

PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

Chronic Care in Humanitarian Crises



RAGHEIDA MOUSSALLEM
JNAH, LEBANON

Ragheida is 57 years old and has type 2 diabetes. She is an immigrant from Syria and now lives in Lebanon.
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Patient profile

Ragheida has type 2 diabetes

Ragheida Moussallem, who is from Syria, fears that she will die soon. Her fears have nothing to do with the war that has ravaged her home country. It is her body run down with diabetes-related complications that concerns her: she needs (but cannot afford) a cardiac catheterisation, she has high blood pressure, she has cataracts and constant eye pain, and she struggles to walk on her swollen legs.

Diagnosed with type 2 diabetes more than 15 years ago, Ragheida does her best to manage her condition. She checks her blood glucose levels, she injects insulin twice a day, and she is careful about what she eats. Despite this, her blood glucose readings often reach dangerously high levels.

Ragheida and her husband live with six of their seven children (and grandchildren) in Beirut. Her children work as carpenters, but work is unreliable and money is scarce.

Ragheida recently discovered that she could get a free supply of insulin from a medical centre 20 kilometres from her home; unfortunately, the imported medicines are not always available. Doctors have told Ragheida that she requires a cardiac catheterisation and eye surgery, but she cannot afford these procedures. She believes that medical help would be cheaper in Syria. However, she cannot return as her hometown of Ghouta has been completely destroyed.

"When the people say that the diabetes is the worst disease in the world, they are telling the truth. The diabetes is very bad disease and it hurt my eyes so much, my heart too. I am so sad."

PROFILE DETAILS

Name

Ragheida Moussallem

Age at time of interview

57-years-old (April 2019)

Location

Beirut, Lebanon

Country of origin

Syria

Year of leaving country of origin

2012

Type of diabetes

Type 2 diabetes

Year of diagnosis

2004

Diabetes-related complications

Swelling in the legs (oedema), eye and heart problems

Occupation

None mentioned

