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## **Re-building the Iraqi health care system**

Education provided by Sheffield Hallam University to senior, Iraqi medical leaders and physicists will have a major impact on helping to rebuild their country's health care system, the Iraqi ambassador for the UK has said.

His Excellency, Ambassador Zaid Noori the Consul General of the Republic of Iraq met with 40 Iraqi medical professionals who have been studying at the University and presented certificates to the cohort to celebrate the completion of their courses.

As part of a project run by Sheffield Hallam in conjunction with the Iraq Ministry of Health, doctors, nurses, physicists, dentists and pharmacists from Baghdad have travelled to Sheffield to learn about British healthcare, gaining hands-on experience in areas such as oncology, radiotherapy, cardiology, intensive care, renal, trauma and paediatric care.

Since the project launched in 2012, the University has welcomed 139 Iraqi healthcare professionals through its doors, all of whom are keen to take away valuable skills.

Ambassador Noori, said: "The healthcare system has suffered a lot in Iraq. There's a lack of physicians, lack of experts and a lack of surgeons who have all left the country under different circumstances.

"Then you have the violence and the violence brings with it a lot of casualties and this makes the situation even worse. This is why the Iraq Ministry of Health launched this initiative with Sheffield Hallam University to train more and more physicists and doctors outside Iraq. We want to be able to build on their medical skills to give a boost to the health system in Iraq and take it back to how it was before.

"The tutors at Sheffield Hallam have been so kind and co-operative and it is down to their initiative that this project has happened.

"These people haven't seen proper training inside Iraq and they have been fighting alone. Now they have seen proper procedures here, they can work together back in Iraq and it opens the window for them to gain more skills - I know some even want to come back and undertake post-graduate study.

"The project is still in its early stages and there's still a long way to go, but this is something that is really going to benefit the health system in Iraq."

Professor Karen Bryan, pro-vice chancellor and dean for the University's Faculty of Health and Well-being, said: "It's really overwhelming to see how much these health care professionals are embracing the opportunity to learn, improve and build on their skills so they can make a valuable contribution and a real difference to their country's health care provision.

"We are so proud to be working with the Iraq Ministry of Health to provide their medical experts with this opportunity."

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***PR 2727/ends***