



SAMS

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



**Strengthening Health Systems
and Transforming Lives**



SAMS Leadership Visit to Syria's Hospitals

During a recent visit to Syria, SAMS Executive Director David Lillie toured several SAMS-supported healthcare facilities to assess ongoing programs, review service delivery, and meet with frontline medical teams working tirelessly to care for patients across the region. His visit included the SAMS Heart Hospital, Maaret Misrin Hospital, and Dana Maternity Hospital, each of which plays a critical role in providing lifesaving and specialized care to vulnerable communities.



Throughout the visit, David met with physicians, nurses, technicians, administrators, and support staff across multiple departments to better understand both the progress achieved and the challenges healthcare workers continue to face. Discussions focused on strengthening systems of care, improving patient outcomes, and ensuring that facilities remain equipped to deliver safe, high-quality, and patient-centered medical services despite ongoing pressures on the healthcare system.

At the SAMS Heart Hospital, he observed the impact of advanced cardiac services that continue to save lives through urgent interventions and specialized treatment. At Maaret Misrin Hospital, he reviewed emergency and inpatient services supporting thousands of patients each month, while his visit to Dana Maternity Hospital highlighted the critical maternal and newborn care being provided to mothers and infants in northern Syria.

The visit also served as an opportunity to recognize the resilience and dedication of frontline healthcare workers who continue to serve their communities with compassion and professionalism under incredibly difficult circumstances. By engaging directly with staff and leadership teams, SAMS reaffirmed its commitment to supporting healthcare professionals, strengthening medical infrastructure, and expanding access to quality healthcare for families across Syria.

As SAMS continues its mission, visits like these help ensure that programs remain responsive to community needs while reinforcing SAMS' long-term commitment to restoring and sustaining healthcare services for Syrians.



Syria's Health Minister Inaugurates SAMS-Rehabilitated Department at Damascus Hospital

In May, Syria's Minister of Health, Dr. Musab Al-Ali, inaugurated the newly rehabilitated Gastroenterology and Endoscopy Department at Damascus Hospital (Al-Mujtahid), which was restored and equipped by the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen Syria's healthcare system and expand access to high-quality specialized medical services.



The rehabilitation project included a comprehensive modernization of the department's infrastructure, with extensive construction and renovation work, upgraded air conditioning systems, and the installation of medical gas networks to improve the clinical

environment and enhance patient safety. The department was also supplied with modern stretchers, patient monitors, and other essential medical equipment, alongside the maintenance and rehabilitation of advanced endoscopy devices to help ensure patients can access timely and effective diagnostic and therapeutic care.

The upgraded department is expected to improve the hospital's capacity to provide specialized gastroenterology and endoscopy services, supporting both patients and healthcare workers with a more efficient and better-equipped treatment environment.

During the inauguration ceremony, the administration of Damascus Hospital (Al-Mujtahid) expressed its appreciation for SAMS' continued support and contributions to the healthcare sector by presenting a shield of appreciation to the organization's Country Director, Mr. Baraa Al-Samoudi, in recognition of SAMS' efforts to improve medical services and support healthcare institutions across Syria.



Meet the Engineer Who Restored Cancer Care in Hama

There are heroes whose names may never appear in the spotlight, yet their impact is felt in people's lives every single day.

Biomedical engineer Ismaail Aajoukah, who had built a stable life and career in Chicago with his family, chose to answer the call of humanitarian and professional duty by traveling to Syria at a critical time when patients were in urgent need of support. At the radiation therapy center in Hama, the linear accelerator had stopped functioning for several days, bringing treatment sessions to a halt and leaving hundreds of cancer patients waiting anxiously. For many patients, the machine represented far more than medical equipment, it was a source of hope and a lifeline for continued treatment.

Ismail arrived and immediately began working to restore the machine. Under challenging conditions, he dedicated long hours to diagnosing technical failures, developing solutions, and coordinating closely with colleagues in the United States. He remained committed to the task until the machine was successfully brought back into service.

