

Caring Institutions in Lebanon

I hope to retain my independence for as long as possible. This may mean that I have to pay for help, but I do not expect it from you or your partners ... If I reach a point when I cannot live independently I do not expect any of you to provide me with a home. I hope and plan to make arrangements with some of my friends to live together in some sort of sheltered accommodation but, failing that, I will have to find the most acceptable place I can and if it uses all my savings - well, they are my savings! If, by then, I am unable to make decisions for myself, you may have to jointly find the best place for me but none of you should feel guilty about not taking the burden. I do not want you to do so - whatever I might be saying at the time. (Growing Old Disgracefully, p. 179)

Testimonies: Elderly living in Caring Institutions

Ramza (Umm Yousef)

I am 80 years old. I came to Hamlin Hospital four months ago. After a visit to my daughter I got very sick and needed constant medical attention. Unable to take care of me, my children decided to put me in a home. All my children visit me especially those who live close by. I am very happy here, and they all treat me with kindness and care.

Adiba Saba Rahbani

I don't know how old I am, maybe 82 or 92, I can't remember. I've been here for a long time but I don't know exactly how long. I am not happy here. I want to go back home. I have a house next to the church in our village and I want to go back and live there. My brother decided to put me in this home because I couldn't take care of my self. My brother comes to visit me from time to time. He is a school teacher and is busy.

Laurice Saafer

I can't remember how old I am, maybe 85. My sons brought me here because I am too sick. My sons are unable to take care of me and since I need constant attention, they decided to put me in a home. At Hamlin they take good care of me; they are very kind and I am happy here. I feel at home and the people here are like my family. My sons visit me every two weeks. They are too busy. I sleep most of the time since I am unable to do anything else. I am too weak and sick.

Eugenie Abou Rjaili

I am 80 years old, no 85 or maybe more, I really can't remember. My son brought me here because I am very sick. I can't move, stand or walk. I just got admitted. I am very happy here, they are very helpful, warm and compassionate. They are very kind to the elderly. My son is very busy with his work; besides, he lives in Mansourieh so he can't visit me everyday.

Saydeh Mashalani

I am 60 or 70 years old, I really don't know. I've been here for a long time (the nurse tells me that she has been in Hamlin for the past 10 years and that she is handicapped.) My sister and nephew brought me here. They visit me once every seven months. My sister had an operation and she is not very healthy so this is why she doesn't visit me very often. It's been a long time since she last visited.



Hamlin, an elderly home in Hammana
Picture Credit: Bassem Maamari

Mounira Houri

I can't remember how long I've been here nor do I remember my age. Yet, I know that I've been here for a long time (10 years according to the nurse). I have 4 children and all of them come to visit me (the nurse says only one comes). I chose to come to Dar Al-Karamat, no one brought me here. I am very healthy (the lady suffers from Alzheimer's disease).

Al-Hajji Raifa Zaydan

I've been here for around 3 years. I am a widow with no children. Thanks to my husband's pension that I can afford to stay in this place. My brothers come to visit me whenever they can. I am very happy here. My health is deteriorating. I can't see well, my leg is broken and I have a constant cough. Besides, my heart and lungs are weak. I am not scared of death, my child, I've been to the Hajj 11 times. If I die it is God's will. My arms will be open wide to welcome death.

Jihan

I can't remember how long I've been here. I never got married. I have two sisters and they decided to bring me here. They always visit me and get me everything I need. My sisters were unable to take care of me for they have their own families so after I broke my leg and couldn't move or walk they put me here. I am not scared of death. On the contrary Ahlan wa Sahlan bil Maut (I will welcome death when it arrives). I am very happy here and I feel as if I am within my own family. I consider them to be my family.

Caring Institutions

1. Ma'wa Al-Ajazi Al-Faransi

Founded: 1904 by a French organization - Notre Dame de la Douleur - the first elderly home in Lebanon.

Number of beds available: 70
 Number of elderly residents: 65
 Admission fee per month: free or minimal contribution depending on one's economic situation.

Criteria for Admission: the elderly should be healthy, able to walk and eat on their own, and they should have a guardian.

Funds: the Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and donations, fund raising activities such as lunches, dinners, parties.

Number of doctors available: two, doctors on call.

Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication, clothes.

Recreational Activities: picnics, trips, birthday parties, visits by schools and other charity organizations.

2. Myrrh Bearing Society (Jam'iyat Hamilat al-Tib)

Founded: 1936

Number of beds available: 18 beds.

Number of elderly residents: 16

Admission fee per month: 250,000 LL (\$ 160).

Criteria for Admission: none.

Funds: a per-dium of 4,000 LL for each elderly paid by the Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and donations, fund raising activities such as lunches, dinners, parties.

Number of doctors available: one, doctors on call.

Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication when available, clothes.

Recreational Activities: no fitness program for all the elderly are too frail to exercise, no library for most of them are illiterate, watch T.V. and listen to the radio.

3. Dar Al-Rahmat

Founded: Beirut 1949

Number of beds available: 700

Number of elderly residents: 500

Admission fee per month: 1st class: \$ 700, 2nd class: \$ 500 with balcony, \$ 400 without balcony, 3rd class: \$ 300.

Criteria for Admission: healthy individuals.

Funds: the Ministry of Social Affairs as well as municipalities.

Number of doctors available: two, doctors on call.



Picture Credit: Bassem Maamari

Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication when available, clothes (charity).

Recreational Activities: T.V, radio, cards.

