



ISPOR  
Lebanon  
Chapter

Under the Patronage of H.E. Minister of Public Health  
**Dr. Rakan Nasser El-Din**

# PATHWAYS TO UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE: BENEFIT PACKAGE AND SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Booklet  
of the  
Meeting



20 February 2025



Al Habtoor City, Beirut,  
Lebanon

CE Credits

Organized by:  
**sciencepro**  
EVENTS

TIME	TOPIC
09:00-09:15	<b>Opening Note - ISPOR Lebanon Chapter</b> <i>Dr. Marie-Therese Sawaya, President ISPOR Lebanon Chapter</i>
09:15-09:30	<b>Opening Note - Ministry of Public Health</b> <i>H.E. Dr. Rakan Nasser El-Din, Minister of Public Health, Lebanon</i>
<b>SESSION I UHC PATHWAY: OPPORTUNITIES &amp; CHALLENGES</b>	
09:30-09:45	<b>Opportunities &amp; Challenges in UHC: Global &amp; Local Perspectives</b> <i>Pr. Awad Mataria, Director of Universal Health Coverage/Health Systems (UHS), World Health Organization, Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean (WHO-EMRO), Egypt</i>
09:45-10:00	<b>UHC in Lebanon: Lessons Learnt in Time of Crisis</b> <i>Dr. Nadeen Hilal, Advisor to the Minister of Public Health, Lebanon</i>
10:00-10:15	<b>UHC in Lebanon: Previous Efforts &amp; Learnings</b> <i>Pr. Walid Ammar, Former Director of the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Director of the Doctorate and Research in Public Health Program, Saint Joseph University (USJ), Lebanon</i>
10:15-10:30	<b>UHC Law in Lebanon: Insights and Prospects</b> <i>Dr. Imad Hout, Deputy of the Parliament's Public Health, Labor and Social Affairs Committee, Lebanon</i>
10:30-11:00	<i>Moderator: ISPOR Lebanon Chapter</i> <b>Panel Discussion</b> <i>Ministry of Public Health, Parliament, Academia</i>
11:00-11:30	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>
<b>SESSION II BENEFIT PACKAGE DESIGN: PROCESS &amp; EVIDENCE</b>	
11:30-11:45	<b>Challenges on Benefit Package Design: Public Health Perspective</b> <i>Dr. Alissar Rady, Team Lead, World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office, Lebanon</i>
11:45-12:00	<b>UHC in Lebanon Based on Primary Care</b> <i>Mr. Walid Hallassou, Managing Director, Nextcare, Lebanon</i>
12:00-12:15	<b>Costing &amp; Design of a Benefit Package - From Process to Evidence</b> <i>Mr. Guy Saad, Actuary &amp; Managing Director, TrisQ, Lebanon-UAE</i>
12:15-12:45	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
12:45-13:45	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>SESSION III EVIDENCE &amp; FUNDING IN UHC</b>	
13:45-14:00	<b>Funding UHC: Learnings from the World</b> <i>Ms. Farah Asfahani, Public Health Specialist, The World Bank</i>
14:00-14:15	<b>Solutions to Improve, Monitor and Sustain Healthcare Funding</b> <i>Dr. Rajaa Charif, Professor, Public Accountancy Director, Ministry of Finance (MOF), Lebanon</i>
14:15-14:30	<b>NSSF and UHC: Evidence-Based Reforms and Reimbursement Policy</b> <i>Dr. Makram Ghossoub, President of the Technical Committee, National Social Security Fund (NSSF), Lebanon Dr. Carla Akl, Controller Pharmacist, National Social Security Fund (NSSF), Lebanon</i>

TIME	TOPIC
<b>SESSION IV</b>	<b>UHC &amp; HTA: MONEY ALLOCATION OR HEALTHCARE FUND OPTIMIZATION</b>
14:30-14:45	<b>The Value of HTA for Efficient Healthcare Management</b> <i>Dr. Dalia Dawoud, Associate Director of the Science Policy &amp; Research Program National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), UK</i>
14:45-15:00	<b>HTA Vision for the Future</b> <i>Dr. Pierre Anhoury, Advisor of the Lebanese Minister of Public Health, Lebanon</i>
15:00-15:15	<b>Developing Lebanon' Economic Evaluation Guidelines: A Milestone for HTA &amp; UHC</b> <i>Dr. Rita Karam, Professor, Lebanese University (LU), Director QA Program, Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Lebanon</i>
15:15-15:30	<b>HTA as Part of the Ecosystem of Health Decision Making</b> <i>Pr. Elie Akl, Vice Provost for Research, Professor of Medicine, American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanon</i>
15:30-16:15	<i>Moderator: ISPOR Lebanon Chapter</i> <b>Panel Discussion</b> <b>Perspectives on the Road to UHC in Lebanon</b> <i>WHO, MoPH, NSSF, Private Insurance, Academia, PAG, SPIL, LPIA</i>
16:15	<b>Closing - Key Takeaways</b>