Thanks to his expertise, dedication, and persistence, the linear accelerator resumed operation, allowing patients to continue their treatment and restoring hope to many families.

While many patients may never know his name, at SAMS we recognize the immense value of his contribution. Behind every meaningful achievement are dedicated individuals who work tirelessly and often quietly, offering their expertise, time, and compassion in service to communities across Syria. We extend our deepest gratitude to Ismaail Aajoukah for his exceptional commitment and humanitarian spirit, and for standing alongside patients and healthcare teams across Syria.



Turkish Delegation Visits SAMS Oncology Center in Deir ez-Zor

In early May, a delegation from the Turkish Ministry of Health visited the blood and oncology center in Deir ez-Zor, which is supported by SAMS, to review the medical services being provided to patients across the region and assess opportunities for continued collaboration and development.



The delegation was accompanied by Dr. Nasr Al-Khalaf, Director of Health for Deir ez-Zor, and Dr. Jamil Al-Dabl, Head of the National Advisory Committee for Blood and Oncology. During the visit, representatives toured the facility and met with medical and administrative teams working to deliver specialized cancer and hematology care to vulnerable patients in eastern Syria.

Discussions focused on the center's patient intake process, the oncology treatment protocols currently in place, and the geographic reach of the services provided, highlighting the growing number of patients traveling from different areas to access

essential cancer treatment and follow-up care at the center.



The delegation also reviewed the challenges facing oncology services in the region and explored opportunities to expand the center's capacity, strengthen specialized medical services, and improve access to lifesaving care for patients in need. The visit underscored the importance of continued partnership and coordination in supporting Syria's healthcare system and ensuring that patients with complex and chronic illnesses can receive high-quality treatment close to their communities.

Through its support of the blood and oncology center in Deir ez-Zor, SAMS continues to help provide critical cancer care, diagnostic services, and long-term treatment for patients who would otherwise face significant barriers to accessing specialized healthcare.



Advancing Global Research: New Issue of Avicenna Journal of Medicine

We are pleased to announce the release of the latest issue of the Avicenna Journal of Medicine, a peer-reviewed open-access medical journal dedicated to advancing medical knowledge, supporting scientific research, and improving clinical practice worldwide.

This new issue features a diverse collection of scientific articles, clinical studies, and case reports spanning a wide range of medical specialties, including oncology, pediatrics, gastroenterology, global health, and more. The publication brings together valuable contributions from physicians, researchers, and healthcare professionals from around the world, reflecting ongoing efforts to address pressing healthcare challenges and promote evidence-based medicine.

Through the dissemination of high-quality research and academic collaboration, the Avicenna Journal of Medicine continues to serve as a platform for innovation, knowledge sharing, and the advancement of patient care across the global medical community.

The graphic features a blue-tinted background image of medical professionals in a clinical setting. In the top left corner is the circular logo of the Syrian American Medical Society, established in 1998, which includes a caduceus and a map of the Middle East. The title 'Avicenna Journal of Medicine' is prominently displayed in white, with the subtitle 'Official Journal of the Syrian American Medical Society' below it. A blue megaphone icon is positioned above the main announcement text. The text reads 'Latest Issue Available Now!' followed by 'Issue 01 · Volume 16 · January 2026'. A large QR code is centered below the text, and the website 'society.sams-usa.net' is at the bottom.

[Read the latest issue](#)



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We are proud that the Avicenna Journal of Medicine, published by Syrian American Medical Society, continues to support scientific research and foster the global exchange of medical knowledge.



SAMS Launches Telemedicine Program to Prevent Blindness in Premature Infants in Syria

The Syrian National Telemedicine Program for Retinopathy of Prematurity (SN-ROP) has officially launched at Idlib University Hospital through the support of the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), in coordination with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The launch marks an important step forward in expanding specialized neonatal care and protecting the vision of premature infants across Syria.

Retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) is one of the leading preventable causes of childhood blindness and primarily affects babies born prematurely or with low birth weight. Without early screening and timely intervention, the condition can progress rapidly and lead to permanent vision loss. Through this new program, healthcare teams are now equipped to detect ROP early using advanced retinal imaging technology combined with telemedicine-based specialist consultations.

