



# COVID-19 in the MENA Region

## Lessons Learned in Research, Public Health Policy and Clinical Practice

### Impact of US and International Collaboration

May 30 - 31, 2022. Gaziantep University, Turkey

## International Conference Organized by



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## Welcome

The Global Health Research, Management, and Solutions, Gaziantep University, American University of Beirut-Faculty of Health Sciences, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center are pleased to announce the new date and location of our **COVID- 19 in the MENA Region: Lessons Learned in Research, Policy, Public Health and Clinical Practice**. This scientific forum reaffirms our strong commitment to building global health bridges between scientists and researchers in North America, Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. International scientific alliances were built over the past 18 months amidst challenging pandemic environment and will continue to prevent disease, reduce health disparities, and promote wellness in the global community. We maintain our dedication and commitment to global health research



collaboration and interventions. Global Health Research, Management and Solutions and its strong partners have strategically designed this scientific forum to gather distinguished researchers and international scientific groups to share COVID-19 lessons learned from MENA region and around the globe. We also aim to establish and promote partnerships and affiliations with health organizations and universities from around the globe. In collaboration with Michigan State University Institute of Global Health and other academic partners in both, the US, Turkey, and the MENA region, we will conduct pre- and post- conference workshops in areas such as: Refugee Resettlement and COVID-19, Emergency Preparedness Amidst Pandemic Environment, and establishing a Center of Excellence in Research Collaboration for the MENA Region, to name a few.

Northern Africa and the Middle East





## Why a Conference on COVID-19 in the MENA Region?

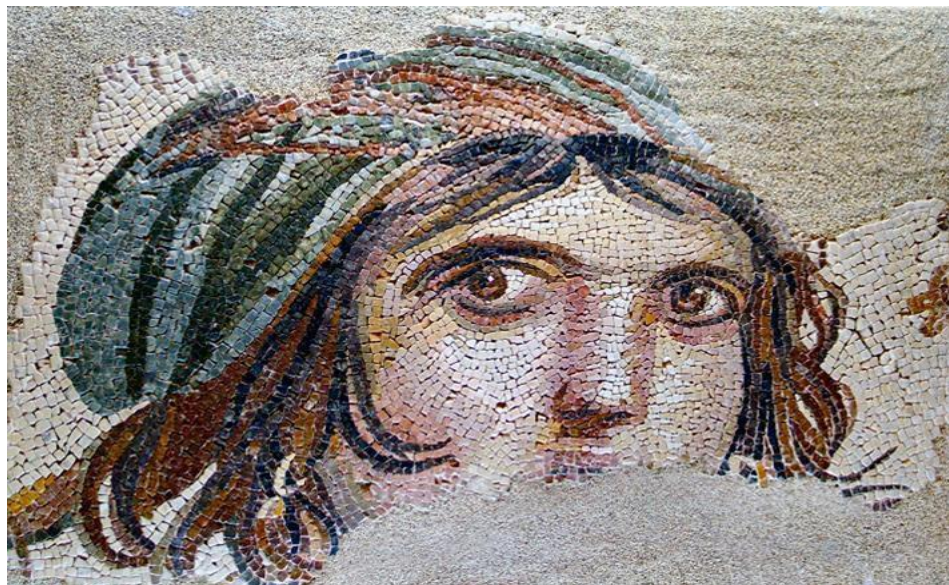
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on overstretched and unprepared health systems is tremendous. The pandemic resulted in the collapse of economic and healthcare systems of several MENA countries, while others managed the pandemic in an acceptable manner. The purpose of this conference is to bring together input from all affected countries and provide lessons learned.

The MENA Region spans from Morocco in the West to the Arab Gulf in the East. It is inhabited by 436 million people in 22 countries characterized by a diverse range of socioeconomic status and health challenges. The region faces multiple political, economic, social, and environmental challenges, including the implications of COVID 19 on health, education, agriculture, health security systems and economies.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that global forced displacement has surpassed 80 million at midyear of 2020, due to persecution, conflict, and human rights violations. Of those displaced, roughly 35 million (almost 50%) live in the MENA region, with 31% of this population being children. These multiple crises have exposed and undermined the fragility of the health and social care systems and poor governance in these countries. The COVID-19 pandemic added insult to injury.

## Gaziantep University

Founded in 1987, the Gaziantep University is an individual full member of European University Association providing quality education to more than 45.000 students in 20 faculties. The university offers a number of majors and minors as well as master and PhD degrees in most of the departments.



## Conference Venue and Safety Guidelines

The Conference venue is the Maveria Culture and Arts Center on the main campus. All participants will adhere to strict CDC pandemic safety requirements including COVID-19 vaccination mandate, social distancing and wearing masks. The scientific committee may consider remote presentations by invited speakers who cannot travel for health concerns or restrictions. Visit <https://gaunmavera.business.site/#gallery> for additional information on the venue.