## PR. AWAD MATARIA

Director of Universal Health Coverage/Health Systems (UHS)  
World Health Organization,  
Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean (WHO-EMRO)  
Egypt

Pr. Awad Mataria is the Director of “Universal Health Coverage/Health Systems” at the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. He has more than twenty years of experience in health systems, health economics and health financing. For the last fifteen years, Dr Mataria supported countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region to reform their health systems with focus on health financing reforms to move towards Universal Health Coverage. With COVID-19, Pr. Mataria got interested in clarifying the conceptual linkages between Universal Health Coverage and Health Security through a health system strengthening lens.

Since his early life, and throughout his professional career, Dr Mataria developed special interest in working in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Dr Mataria has a Ph.D. in Health Economics and a Masters in Health Systems Analysis, following his undergraduate degree in Pharmacy. His areas of expertise are: Universal Health Coverage; health systems financing and organization; Social Health Insurance; using economics in health care priority setting; measuring the benefits of health care mainly using stated preferences techniques; economic evaluation of health care interventions; and National Health Accounts.

Pr. Mataria has more than seventy publications in high impact journals, including, Journal of Health Economics, Health Economics and The Lancet; and is co-editor of a landmark Book on: “Making Health Systems Work in Low and Middle Income Countries”. He also presented at several international and regional conferences. Pr. Mataria is fluent in three languages: English, French and Arabic (mother-tongue).





## DR. NADEEN HILAL

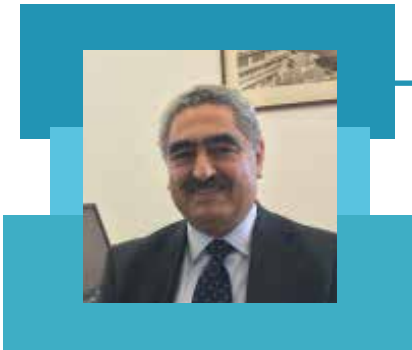
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Advisor to the Minister of Public Health  
Lebanon

Dr. Nadeen Hilal has been serving as an Advisor to the Minister of Public Health in Lebanon since 2021. In this role, she has led numerous system strengthening initiatives and collaborated extensively with international organizations to improve healthcare delivery and policy frameworks in Lebanon. Her work contribution has focused on enhancing public health strategies, expanding healthcare services, and developing sustainable projects to support vulnerable populations.

Dr. Hilal is also a practicing Rheumatologist and a graduate of the American University of Beirut. She serves on the executive board of the Lebanese Society of Rheumatology, contributing her expertise to advance rheumatologic care in the region. Additionally, she holds a Master's degree in Public Health with a concentration in Health Management and Policy. Her academic contributions include several publications in the fields of Rheumatology and public health.





## PR. WALID AMMAR

Former Director of the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)  
Director of the Doctorate and Research in Public Health Program  
Saint Joseph University (USJ)  
Lebanon

Professor Walid Ammar is currently, Director of the Doctorate and Research in Public Health Program at St. Joseph University in Beirut, and the chairman of the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee (IOAC) of the WHO.

He served as Director General of the Ministry of Public Health of Lebanon (1993-2020). Under his leadership, reform efforts led to significant improvement in health indicators while decreasing the GDP share of health expenditures. He established the Primary Health Care Network in Lebanon, led the Hospital Accreditation Program, and introduced performance contracting with the private sector.

His innovative collaborative leadership and open networking model of governance lied behind these achievements and the resilience of the health system.

Professor Ammar was appointed in 2011, Commissioner in the United Nations Commission on Information & Accountability for Women & Children's Health. He served as a member of the Executive Board (EB) at the World Health Organization (2012-2015). He has published over 200 per-reviewed papers and book chapters in addition to two books: "Health System and Reform in Lebanon" (2003), "Health Beyond Politics"(2009).

Professor Ammar is an Honorary Member of the Delta Omega Society (2013) and the recipient of the WHO Shousha Foundation Prize (2016). He is Officer in both the French National Order of Merit and the Belgium's National Order of the Crown. He was awarded in June 2020, the Golden Medal of the National Order of the Health Merit by the President of the Republic of Lebanon.







## DR. IMAD HOUT

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Deputy of the Parliament's Public Health  
Labor and Social Affairs Committee  
Lebanon

Dr. Imad Hout is a Lebanese Member of Parliament from 2009 to 2018 and was re-elected in 2022. During his tenure, he has been member of the Administration and Justice Committee, as well as the Health and Social Affairs Committee. He is actually also a member of the parliamentary committee discussing the Universal Health Coverage draft Law.