The SN-ROP program connects local medical teams with specialized ophthalmologists who

remotely review retinal images and provide timely assessments and recommendations according to international standards of care. This approach helps bridge critical gaps in access to specialized pediatric eye care, particularly in areas facing shortages of trained specialists and ongoing healthcare challenges.

By introducing a national telemedicine-based screening model, the program strengthens the capacity of neonatal intensive care units and improves continuity of care for vulnerable newborns. It also supports earlier diagnosis, more effective follow-up, and faster referrals for treatment when needed, all of which are essential to preventing avoidable blindness and improving long-term outcomes for premature infants.

SAMS remains committed to advancing innovative healthcare solutions that improve access to lifesaving and specialized care throughout Syria. Families are encouraged to adhere closely to scheduled screening and follow-up appointments to help safeguard their children's vision, health, and future development.

Transforming Silence into Sound for Syrian Children

For years, SAMS has been transforming lives through pioneering cochlear implant surgeries, helping children hear the world for the very first time and restoring hope to families who once feared their children would live in silence.

At Idlib University Hospital in Syria, a specialized medical team recently completed six cochlear implant surgeries in just two days during a May medical mission, including three highly complex cases involving children affected by meningitis. These cases are particularly challenging due to complications that can occur after infection, making the success of each surgery a remarkable medical achievement.

With these latest procedures, the total number of successful cochlear implant surgeries supported by SAMS in 2026 has reached 24, reflecting the organization's continued commitment to expanding access to advanced, life-changing healthcare for children in Syria.

Beyond the operating room, each surgery represents a deeply personal milestone. Behind every procedure is a child hearing a mother's voice, responding to their name, or experiencing everyday sounds for the very first time. These moments not only change the lives of children but also bring renewed hope and joy to entire families.

Through continued investment in specialized care, cutting-edge medical technology, and skilled healthcare professionals, SAMS remains dedicated to ensuring that children across Syria have the opportunity to communicate, learn, and thrive.



A New Step Forward for Pathology Education in Syria

Marking a significant advancement in medical education and pathology training across Syria's coastal region, SAMS has successfully delivered and installed the first multi-head microscope at the laboratory of Latakia University Hospital. As the first device of its kind in the area, the microscope represents an important investment in strengthening both healthcare services and the education of future medical specialists.

The advanced microscope is equipped with a connected camera system and will soon be complemented by a large display screen, enabling multiple residents, medical students, and trainees to observe and analyze pathology samples simultaneously. This collaborative approach enhances hands-on learning, encourages real-time discussion between instructors and trainees, and improves the overall quality of medical education. By allowing larger groups to examine the same specimen at the same time, the technology helps bridge gaps in specialized training and provides pathology residents with a more interactive and comprehensive learning experience. It also supports faculty members in delivering more effective instruction and fostering the next generation of highly skilled pathologists.

This initiative is part of SAMS' broader commitment to strengthening pathology services, expanding access to advanced medical education tools, and supporting the development of Syria's healthcare workforce. Through investments in modern equipment, training opportunities, and institutional capacity building, SAMS continues to help create sustainable improvements in healthcare delivery and medical education throughout the country. Because stronger training today leads to better patient care for generations to come.



The Impact of SAMS' Emergency Health Response in Gaza

SAMS Foundation in the Gaza Strip continues to provide critical healthcare services to communities affected by the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Through a network of static medical points and Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) teams, SAMS is working to ensure that vulnerable populations can access essential healthcare services, even in areas facing significant challenges and limited medical resources.

In April 2026, SAMS delivered nearly 15,000 medical and psychosocial support services to over 12,500 beneficiaries across the Gaza Strip. These services included primary healthcare consultations, treatment for acute and chronic conditions, maternal and child health services, medication distribution, health education, and mental health and psychosocial support for individuals coping with the effects of conflict and displacement.

