

NDC Provides Specialized Health Services to Children Suffering from Heart Diseases

Caritas Baby Hospital, Bethlehem (Specialized Health Services Grant Beneficiary NGO)



Rahaf Bazay'a is a 5 year old girl from Betula, Hebron. She was born a healthy baby, without any birth complications or deficiencies. When she was four years old, Rahaf suddenly started facing difficulties in breathing; and the situation continued for a few weeks and eventually progressed into becoming a life threatening state. Her parents immediately took her to the nearby hospital in Hebron, where she was examined, and diagnosed to have a heart problem, and possibly heart failure. Due to the limited resources available at the hospital, particularly the absence of needed cardiograph machines and instruments, the exact cause of this failure remained unknown.

Rahafa's medical situation continued to worsen and her difficulty in breathing continued to regress. The doctor who diagnosed her situation recommended that she should be transferred to the Caritas Baby Hospital (CBH) in Bethlehem. At that time, the doctor was informed that the CBH received a grant to purchase a high-standard echocardiography machine with 3-Dimensional modality which exams the heart and its anatomy in depth and accurately identifies the exact causes of heart failures. As advised, Rahafa's parents took her to the CBH in coordination with the specialized pediatric cardiologist there, Dr. Rula Awwad, to undertake such a heart examination.

The result of the echocardiography examination revealed that Rahaf has a congestive heart failure with severe mitral valve regurgitation and mitral valve leaflet tear in her heart and this requires immediate heart operation. Without any delay, she was immediately transferred to an Israeli hospital to endure an open heart surgery.

Fortunately, the surgery went well and Rahaf was discharged home a few days later. One week after her discharge, Rahafa came to CBH for regular postoperative check-up. Dr. Rula Awwad, the pediatrician that examined her, discovered that there was a large amount of pericardial effusion

around her heart, and she immediately placed Rahaf in the CBH for intensive heart monitoring and medical treatment. Three days later, Rahaf's health stabilized and she was discharged from the CBH.

Furthermore, Rahaf's mother, Um Da'oud, expressed her gratitude to the CBH staff for rescuing her child's life and for the donors (NDC) who made it possible for the CBH to purchase this unique and essential machine, without which her daughter's heart failure may have terminated her young life.

It is worth mentioning that NDC provided a total amount of USD 230,000 to the CBH as to purchase the echocardiography machine. This machine is the first of its kind in the West Bank and it provides 3 modalities, 1) 3D echocardiography, by which the heart can be examined from a 3 dimensional angle, in addition to all its details. 2) Tissue Doppler, which helps in assessing certain difficult cases and, 3) Fetal echocardiography which provides detailed examination of the baby's heart intrauterine during pregnancy. In the near future, the CBH will conduct workshops about the importance of this machine and the indications it provides about fetal echocardiography.

