The Arab Society for Pediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes (ASPED) was launched in 2012 and its main mission is to ensure a high standard of care and development in Pediatric Endocrinology and diabetes in the Arab region. ASPED has members from 21 Arab and non-Arab countries and it is part the International Consortium for Paediatric Endocrinology. The society and has established strong links with large scientific bodies such as the European Society of Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE), and International Society for Paediatric and Adolescent Diabetes (ISPAD) and Global Pediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes (GPED).

The ASPED-ESPE school is an initiative by ASPED in collaboration with the ESPE to update the knowledge of young physicians involved in the care of children and adolescents with endocrinopathies in Arab countries. The first ASPED-ESPE school was conducted in 2014 and has been running annually since then. The school has a steering committee (SC) of five paediatric endocrinologists from ASPED and ESPE. The SC organizes the scientific program and set the enrollment criteria. Participants are selected through open competition following an advertisement in the ESPE and ASPED websites. The school adapts the format of an intensive course in basic and clinical science of acute and chronic paediatric endocrine disorders. The curriculum is delivered by a faculty of senior ESPE and ASPED members and the event is sponsored by an educational grant from Novo Nordisk Gulf.

The fifth ASPED-ESPE school was held between 31 October 2018 and 3 November 2018 at the Holiday Inn hotel, festival city, Dubai, UAE. It was run by 15 combined faculty members and attracted 89 applicants from 12 Arab countries. Of these, 39 were selected. The scientific program covered various aspects of paediatric endocrinology including growth, puberty, hyper and hypothyroidism, disorders of sex development, adrenal pathology, water balance and diabetes. The curriculum was delivered via didactic lectures, clinical case-based presentations and small group discussion. Twenty-five plenary presentations and 46 complex cases/research projects were presented in small interactive parallel groups. The presenters of the four small group winning abstracts were awarded on the last school day and their presentations were accepted by the ESPE e-learning portfolio.

The school enabled participants from 12 Arab countries to meet and link-up with senior researchers and clinical experts as well as fellow clinicians in a collegial environment encouraging active discussions and exchange of ideas. One of the highlights of the scientific program was the presentation of the result of a survey on gender assignment conducted during the fourth ASPED-ESPE school, 2017 and published in time with the fifth school. A survey on the Induction of puberty was conducted during the 2018 school and the results will hopefully be presented in the sixth ASPED-ESPE school, 2019. Beside the standard program, the school integrated full day ‘ASPED Kyowa Kirin Masterclass’ in paediatric bone disease. The social interaction between the school faculty and participants was remarkable and the social program included a cruse Gala Dinner and visiting various local monuments.

In the feedback evaluation participants indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the organization and the scientific value of the event. Most participants felt that the school has refreshed their knowledge and significantly improved/changed their clinical skills and practice. In particular, they highly agreed that the school encouraged brainstorming, provided an excellent platform for networking, establishing future collaboration, and sharing clinical experience and research ideas. They also described the school as a great opportunity to establish links and with senior ASPED and ESPE faculty members. Some participants suggested changing the name from school to academy to reflect the level of the scientific program. Based on that, the SC decided that from 2019 the event will be called ASPED-ESPE academy.

CONTACT Abdulhadi Habeb amhabeb@hotmail.com

This article has been republished with minor changes. These changes do not impact the academic content of the article.

© 2019 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.
Maintaining ASPED-ESPE schools regularly for 5 years is a successful story and an example of a combined effort to promote medical education between a young and a leading scientific society. To our knowledge, the only similar joint educational event in the Arab region is the ASPED-ISPAD Diabetes Academy, which runs annually by the same society since 2015. We hope that such a collaborative work by ASPED can be taken as a role model for other scientific societies/associations in the region.