Dr. Hout holds a medical degree from Saint Joseph University in Lebanon and universities in Paris. He is a member of the French College of Orthopedic Surgery and has earned the title of Assistant Professor from the Parisian Academy. In addition, he holds a diploma in Healthcare Management from Saint Joseph University and a diploma in Human Resource Development from Paris.

Beyond his political and medical careers, Dr. Hout is a lecturer at the Lebanese University. He serves as the head of the Lebanon branch of the organization "Arab Parliamentarians Against Corruption" and held the position of Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab Physicians





## DR. ALISSAR RADY

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**Team Lead**

**World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office  
Lebanon**

Dr. Alissar Rady occupies the post of Team Lead- technical unit at WHO Beirut she provides strategic and technical support to all the programs of Lebanon Country office.

Dr Rady started her career as Family Physician graduated from AUB in 1993, with Masters in Basic Sciences and Masters in Public Health, along with 11 certificates for advanced training in health systems and health emergency. Dr Rady shifted to public health as medical officer in 1994 at WHO, before moving to work as international expert with several UN agencies, including, ILO, UNFPA, and UNICEF regional offices as well as the World Bank, and then back to WHO Lebanon since 2005.

Dr Rady has several publications in the area of public health, including peer reviewed articles, and has contributed to four national guidebooks development; Awarded the Medal of Merit, Silver Palm rank from the Lebanese President of the Republic in 2022.







## MR. WALID HALLASSOU

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**Managing Director**  
**Nextcare**  
**Lebanon**

Walid Hallassou is a dynamic leader with over 20 years of experience in Third Party Administration (TPA). Since joining Nextcare Lebanon in 2024, he has leveraged his extensive background in HealthTech, Population Health, and Value-Based Care to drive innovation in healthcare access.

A passionate advocate for digital transformation, Walid is committed to sustainability goals through initiatives like the Lumi Digital Health Ecosystem, which aims to make healthcare simpler, smarter, and more accessible. Beyond his professional endeavors, Walid is a father, pharmacist, and an entrepreneur at heart. With his unique blend of expertise and enthusiasm, Walid is dedicated to reshaping healthcare and unlocking new opportunities for all stakeholders.





## MR. GUY SAAD

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Actuary & Managing Director  
TrisQ  
Lebanon-UAE

Guy Saad is the founder and CEO of TrisQ, an actuarial consulting and Insurtech company with operations in Lebanon and the UAE. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Saint-Joseph University and is a Fellow of both the Society of Actuaries and the Lebanese Association of Actuaries, where he currently serves as Vice-President.

With 20 years of experience in actuarial consulting, Guy has worked with local and multinational consulting firms, insurers, health mutual funds, pension funds, and medical third-party administrators across the MENA region and Europe. He has played a pivotal role in the costing of benefit packages and conducting actuarial studies for national health schemes in several MENA countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Lebanon's National Social Security Fund.





## MS. FARAH ASFAHANI

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**Public Health Specialist**  
**The World Bank**

Farah Asfahani is a Health Specialist at the World Bank. Her work at the Bank focuses on a range of areas including primary healthcare, digital health, pandemic preparedness and response, health systems strengthening, and health financing. She holds a Master's degree in Public Health Nutrition from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Farah has experience in Lebanon and across a number of countries in Africa and the MENA region, both in development and humanitarian aid.





## DR. RAJAA CHARIF

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**Professor**  
**Public Accountancy Director**  
**Ministry of Finance (MOF)**  
**Lebanon**

Prof. Rajaa Charif is a distinguished expert in public finance, law, and administration. She serves as the Director of the Public Accountancy Directorate at the Lebanese Ministry of Finance and is a professor at Beirut Arab University and Lebanese University. Holding a PhD in Law from Lebanese University, her research focuses on taxation, financial governance, and public policy.

With over two decades of experience, Prof. Charif has contributed extensively to academia, training institutions, and government committees. She has authored multiple books and studies on public finance, taxation, and governance. As a researcher at the American University of Beirut, she evaluates public health policies and financial strategies.

She actively participates in international conferences, representing Lebanon in high-profile discussions on financial reforms and governance. Prof. Charif is a dedicated advocate for fiscal transparency and policy development in Lebanon and the MENA region.





## DR. MAKRAM GHOSSOUB

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**President of the Technical Committee  
National Social Security Fund (NSSF)  
Lebanon**

Dr. Makram Ghossoub is a distinguished expert in Lebanese labor law and social security, currently serving as the President of the Technical Committee at the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). With a master's degree in business administration from Lebanese University and specialization in Informatics Engineering from CNAM Paris, he has played a key role in modernizing social security systems in Lebanon.

Since 2009, he has been a sworn inspector at the NSSF and has lectured extensively on labor and social security laws. His research and publications focus on wage structures, legal frameworks, and administrative reforms.

