

UICC strategic leader honoured in Amman

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Geneva, Switzerland, 26 September 2007 - Dr Joe Harford, UICC strategic leader for knowledge transfer, was honoured this month for his work in the Middle East.

Dr Harford directs the US National Cancer Institute's office of international affairs, and the award from the Arab Medical Association Against Cancer in recognition of a decade of work in the Middle East that includes numerous bilateral activities as well as the Middle East Cancer Consortium (MECC).

His work with MECC, which has Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Turkey, and the Palestinian Authority as its members, has focused on establishing and strengthening cancer registries, as well as individual and group training for regional health-care workers and cancer researchers. He has also worked on bilateral activities to build capacity for research and improving patient care in the Middle East.

Faisal Al Fayez, the former prime minister of Jordan, presented Dr Harford with the award at a gala dinner during the Middle East and North Africa cancer research conference that took place in Amman, Jordan, 3-4 September.

The cancer research conference - the first of its kind in the region - was sponsored by the King Hussein Cancer and Biotechnology Institute, Duke University, and NCI.

It offered sessions on cell death and differentiation, biomarkers, molecular targets and molecular diagnostics, signal transduction, clinical therapeutics, and future directions for cancer research.

The citation on the AMAAC award reads "In recognition for his significant contribution to enhance the status of cancer care and cancer research in the region and for his unwavering efforts to support needed infrastructure and create opportunities

in cancer education, training and capacity building to help cancer patients and their families throughout the Arab world."

In accepting the award, Dr Harford thanked AMAAC and acknowledged the support of former and current NCI directors and the US State Department. He also thanked NCI's Dr Samir Khleif, who served for three years as director general of the King Hussein Cancer Centre in Amman. During the gala dinner, Dr Harford gave a talk on "A global view on cancer".