4. Jam'iyat Al-Khadamat Al-Ijtima'iet

Founded: 1951

Number of beds available: 150

Number of elderly residents: around 120

Admission fee per month: free.

Criteria for Admission: none (elderly, sick, disabled).

Funds: Ministry of Social Affairs, funds, income generating activities, donations.

Number of doctors available: 3 (general practitioner, rheumatologist, neurologist) and 15 on call.

Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication, clothes.

Recreational Activities: parties, trips, visits by schools and other charity organizations.

5. Dar Al-Ajaza Al-Islamieh

Founded: 1954

Number of beds available: 800

Number of elderly residents: 800

Admission fee per month: free (minimal contribution depending on one's economic situation).

Criteria for Admission: the elderly should be in need attention.

Funds: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, UNRWA, medical brigade in the Lebanese army, private patients charity, donations and contributions.

Number of doctors available: 25

Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, clothes, medication, specialized medical treatment, dentistry attention, laboratory examinations, x-ray, etc.

Recreational Activities: T.V., radio, video, walks, trips, sports, painting, excursions.

6. Ma'wa Al-Ajazi - Tal Cheha

Founded: 1957

Number of beds available: 40

Number of elderly residents: 30

Admission fee per month: free or minimal contribution depending on one's economic situation.

Criteria for Admission: healthy individuals.

Funds: Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and donations.

Number of doctors available: one (general practitioner), doctors on call.

Facilities: food, hot water, laundry, medication.

Recreational Activities: picnics, trips, parties, outings to restaurant, prayers.

7. Hamlin

Founded: 1971

Number of beds available: 90 to 100

Number of elderly residents: 26



Source: Brochure of Dar Al-Ajaza Al-Islamia

Admission fee per month: 1st class \$ 665 (room for one person, toilet, hot water), 2nd class \$ 400 (room for two people, toilet, hot water), 3rd class \$ 300 (room for two people).

Criteria for Admission: none.

Funds: Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church covers the deficit.

Number of doctors available: one, doctor on call (hospital ten blocks away, all elderly are treated free of charge).

Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication, clothes.

Recreational Activities: parties, picnics, visits by schools and other charity organizations, prayer services,

8. Deir Mar Youssef Jrabta

Founded: 1973

Number of beds available: 50

Number of elderly residents: around 45

Admission fee per month: free or minimal contribution depending on one's economic situation. Some pay \$ 200 others pay \$ 400 and those in first class pay \$ 500.

Criteria for Admission: none.

Funds: Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and donations.

Number of doctors available: one.

Facilities: food, hot water, laundry, medicine, clothes if donated.

Recreational Activities: T.V., radio, picnics.

9. Dar Al-Karama

Founded: in 1983
 Number of beds available: 50
 Number of elderly residents: 30
 Admission fee per month: class a - fit and healthy \$ 440, class b - unhealthy elderly who need more care \$470, class c - are invalids \$ 500.
 Criteria for Admission:none.
 Funds: Fees exempted, donations, contributions.
 Number of doctors available: one, doctors on call.
 Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, clothes if donated.
 Recreational Activities: T.V. cards, parties on Mother's day.

10. Jam'iat Al-Bir Al-Masihi Al-Orthodoxi - Tripoli

Founded: 1984
 Number of beds available: 45
 Number of elderly residents: 45
 Admission fee per month: free or minimal contribution depending on one's economic situation.
 Criteria for Admission: accept all elderly even sick ones.
 Funds: the Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and donations, fund raising activities such as lunches, dinners, parties, selling hand crafts, etc.
 Number of doctors available: two - general practitioner and gynecologist.
 Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication if needed, clothing.
 Recreational Activities: games, T.V., picnics, visits by schools and other charity organizations.

11. Ain Wa Zin

Founded: in 1989
 Number of beds available: 74
 Number of elderly residents: 73
 Admission fee per month: \$ 300 (no classes).
 Criteria for Admission: none.
 Funds: the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, contributions and donations, fund raising activities.
 Number of doctors available: two doctors, one available everyday and the other every week.
 Facilities: food, laundry, hot water, medication when available, clothes if donated.
 Recreational Activities: trips, picnics, handicrafts.

12. Mustashfa Dar Al-Sahil lil Naqaha

Founded: 1990
 Number of beds available: 32
 Number of elderly residents: 10
 Admission fee per month: 1st class \$ 800, 2nd class \$ 500, 3rd class \$ 300.
 Criteria for Admission: none (elderly, sick, disabled).
 Funds: Ministry of Social Affairs, contributions and donations, the founder and owner Ms. Khayriet Alama often covers the deficit.
 Number of doctors available: three (geriatricians, cardiologists, general practitioners).
 Facilities: food, hot water, laundry, clothes, share in paying for medication with the parents.
 Recreational Activities: T.V, radio, card games, walks.



Picture Credit: Bassem Maamari

13. Al-'Omr Al-Madid

Founded: 1992
 Number of beds available: 60
 Number of elderly residents: 23
 Admission fee per month: suite \$ 775 (2 beds, salon, toilet, balcony) \$ 400 (1 bed, salon, toilet, balcony), \$ 100.
 Criteria for Admission: absolutely healthy individual because Al-'Omr Al-Madid is more of a residence for the young old.
 Funds: private donations from individuals.
 Number of doctors available: one.
 Facilities: hot water, food, laundry.
 Recreational Activities: trips, conferences, picnics, gym, members of the club elderly run by Al-'Omr Al-Madid.