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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Through EU Support to the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network:
St. John Eye Hospital becomes first Palestinian hospital to achieve Joint Commission
International Accreditation***

St. John Eye Hospital has been awarded the three-year Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation for quality and patient safety. JCI notified St. John Eye Hospital on June 12, 2013 of successfully achieving the JCI accreditation. The Joint Commission is a US-based organization that has established patient safety and quality service standards and goals for health service facilities. The JCI accreditation survey at St. John Eye Hospital occurred between May 6-9, 2013. This accomplishment is a significant milestone for the Palestinian healthcare system which demonstrates the safety and quality of services.

Over the last three years, the East Jerusalem Hospitals (EJHs) have been preparing their facilities for JCI accreditation. The Joint Commission conducts site visits to facilities to evaluate their implementation of the standards. Successful facilities receive a three-year accreditation. The facilities within the East Jerusalem Hospital Network (EJHN) are the first in Palestine to endeavor to achieve this goal.

This prestigious accreditation could not have come at a better time in supporting us achieving our strategic goals to put the hospital in line with the best eye hospitals worldwide. We have recently become a full member of the World Association for Eye Hospitals and the accreditation will help to strengthen our relationships locally as well as globally with leading institutions such Moorfields Eye Hospital in London. Quality care and clinical research feature high on our priorities and JCI accreditation will help in this regard, stated St. John Eye Hospital CEO, Brigadier Tom Ogilvie-Graham.

The East Jerusalem Hospitals serve as the main centers for specialized care within the Palestinian health system. Patients needing services and procedures that are not available in the West Bank and Gaza are referred for treatment in the EJHN facilities by the Palestinian Ministry of Health. Over half of the EJHN workload comes from referred patients from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As such, the EJHN plays a critical role in providing health services to the Palestinian people.

The EJHN and its six facilities have been supported by the European Union and the World Health Organization (WHO) for the last four years. Through the latest phase of this programme the EU provided EUR2,4 million which allowed the hospitals to improve the quality of their health services, upgrade their status to the highest international standards (ISO certification and most recently, Joint Commission International¹ accreditation) and engage in joint initiatives and activities (e.g.: risk management, legal representation). The EJHN and its six facilities have been supported by the European Union and the World Health Organization (WHO) for the last four years. Through the latest phase of this programme the EU provided EUR2,4 million which allowed the hospitals to improve the quality of their health services, upgrade their status to the highest international

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standards (ISO certification and most recently, Joint Commission International² accreditation) and engage in joint initiatives and activities (e.g.: risk management, legal representation). In order to prepare the hospitals for JCI accreditation, WHO facilitated various training opportunities including direct training from JCI, and on site consultations by JCI mock surveyors and external quality professionals. In addition, WHO facilitated regular meetings and workshops among the EJHN quality coordinators and their teams to encourage an environment of joint learning, information sharing, and communication among the member facilities of the network.

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