Intensive Care Nursing (adult) programme. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing pressure on the hospitals, it was decided that this programme will start running from September 2021.

This dynamic programme is aimed at the practising nurse wishing to further his or her career in Intensive Care Nursing and is structured around the diverse nursing knowledge and competence required for the multiple and complex needs of the critically ill patient. Year One is the separate qualification of the Postgraduate Diploma in Intensive Care Nursing, which requires the successful completion of six theoretical modules, in parallel with the year-long Clinical Competence Assessment. Year Two leads to the award of the MSc in Intensive Care Nursing, on successful completion of a capstone research project.

Irish Medical Council Visit postponed to March 2021

We are committed to the highest academic standards of teaching and learning and the standard of our transnational degrees. Part of this commitment entails benchmarking our provision against good practices nationally and internationally, taking part in quality reviews and accreditation by renowned quality agencies and achieving international recognition for the quality of our programmes, which opens different pathways for our graduates both nationally and internationally.

Since 2014, our Medicine programme has been benchmarked against the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) standards and accredited by the Medical Council of Ireland (IMC) which is recognised by the WFME. This year, RCSI Bahrain was preparing to undertake the re-accreditation process of the undergraduate Medicine programme by the IMC. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the worldwide travel disruption experienced, the programme's accreditation was extended for a year and the IMC visit was moved to March 2021.

Member of Shura Council addresses University Executives

A member of the Shura Council and businesswoman, Her Excellency Nancy Khedouri, was welcomed to the RCSI Bahrain campus in November 2019 to meet with RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Otoom, along with senior officials.

Her Excellency provided senior management with a detailed overview on the role of the Shura Council, in addition to general information on the National Assembly, Executive Authority and the Judicial Authority in Bahrain. The presentation included a brief history of the National Action Charter, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the system of Government and the Shura Council, followed by an introduction to the Executive Authority and the Judicial Authority. At the end of her presentation, Her Excellency presented attendees with copies of the book 'The Guide to the Function of Shura Council'.



President Professor Sameer Otoom and Her Excellency Nancy Khedouri



RCSI Bahrain officials meeting with Supreme Council for Women officials regarding the Award for Advancement of Bahraini Women

Award for Advancement of Bahraini Women

RCSI Bahrain was awarded second place in the private institution category in the Award of Her Royal Highness (HRH) Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa for Bahraini Women. The award is considered one of the important initiatives achieved by the Kingdom of Bahrain in the field of supporting and consolidating the status of Bahraini women. Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka underlined the role of the award in supporting the institutional and individual efforts to adopt policies aimed at achieving active partnership and gender balance in various sectors.

We take pride in this recognition and the support we receive for our efforts and initiatives in supporting the award's aims towards gender equality, non-discrimination against women, supporting and empowering working women, ensuring their success in performing their work and family duties, increasing the number of women holding leading and executive positions and following up on national efforts that aim to integrate women's needs in national development plans.

Ministry of Health Steering Committee

A Steering Committee meeting was held between the Ministry of Health and RCSI Bahrain in November at the Ministry of Health offices in Bahrain, to discuss and agree student access to electronic patient records, the professional development of clinical staff at Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), the upcoming visit of the Irish Medical Council (IMC) and the internship programme. During the meeting, the Committee approved the list of clinical staff working with RCSI Bahrain. RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom, and other RCSI Bahrain officials extended their gratitude to the Ministry officials for their continuous support.

Nursing Advisory Board Meeting

In April 2020, we were able to successfully conduct our first Virtual Programme Advisory Board for the Bachelor in Nursing and Masters in Nursing programmes, as part of the yearly Board's review to oversee the development and delivery of the programmes.

The virtual meeting was attended by 26 representatives from RCSI Bahrain's affiliated hospitals, King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH), Bahrain Defence Force Hospital (BDF), Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), American Mission Hospital (AMH), and Royal Bahrain Hospital (RBH), along with representatives from the Ministry of Health, National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) and Tamkeen. Alongside RCSI Bahrain faculty and senior members, nursing students and alumni attended the virtual meeting, in addition to representatives from the Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi.

