



STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

Muslim Advisory Council of Canada is Deeply Concerned About Rise of Islamophobia in Canadian Healthcare Settings

(Toronto, ON) October 18, 2023 – The Muslim Advisory Council of Canada (MACC) is deeply concerned about the sudden rise in Islamophobic incidents in various sectors across Canada, including healthcare. Over the past couple of weeks, several Islamophobic incidents have been directly reported to the Muslim Advisory Council of Canada by physicians, physicians' assistants, and patients seeking medical assistance in Canadian healthcare facilities. This, of course, is linked to the devastating events that have taken place, and continue to take place, in Israel and Palestine. Our heartfelt condolences are with both Israelis and Palestinians who have suffered unimaginable losses.

Unfortunately, yesterday, we learned of an attack on Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, resulting in the death of hundreds of civilians. In accordance with international law, hospitals and critical civilian infrastructure should not be targeted. Hospitals must be a safe haven for the injured. The growing number of innocent civilians who have lost their lives in this conflict, including women and children, is an atrocity. As stated by Prime Minister Trudeau yesterday, "International humanitarian and international law needs to be respected in this and in all cases. There are rules around wars and it's not acceptable to hit a hospital." The United Nations and the World Health Organization strongly condemned the act, with the WHO calling for the immediate protection of civilians and healthcare.

Evidence of a study that we conducted earlier this year, in conjunction with McMaster University's Research Shop, showed that Islamophobia, racism, and discrimination have resulted in the unfair treatment of patients in our healthcare system. We fear that the current political climate may exacerbate the prevalence of these sentiments - and that it may continue to do so into the indefinite future given the tensions arising worldwide by the crisis in the Middle East. When it comes to the critical services provided by our publicly funded institutions, we must do what we can to foster positive social integration and cohesion. Integral to achieving this is our advocacy to combat any form of discrimination in healthcare settings – be it religious, racial, or other. The Muslim Advisory Council of Canada is asking that all Canadians extend civility when dealing with each other in healthcare facilities across the country.

We appreciate the input shared by both Muslims and non-Muslims across Canada and encourage others to [reach out to us](#) if they experience discrimination in healthcare settings. We will continue to advocate against Islamophobia, anti-Muslim sentiment, and racism, ultimately to promote understanding and equality within our publicly funded institutions. We also hope and pray for a just resolution to the long-standing conflict in the Middle East - one that results in long-standing peace in the region.

For more information:

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