## Conference Structure

This 2-day conference will host prominent health and policymakers, practitioners, and researchers from the MENA region, Turkey and other regions. Included will be a plethora of speakers, keynote speakers, and panelists. The conference will include lectures, plenary sessions, panel sessions, training workshops, and roundtable discussions.

## Themes of the Scientific Program

- How were policies to mitigate the various effects of the pandemic (personal and public health, education, social determinants of health, etc...) developed and implemented? Where did they succeed and where did they fail? What can be learned from the current pandemic for future pandemics?
- How did healthcare systems manage the pandemic including innovation, technology, data science and digital health? Were there successful community-based initiatives to fight covid-19? What role did the private sector play? What positive and negative roles did social media play?
- What was the impact of the pandemic on the health of people, particularly on mental health and the management of non-communicable diseases with special attention to refugee and displaced populations?
- What capacity building efforts are needed in the MENA Region for better preparedness and response?
- What is the impact of past and future US and international collaborative efforts on these endeavors?

## Target Population

Includes academics, practitioners, public health officials, and national/international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) interested in public health, education, social protection, economics, policy, and politics. Students of health and other disciplines. Around 500 participants are expected to attend, including 60-70 speakers from North America, Europe, and the MENA Region. More than 100 academic and research centers as well as government and non-government health and human service organizations from around the globe will be represented. The content and the diverse format of delivery and interaction at the conference (workshops, roundtable discussions, panel discussions, plenary sessions, and oral and poster presentations) will facilitate networking and the opportunities to form collaborative teams.



## **Learning Objectives** - Outcomes of the Conference could be summarized into:

- Share experiences and increase awareness about policies, practice, research, and innovation to address health issues facing the MENA region e.g. in mental health and non-communicable diseases
- Identify how to build bridges between US and European higher education institutions and institutions in the MENA region and Turkey to improve conducting research within the complex setting of instability, uncertainty, and forced migration and displacement.
- Establish a platform to enhance and ensure proper global health practices amidst pandemics and emergency settings
- Identify links and promote partnerships between researchers and academics, and governmental and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in the MENA Region, especially in countries hosting large number of refugees.
- Identify and improve research capacities in the MENA Region, both in qualitative and quantitative methodologies, to examine and respond to health priorities within the complex setting of instability, uncertainty, and forced migration and displacement.

**Eligible Conference participants can obtain CME credit hours from both, the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Gaziantep University.**

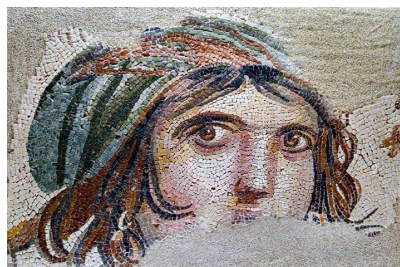
## **Continuing Medical Education (CME) - International Attendees**



JOINTLY ACCREDITED PROVIDER™  
INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Medicine. University of Nebraska Medical Center is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

## **Continuing Medical Education (CME) - Attendees from the MENA Region and Turkey**



This live activity has been approved for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. The Turkish Medical Association recognizes programs that offer AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. Physicians may submit credits earned toward their TMA CME/CPD personal board certification requirements. There is no limit to the number of credits physicians may submit toward their requirements.

# Abstracts: Preparation and Submission Guidelines

## A. General Information

- All expenses (e.g., submission, conference registration, airfare, lodging, etc.) associated with the submission and presentation of an abstract are the responsibility of the presenter.
- Submission of an abstract constitutes a commitment by the author(s) to present if accepted.

## B. Eligibility

- Only original work should be submitted. Abstracts may be eligible for consideration and/or presentation if some of the information included had been previously partly presented or published.
- Any human experimentation must conform with the principles of research ethics and integrity.

## C. Abstract Submission Details & Deadlines

- Abstract submission opens **November 8, 2021** and will be submitted using the online submission form.
- **Submission deadline is January 1, 2022.** Abstracts must be submitted in their final form by this deadline to be considered for presentation.
- **Notifications of acceptance status** will be sent on **January 15, 2022.**
- Accepted abstracts may be published in the **Conference Proceedings.**
- For CME purposes, all abstracts must include a Conflict of Interest (COI) disclosure form available at <https://www.unmc.edu/cce/catalog/rss-grandrounds/C02-COI-form.pdf>. Please fill the form, save it to your computer then **upload it to the abstract submission form** as instructed at the bottom of the submission form.
- To access [Abstract Submission Form](#), [click here](#) or go to <https://formlets.com/forms/tpL3uhgd1InNmNo4/>

## D. Review

- Submitted abstracts are peer-reviewed
- Acceptance decisions are based on scientific merit.

## E. Abstract Preparation Guidelines

### 1. Author Name(s)

- An author may submit multiple abstracts. Accepted abstracts must be presented by one of the co-authors.
- Full names, affiliations and contact information for all authors must be included with the abstract.