Attendees of the virtual Advisory Board welcomed the measures taken by RCSI Bahrain to ensure continuance of the programmes and appreciated the efforts made to ensure that nursing students return to practice, complete their programme as planned and that final year students were able to enter the workforce without delay. The Advisory Board discussed the arrangements for the continuation of online teaching, both for the theoretical and practical components of the programmes under the restrictions of COVID-19.

Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi Academic Partnership

Dr Gayle Petty, Director of Academic Partners (Nursing) in Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi chaired the Bahrain Higher Education Council (HEC) Viva's in January 2020, for the MSc in Nursing students who had completed their research dissertation. During her visit, Professor Sameer Ootom, President of RCSI Bahrain, alongside

other RCSI Bahrain senior officials, met with Dr Petty to discuss possible future developments under the Academic Partnership, in addition to the current MSc in Nursing.

The meeting also included discussions on the approval of the HEC PG Dip/MSc in Nursing Intensive Care (Adult) Programme, placements for medical student electives and the Professional Development Diploma in Clinical Leadership. The discussions emphasised the value and importance of this partnership, as well as its significance across the region in terms of provision of leadership in the education of healthcare professionals.

Ministry of Education Workshop

In January 2020, our RCSI Bahrain librarians attended a workshop organised by the Ministry of Education on 'Unpacking Bibliometrics and Boosting Citations'. The workshop was also attended by academics, researchers and other professionals from universities in Bahrain.

As part of the 2018-2022 strategic plan, a framework to develop our pillars was mapped out and the opportunities generated by the academic year 2019-2020, in conjunction with the ongoing support of our stakeholders, has fostered the advancement of those plans.



Professor Laura Viani and Major General Professor Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa

Professor Laura Viani receives award from Royal Medical Services

Professor Laura Viani, RCSI Council Member and Otolaryngologist/Neurotologist at Beaumont Hospital and Temple Street University Children's Hospital in Dublin, was presented with an award from the Royal Medical Services and the Saudi Otorhinolaryngology Society.

The award was presented as a token for her contribution towards providing training in Bahrain and the Middle East. During her visit to Bahrain in September, Professor Viani met with the Director of Bahrain Defence Force Royal Medical Services, Major General Professor Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, the senior management team at RCSI Bahrain, and assisted in cochlea implant surgeries at the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital.

A YEAR IN PICTURES

September

Orientation Week



January

Award winners honoured during annual Staff Lunch



November

RCSI Bahrain hosts Fourth International Research Conference



October

International Night event



February

Coronavirus Risk lecture conducted by Professor Manaf Al Qahtani



December

Students and staff gather to celebrate Bahrain's National Day





May
Alumni Series Special organised
by Student Council



March
Student Volunteers

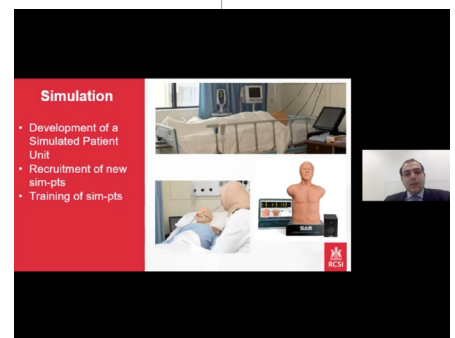


July
Safe return to campus
refurbishment



April
RCSI Bahrain helps in creating
3D face visor for medical
teams in hospitals

June
RCSI Bahrain hosts virtual
Conferring Ceremony



August
Students Town Hall



“ **RCSI Bahrain** aims to enhance health in Bahrain, the GCC region and beyond, through endeavour, innovation and collaboration in education, research and service. ”





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RCSI Leading the world to better health