Professor Hassan K. Awwad; The Father of Radiation Oncology and Radiobiology in Egypt and the Arab World, His Good Deeds Last Forever and Inspire us for the Future.

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Our most respected professor Hassan K. Awwad passed away on January 5th, 2007, at the age of 81. He was considered as the father
of radiotherapy in Egypt. He was always named "The Professor", as he was the founder of the radiotherapy departments at the National Cancer Institute, Cairo University & Faculty of Medicine, Alexandria University. He also shared in developing NEMROCK (Kasr El Aini Center of Radiation Oncology and Nuclear Medicine), the place where he graduated and worked during his early years of experience. He, together with professor Reda Hamza, dean of NCI, Cairo at that time, had initiated 7 oncology centers all over Egypt, from Aswan in the South to Damietta and Damanhour in the North. These 7 centers were developed by the Ministry of Health. Prof. Awwad and Prof. Hamza were responsible for facility providing and plans. They chose all the necessary equipment, tools and personnel. These centers were in action since 1988 and are currently taking care of the oncology patients in a wide area of the country. Prof. Awwad graduated from the Faculty of medicine, Cairo University, in 1949. He had his Medical Doctorate (MD) in Radiotherapy from Alexandria University in 1956. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) awarded him fellowships in France (Institute Gustave Rossy) to gain experience in brachytherapy in 1956 and 1971, England 1956, 1959. Another fellowship was awarded to Prof Awwad in Harvard University (Peter Bent Brigham Hospital) in radiobiology and radiotherapy during the years 1964-1965. He personally and with other members of the National Cancer Institute gave much of their efforts and time to teach, train and guide young radiotherapists, biologists, physicists and radiation therapists through direct on-hand teaching and training as well as holding training courses for radiation oncologists, physicists and technologists. He insisted to ensure its regularity 4 times yearly. These courses trained a lot of personnel from all over Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Palastine, Iraq, Uganda, Nigeria and other countries. He himself had many teaching missions in different Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and others) for the sake of groups of his students that could not come to Egypt. He served as the head of the Department of Radiation Oncology for more than 15 years (1970-1985), full time Professor in Radiation Oncology and Radiobiology (1985-2007), Professor of Radiotherapy, Alexandria University (1954-1970), Chief of the Department of Nuclear Medicine, Medical Research Institute, University of Alexandria (1963-1964), Chief of the Radiotherapy Unit in the Heliopolis Hospital, Ministry of Public Health, 1985-2007. He was co-founder of the Egyptian Society of Cancer and acted as vice president and head of the scientific committee of the society. He shared the activities of many Egyptian, Arab and international scientific societies. His activities in these societies were great. Prof. Awwad had direct contact with his students that never ended, even after some of them left to work in other places in USA, Canada, Europe or Arab Countries. His students’ specialty varied between radiobiology, pharmacology, biochemistry, tumor biology, radiation oncology, medical oncology and surgical oncology. Prof. Awwad had more than 100 published articles on hypoxia and hypoxic cell radiosensitizers, biology of growth of human tumors, biology and clinical models of the time factor in external beam radiotherapy, biology and mathematical models of time factor in brachytherapy, radioactive dynamic cancer studies of plasma protein metabolism, radioactive dynamic factor studies of blood disorders and lymphoma, radiation damage of DNA and normal tissues, head and neck cancer, bladder cancer, breast cancer, cervical cancer and development and optimization of clinical radiotherapy. He had continuous cooperation and collaboration with many of the great scientists and clinicians in Holland, France, United Kingdom, USA and Japan. He continued to exchange ideas with these great people all through his life and till the last moments of his extended fruitful life. Prof. Awwad wrote many books for a wide diversity of readers, for the lay people in Arabic, for radiographers, young oncologist, and the highly experienced radiation oncologists and radiobiologists. His book "Radiation Oncology: Radiobiological and Physiobiological Perspectives" was a real translation of radiobiology language to the oncologist and at the same time translation of the oncologist language to the biologist. This book ended with establishing a common language for both teams. In addition, it led other books in these specialties to communicate with the same language. The good news is that Prof. Awwad had completed the second edition of this book just before passing away. This second edition is really a totally new book coping with the advancement of knowledge reached till the end of 2006. We are sure that this book with all other good deeds performed by Prof. Awwad, will keep his memory in Egypt as well as elsewhere in the whole world.