Dr. Nisreen Amayiri is a paediatric neuro-oncologist at the King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) in Jordan.

She completed her Higher Specialization in Paediatrics at the Jordan University of Science and Technology and her fellowship in Paediatric Hematology Oncology at the KHCC. Following her graduation in 2011, she was appointed and continues to be in charge of the neuro-oncology service.

Dr. Amayiri is the recipient of the ASCO 2016 Life Award from the Conquer Cancer Foundation which enabled her to pursue her paediatric Neuro-Oncology fellowship at the Hospital for Sick Children (Sickkids)/Toronto in 2016/2017.

Recently in 2020 and through a My Child Matters grant, an initiative of the Sanofi Espoir Foundation, she is leading a national awareness project, HeadSmart Jordan, raising awareness about the signs and symptoms of brain tumors in children to allow timely diagnosis and referral.

Dr. Amayiri has several publications related to paediatric brain tumors. Her main clinical interest is to work nationally, regionally and internationally to improve the survival and importantly the quality of life of children diagnosed with CNS tumors in resource-limited countries.

She believes that this can be achieved through close collaborations and twinning with institutions and programmes in high income countries.
Through these discussions with our twinning programme partner, and the shared articles and guidance afterwards, we noticed an escalation in the team’s knowledge over time. Twinning, if done in the proper way, is a great success formula to advance care in countries with limited resources. Subsequently, several regional countries joined our teleconferences where they are given the opportunity to discuss their patients’ management plans and advance their knowledge.

To lead a team when you are the most junior was not easy. Your self-confidence and communication skills are tested every day. Nevertheless, three things helped me improve these skills: understanding myself better, improving my clinical knowledge, and having an experienced mentor who is ready to listen and provide advice. These challenges made me a better version of myself, more knowledgeable and wiser, and ready to take the lead and mentor younger colleagues.

On Balancing Career and Other Life Responsibilities

This has never been easy; working as a paediatric neuro-oncologist in a resource limited country is demanding, both physically and emotionally. Few things helped me find some work-life balance. My mother’s support and encouragement kept me focused on the worth of my work and the important people in my personal life. Working on some research projects allowed me to distract from the stress of the clinical duties even if for a short time. Spiritual meditation helped me organize my life priorities and “re-charged” me whenever I felt overwhelmed.

My Words of Wisdom for the Next Generation of Female Leaders

Have a passion for your work; this is what will help you survive the tough times. Utilize every chance to expand your professional network; this is an invaluable resource for future opportunities. Find a mentor who is able to understand your values and career goals and who is enthusiastic and invested in your growth and support. And most of all, maintain a work-life balance!