The deployment of mobile medical teams has been particularly vital in reaching underserved communities, displacement sites, and areas where access to healthcare remains limited. By bringing medical care directly to patients, SAMS helps bridge critical gaps in service delivery and ensures that families receive timely and lifesaving support.

Despite the complex operating environment, SAMS remains committed to delivering comprehensive, patient-centered care and responding to the evolving needs of communities throughout Gaza. The achievements of April reflect the dedication of healthcare workers and support staff who continue to serve on the front lines, providing hope, relief, and essential medical assistance to thousands of people in need.



April 2026 Highlights

- 14,917 total medical and psychosocial support services provided
- 12,546 total beneficiaries reached
- Ongoing deployment of static and mobile medical teams across the Gaza Strip
- Delivery of primary healthcare, medication, health education, and mental health support
- Continued efforts to expand access to care for displaced and vulnerable populations

Through these interventions, SAMS continues to uphold its mission of providing quality healthcare and humanitarian assistance to communities facing some of the most challenging circumstances in the region.



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SAMS Institute: Advancing Medical Education Through Scientific Conferences in Aleppo and Latakia

As part of its commitment to strengthening medical education and fostering academic excellence, SAMS Institute participated in two major scientific events in Syria this month. Bringing together physicians, academics, researchers, and students, these conferences provided valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange, professional development, and collaboration aimed at advancing healthcare education and practice across the country.



Latakia

As part of the Annual Scientific Conference of the Faculty of Human Medicine at the University of Latakia, SAMS Institute participated in discussions focused on advancing medical education and strengthening academic excellence. During the conference, Dr. Bashir Taj El-Din, Director of Health Systems Strengthening and Sustainability at SAMS, delivered a lecture on Integrated Quality Management in Medical Education, highlighting the importance of modern quality standards, continuous evaluation, and strategic planning in

preparing future healthcare professionals. The participation reflects SAMS Institute's commitment to supporting medical education and fostering collaboration among academic and healthcare institutions across Syria.

Aleppo

SAMS Institute was proud to participate in the First International Scientific Week at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Aleppo, a landmark event that brought together physicians, academics, researchers, and students from across Syria and beyond. Through the contributions of its speakers and the dedication of Team SAMS volunteers, SAMS helped facilitate scientific exchange, professional development, and meaningful dialogue on the future of healthcare and medical education. While the event has concluded, the knowledge shared, partnerships strengthened, and ideas generated during the week continue to inspire progress in medical education, research, and healthcare across Syria.

Through its participation in these conferences, SAMS Institute continues to strengthen partnerships with academic institutions, support the professional development of healthcare providers, and promote the exchange of scientific knowledge. By investing in medical education and collaborative learning opportunities, SAMS remains committed to helping build a stronger healthcare workforce and advancing the future of healthcare in Syria.

SAMS Medical Missions – Extending Impact Beyond the 24th International Conference in Aleppo

As part of the 24th SAMS International Conference in Aleppo, Syria, SAMS is proud to announce a series of impactful Medical Missions taking place alongside this landmark scientific gathering. These missions serve as a vital extension of the conference's purpose—transforming knowledge into action and directly strengthening healthcare delivery for patients and facilities on the ground.

Pre-Conference Medical Mission

June 21–25, 2026

A focused period of hands-on clinical engagement, where medical teams will work directly within local healthcare facilities to provide specialized care and support capacity building.

SAMS 24th International Conference

June 27–29, 2026

University of Aleppo, Syria

A premier scientific gathering bringing together healthcare professionals, researchers, and experts to exchange knowledge, advance medical practice, and foster collaboration across disciplines.

