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**Abstract**

# The Pattern of Referral of Sick Omani Pilgrims From the Omani Medical Mission During Hajj 2019

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Ahmed Obaid Almashaykhi<sup>1</sup>, PhD, MD; Randa M Nooh<sup>2</sup>, PhD; Sami Said Almudarra<sup>3</sup>; Abdulaziz Saad ALMutari<sup>2</sup>; Naif Saud ALBudayri<sup>2</sup>; Khalid Masoud AIGhamdi<sup>2</sup>; Ali Aldarwish<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Health, Muscat, Oman

<sup>2</sup>Field Epidemiology Training Program, Ministry of Health, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

<sup>3</sup>Ministry of Health, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Corresponding Author:**

Ahmed Obaid Almashaykhi, PhD, MD

Ministry of Health

128 Culture Street

Al Khuwair

Muscat, 11

Oman

Phone: 968 92966264

Email: [dr.ahmed929@hotmail.com](mailto:dr.ahmed929@hotmail.com)

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Annually, in the month of Dhul hijjah, over 2 million Muslims travel to Saudi Arabia to perform hajj. Hajj is the biggest mass gathering globally, which creates a substantial influence on hajjes' health. The Omani medical mission is the official delegation from the Omani government to Saudi Arabia to serve the Omani hajjees regarding their health issues.

**Objective:** This study investigates the referral rate and pattern of diseases among hajjees referred by the Omani medical mission during Hajj 1440 H.

**Methods:** We conducted a cross-sectional study at the Omani Medical missions in Makkah, Madinah, Mina, and Arafat. Data was collected via a predesigned form. All Omani pilgrims presenting to the mission who were referred to local hospitals were included.

**Results:** The total number of cases was 5000, of which 106 (2.1%) were referred to local hospitals (21.2 per 1000 hajjees). The most common causes of referral were cardiovascular diseases (23.6%), followed by gastrointestinal disease (17.9%) and trauma (16.9%). Male patients comprised 60.1% of the sample. Their mean age was 47.3 (SD 11.27) years, with the highest referrals in the 51-60 years age group (30%). Over half (55.7%) had comorbidities. Patients' mean time to reach the clinic was 8.87 (SD 6.41) minutes, with 65% arriving in 5 minutes or less. The mean time needed to reach the hospital by ambulance was 11.39 (SD 6.6) minutes, with 36% arriving within 5 minutes. Of the referrals, 42% were admitted into the hospital. Hospitalization was significantly higher among patients with chest pain ( $P<.006$ ), diabetics ( $P<.001$ ), and patients with heart disease ( $P=.01$ ).

**Conclusions:** The most common causes for referral of hajjees from the Omani Medical Mission were cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal disease, and trauma. This information should assist the Omani government in planning their medical services in the hajj season in future years.

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**KEYWORDS**

hajj; referral; Omani; pilgrims

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