

Children's Heart Center Team at AUBMC Performs the First Lebanese Non-Surgical Trans-catheter Implantation of a Pulmonary Valve

(Monday July 6, 2015) Beirut, Lebanon – The Children's Heart Center team at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) performed the first Lebanese percutaneous implantation of a pulmonary valve “Melody” to treat patients with Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) instead of performing an open heart surgery which is a much more invasive procedure. The procedures took place last week and the two Lebanese patients with CHD from Shouf and Bekaa areas who underwent the procedures left the hospital in excellent condition. The procedure was performed by a team headed by the Director of the Children's Heart Center Dr. Fadi Bitar, in addition to Drs. Issam El Rassi, Mariam Arabi and Georges Bikhazi from the Anesthesiology Department with the assistance of Dr. Alain Fraise from the Royal Brompton Hospital, London UK.

The “Melody” is indicated for patients with a dysfunctional right ventricular outflow tract (RVOT) conduit. Conduits are surgically implanted valves used to treat congenital heart defects of the pulmonary valve and often require replacement since they have a limited lifespan. Accordingly, “Melody” is unusually beneficial to pediatric patients with RVOT conduits who may require several surgeries over their lifetimes.

The “TPV Melody” insertion is a special procedure used to treat narrowed or leaking pulmonary valve conduits that hinder the proper flow of blood from the heart's right ventricle to the pulmonary artery, which is responsible for the transport of the blood to the lungs for oxygenation. The conduits get calcified or become leaky with time and instead of performing an open heart surgery to treat the condition, the “Melody” is intended to provide another option to conduit replacement. It is a valve inserted between the right ventricle and the lung artery via a stent and delivered on a special balloon catheter inserted through the groin area and implanted in the required position. The patients usually leave the hospital the next day of the procedure without the scar of the surgery and the accompanied pain and risks of open heart surgery. The “Melody” device recently received the Pre-Market Approval (PMA) from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in January 2015 and is being now used in the leading heart centers in the USA and world.

The Children's Heart Center at AUBMC is one of the leading Centers in the region and the only comprehensive Children's Heart Center in Lebanon and is comprised of a team of more than 50 physicians, nurses and allied healthcare providers. The Center's surgical outcome results are comparable to the leading hospitals in the USA with success rates of 97%. The center has previously reported first of these kind procedures to treat children with CHD in Lebanon and the world, in addition to pioneering worldwide discoveries in the field of Pediatric Cardiology.

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With these two procedures being performed at AUBMC, the Children's Heart Center joins the finest heart centers worldwide in delivering state-of-the-art care to the children of Lebanon who can now enjoy this advanced modality of treatment.

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About AUBMC

Since 1902, AUBMC has been providing the highest standards of care to patients across Lebanon and the region. It is also the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine at AUB (established in 1867), which has trained generations of medical students and physicians, and whose graduates can be found at leading institutions around the world. AUBMC is the only medical institution in the Middle East to have earned the four international accreditations of JCI, Magnet, CAP, and ACGME-I attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, pathology/laboratory services and graduate medical education.

The Faculty of Medicine has graduated over 4,000 medical students and physicians; the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing provides excellent education for the nursing staff, and the Medical Center meets the health care needs of over 360,000 patient visits annually.

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For more information please visit our website www.aubmc.org or contact:

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