2. Format. Two formats are considered:

**a. Original observations.** These should include the following sections

- Background:
- Objectives: list 2 – 3 learning objectives linked to the theme of the conference
- Methods:
- Results:
- Conclusions:

**b. Descriptive Reports.** These must be in a narrative format

3. Content

a. Word limit – Abstracts are limited to 3000 characters. This includes the text but not the title or authors.

b. Tables/Illustrations/Graphs: Up to three items may be included

c. Include a biography, a headshot, and a COI form with the abstract.

4. Submission - Abstracts should be submitted Online using the [Abstract Submission Form](#) and must include a bio-sketch and a completed Conflict of Interest (COI) Form.

## **F. Publication & Presentation of Accepted Abstracts**

1. Conference Proceedings

- Full text of accepted abstracts may be published in the conference proceedings
- Conference proceedings may also include full page manuscripts of abstract presentations

2. Presentation

- The Scientific Committee will determine presentation time and format for all accepted work, based on the topic and relationship to others submitted.
- Presentations and question-and-answer periods will be in English and Turkish. Instant translation will be available.
- Each presenting author is required to comply with the ACCME Disclosure Policy and is expected to disclose to the audience any real or apparent conflict(s) of interest and financial interests.

**[Click here](#) to submit your abstract or go to <https://formlets.com/forms/tpL3uhgd1InNmNo4/>**



## Social Program

Conference participants, especially international speakers and guests, will enjoy a social program during and after conference days. The Social program will include an official welcome reception and two gala dinners with traditional folkloric music depicting Gaziantep and MENA region. A visit to Zeugma Museum, the largest ancient mosaics indoor museum in the world with other pieces added to the collection, and a visit to the Ruins



Gaziantep, one of the world's oldest cities, was constructed in 1479. It is one of the modern provinces of South-Eastern Anatolian Region, one of the oldest of Hittite origin and the center of pistachio cultivation in Turkey with extensive olive groves and vineyards, Gaziantep is one of the important centers of Turkey.

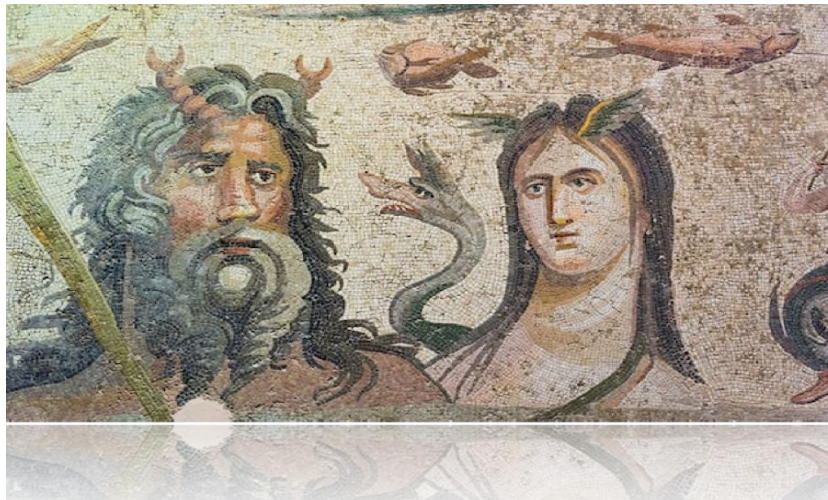




Gaziantep kitchen has a special influence on the [Turkish cuisine](#) with its immensely rich flavor. In addition to dishes which date back to the Oguz [Turks](#), there is the influence of Aleppo. Its rich kind of [soups](#), rice meals, [kebabs](#), meatballs, are among the most favorite. Local [desserts](#), kunefe, burmali kadayif, sari burma, mashed pistachio and milk fat, are considered the best in the world. Gaziantep is famous for its sweet pastry [baklava](#). There are two bazaars which could survive to our day and are still used. The Zincirli Bazaar, was built in the 18th century, is locally known as "black steps bazaar" and has 80 shops and five gates. The other bazaar, Kemikli, dates back to the 19th century with cut stone and rectangular structure with two gates



Gaziantep bore the influence of many civilizations for its location as a crossroad between the east and the west or between the Eastern [Mediterranean](#) and the plains of Mesopotamia. Coppersmith works, [mother of pearl](#) working, traditional shoe making, cloth making, stone working, antique weapons, gold and silver works are the leading traditional handicrafts in Gaziantep.



Gaziantep has a territory of 7,642 square kilometers and a population of a little over 2 million. It is the leading province of the [GAP](#) region in terms of population density.

## Conference Committees

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## Scientific Advisory Board

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**Dr. Hassan Fehmi**, Chief Nephrology Department, Henry Ford Health System, MI, USA

**Mr. Sean Carroll**, Director ANERA, Washington DC, USA





## Contact Information:

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Scientific Committee Chair

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### General Questions about Gaziantep University

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