Beyond his professional career, Dr. Ghossoub is an acclaimed poet, writer, and cultural advocate. He has published several poetry collections and children's stories, with his work translated into multiple languages. He is an active member of literary committees, including the Lebanese Writers Union, and has been honored for his contributions to Arab literature and culture.





## DR. CARLA AKL

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**Controller Pharmacist  
National Social Security Fund (NSSF)  
Lebanon**

Dr. Carla Akl is an experienced pharmacist specializing in pharmaceutical ethics, quality control, and pharmacoconomics. She has been a Controller Pharmacist at the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) since 2009, where she manages drug lists, evaluates medications based on clinical trials, and implements cost-effective reimbursement strategies.

Previously, she served as Chief Pharmacist at Hayek Hospital, redesigning inventory systems and overseeing procurement, accreditation, and patient safety. With a PharmD from Lebanese University, she further specialized in industrial cosmetology, dermopharmacy, and pharmaceutical business administration.

Dr. Akl is actively involved in pharmaceutical research, attending international conferences, including ISPOR Europe and clinical trial masterclasses. She is committed to improving healthcare accessibility through precision-driven pharmaceutical policies and patient-centered care.





## DR. DALIA DAWOUD

Associate Director of the Science Policy & Research Program  
National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)  
UK

Prof. Dalia Dawoud, PhD, is Associate Director (Research) at the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). She has over 20 years of experience as health economist and researcher. Her current work is focused on advancing HTA and clinical guideline development methods through research. Dalia leads NICE newly established HTA Innovation Laboratory (HTA Lab) as well as NICE's portfolio of European Commission funded projects, such as SUSTAIN-HTA, IHI READI and IHI SYNTHIA, with cumulative funding of over 5 Million Euros.

She is widely published in the area of health economics and outcomes research and serves as Associate Editor of ISPOR journal Value in Health and as Director on ISPOR Board of Directors (2023-2026). Dalia also holds a position as Professor in Clinical Pharmacy at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Cairo University, Egypt and has long standing experience of the Egyptian health care system both as a pharmacist and academic.







## DR. PIERRE ANHOURY

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Advisor of the Lebanese Minister of Public Health  
Lebanon

Dr. Pierre Anhoury is a Lebanese-born doctor, regular lecturer at ESA in Beirut since 2010. He is now the advisor of the Lebanese Minister of Health. Before this position, he was the Director of International Relations at the Institut Curie, Paris, France from 2016 to 2022. He spent 27 years in health management consultancies including E&Y, Deloitte, IMS Health, Kantar Health and Accenture.

He developed expertise in hospital strategy, management consulting and organisation of health services, mostly in cancer treatment centres. He developed methods for the evaluation of drugs, especially in oncology. He has participated in several Cancer Plans in different countries. Dr. Anhoury is MD, public health specialist (MPH) with additional specialties in clinical oncology, geriatrics, palliative care and health risk management.





## DR. RITA KARAM

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**Professor**  
**Lebanese University (LU)**  
**Director QA Program**  
**Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)**  
**Lebanon**

Dr. Rita Karam. is a distinguished expert in pharmaceutical sciences, pharmacovigilance, and public health, with over 30 years of experience in academia, healthcare policy, and quality assurance.

She is a Professor at the Lebanese University and the Head of the Quality Assurance of Pharmaceutical Products Program at the Ministry of Public Health in Lebanon. She has been instrumental in shaping Lebanon's drug regulatory landscape, leading the development and implementation of the national pharmacovigilance system.

Dr. Karam has extensive experience in healthcare policy, quality assurance, and health economics. She has contributed significantly to research and policy development, particularly in health technology assessment and universal health coverage. Her collaborations with international organizations, including the WHO and ISPOR, have driven critical discussions on medication safety, pricing, and access to medicines.

As a skilled speaker and researcher, Dr. Karam has published extensively and presented at global conferences on drug regulation, health policy, and patient safety. She is dedicated to advancing public health through education, evidence-based policymaking, and strengthening pharmaceutical governance.





## PR. ELIE AKL

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Vice Provost for Research

Professor of Medicine, American University of Beirut (AUB)  
Lebanon

Elie Akl is a tenured Professor of Medicine at the American University of Beirut (AUB), where he serves as Vice Provost for Research, leads the division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, directs the AUB GRADE center, and co-directs the Center for systematic reviews of health policy and systems research (SPARK).

He serves on the GRADE working group executive committee, on the board of trustees for the Guidelines International Network (GIN), and on the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on Drug Evaluation (Essential Medicines List). His research expertise is in evidence synthesis, practice guidelines and conflicts of interest. He published more than 550 peer-reviewed papers and was listed by Clarivate as one of the “Highly Cited Researchers” yearly since 2015.



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