

Republic of Iraq



Dr. Saleh Mahdi Al-Hasnawi



Saleh Mahdi Al-Hasnawi is a professor and consultant psychiatrist, public health expert and a politician. Born in Iraq in 1960, married and have two sons and two daughters. He speaks Arabic and English languages.

Dr. Al-Hasnawi is a member of the Iraqi parliament since 2010; he's also a distinguished member of the Health and environment committee and former Minister of Health, before that he was the director general of Karbala Health Directorate, the head of the Iraqi Medical Syndicate in Karbala and professor in Karbala University

He served as a Minister of Health (2007-2010); he was interested to achieve the millennium developmental goals in health and environmental sector, decreasing the climate change effect and the relationship of health with the education.

During his service as a Minister of Health, he achieved relevant goals such as; decreasing the mortality of neonate from 30 to 27 deaths per thousand and the less than five years age mortality from 35 to 28.7 per thousand. New vaccination for hemophilia's influenza and Rota virus was introduced for the first time in Iraq during his time which led to remarkable decrease in the children mortality.

He worked on increasing the number of primary health care centers in Iraq and within 3 years of his service as a minister of health; each center served 14000 citizens in 2010, while it served 22000 citizens in 2007.

His belief in achieving health equity and poverty fighting led him to launch the Health Houses Initiative (small health units) to provide health services to the rural areas, this initiative provided health services for nearly one million Iraqi population reducing health inequality and the poverty level.

In 2009, Dr. Al-Hasnawi in coordination with the Minister of Education and the World Health Organization launched the project of Health Promoting Schools, this project established the firming ground for the transference of the Iraqi schools into more health promoting institutions, also he launched with the Minister of Higher Education and the WHO, Medical Schools Accreditation Project in 2009.

Student's mental health was one of the priorities that Al-Hasnawi adopted throughout training of a large number of teachers to detect children psychological problems and managing it properly.

He held many other responsibilities:

- The membership of the Executive Bureau of the World Health Organization; 2008.
- Chairman of the Ministerial Technical Committee of the Annual Congress of Ministers of Health in EMRO region; Cairo 2008 and Morocco 2010.
- Member of Technical Committee of the Global Fund for fighting (Malaria, Tuberculosis and ADIS).
- Key speaker and chairman of one of the session in the Healthy Cities Global Conference held by WHO. Japan 2010.
- Chairman of the National Committee for Arab Board for Medical Specialization.
- Chairman of National Health and Medical Education System Reform.
- Chairman of the National Water and Rivers Pollution Committee.

At 2009, Al-Hasnawi was granted the Shining World Leadership Award by Supreme Master Ching-Hai International Organization for his action in the legalization of anti-smoking law. He also granted the presidential medal of the Royal College of Psychiatrists; Edinburgh at 2010 for his remarkable role in mental health promotion in Iraq and Middle East Region.

Parliamentary work

After the Ministry, Dr. Al-Hasnawi was elected as parliament member at 2010 and reelected for the same position at 2014. During his time in the Iraqi parliament he continued up his coordination with many international organizations in many fields: for example;

Chairing the Consultation Meeting of WHO - EMRO for Health Researches Strategy in Middle East 2011; also chairing the Consultation Meeting of WHO - EMRO for Mental Health Strategy 2011.

He represented Iraqi parliament in the annual Health Diplomacy Meeting held by the WHO – EMRO 2014; 2015; 2016. He contributed as expert and stalk holder in putting the mental health disease priorities in the disease priority program held by Bail Gaits Foundation, Gorge Washington University and WHO. At 2014 he was one of the key speakers in the Health Equity Conference in Tehran held by WHO – EMRO.

In post ISIS Iraq, Dr. Al-Hasnawi took upon himself a new initiative concerning the psychological rehabilitation of children who are under ISIS tyranny in cooperation with the Iraqi Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization, the merits of this initiative is to be seen within the next few months after the liberation of many Iraq territories from ISIS, and in the same field he led through the Iraqi Psychiatrists Association and Ministry of Education a long term program for remolding of the school curriculum depending on de violence, and peaceful coexistence between people of different backgrounds and beliefs.

He cooperated with Global Partner Organization and many Iraqi MPs to achieve the code of conduct for Iraqi Parliament and participated in many meeting in the region with Global Partner Organization lecturing about the role of political parties in the transitional period.

Dr. Al-Hasnawi as the head and founder of the Iraqi Society of Addiction Medicine delivered the first reliable national survey about the epidemiology of drugs abuse in Iraq in cooperation with USAID and the University of California, utilizing the data, he worked with Iraqi Ministry of Health and WHO to adopt a new strategy for substance abuse management in Iraq.

Legislative aspect

In the parliament he contributed to many laws aimed to reform the health and educational system, health equity achievement and poverty reduction, i.e.

He introduced with the chairman of the Education Committee in the Parliament a draft of law to give incentives to the students of primary and secondary public schools to encourage the enrollment of students, decrease the drop out and fighting poverty both of them succeeded to pass the law under the name of Public School Bonus Law (number 3; year 2014). He contributed to the legislation of Literacy law 2011, human trafficking prohibition law 2012, Human Organ Transplantation Act 2012, proposing draft of anti-drugs law with the Ministry of Health professionals and lobbying in the parliament to pass the bill in 2016.

He participated with the Health and Environment Committee in elaboration of the national environment strategy and convinced the Ministerial Council to adopt it and announced 2014 is the environment protection year in Iraq.

Al-Hasnawi contributed to many laws support the social equity, health system, judiciary system indecency, media freedom, and lastly he proposed a draft of Social Health Insurance Law which still under negotiation and it aimed to protect poor people from the financial burden of the health services utilization.

Dr. Al-Hasnawi opened the first center in Iraq serving the school children with psychological problems in Karbala Governorate in 1998.

Academic achievement

Bachelor in Medicine (Baghdad)

Bachelor of Law (Baghdad)

Fellowship of Iraqi board of medical specialization (Baghdad)

Fellowship of the faculty of public health (UK)