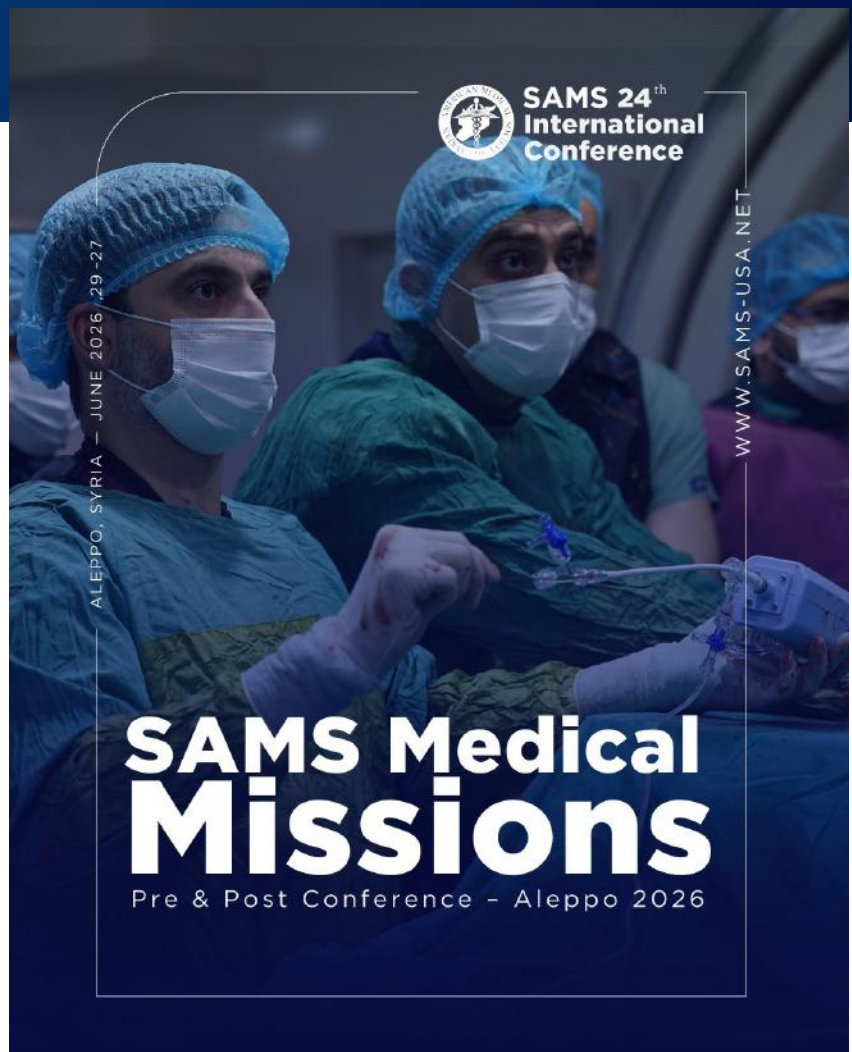
Post-Conference Medical Mission

June 30 – July 2, 2026

Continuing the momentum of the conference, participating teams will return to the field to deliver direct patient care and reinforce clinical impact in targeted medical specialties.

We warmly invite healthcare professionals, researchers, and experts from around the world to join us in Aleppo for these days of collaboration, learning, and meaningful humanitarian impact, where science meets service and knowledge becomes healing.

Volunteer now:
sams-usa.net/volunteer



SAVE THE DATE

SAMS 24TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

JUNE 27 - 29, 2026

ALEPPO, SYRIA

society.sams-usa.net





**SAMS 24th
International
Conference**

Idlib University Hospital - 2026 ,28 June

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SAMS Idlib Conference

A Full-Day Scientific Event

Idlib University Hospital

2026 ,28 June

Registration Required

Free Admission



**SAMS 24th
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Conference**

ALEPPO, SYRIA — JUNE 26, 2026

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ALEPPO, SYRIA — JUNE 2026, 25

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Reflecting on this month's stories, from healing in Syria to hope in Gaza, it's clear that our united efforts are making a greater difference than ever.

But the work is far from over.

Whether you're a healthcare professional, advocate, or supporter, you have a role to play in advancing our mission of delivering dignified, high-quality care to communities in crisis.

Here's how you can stay engaged:



Donate to support emergency relief and medical care:
sams-usa.net/donate



Volunteer your time and expertise:
sams-usa.net/volunteer




Advocate by amplifying our message and engaging with policymakers


*Thank you for being part of the SAMS family.
Together, we are healing, rebuilding, and
inspiring hope.*

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