

ATTACKS ON HEALTHCARE

From the Syrian civil war to Gaza and Khartoum

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CONFERENCE & ROUND TABLE

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Uni Mail, Room MR380



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Attacks on healthcare have taken various shapes and have become a major concern in many countries and contexts. The safety and protection for healthcare workers in contexts of armed conflicts, however, is even more precarious. Recent armed conflicts in Gaza, Myanmar, Syria, Ukraine and Sudan have escalated the destruction of health facilities and ambulances and the direct violence and threats exerted directly on healthcare workers. There is now more and stronger evidence of the impact of attacks on health outcomes, changes to health-seeking behaviour of patients who feel unsafe in hospitals, the morale of healthcare workers who leave their post because they fear for their life, the disruption of essential healthcare services and closure of facilities. The next step is to ensure that attacks on healthcare do not become the new norm amongst dictators and amongst their troops. There is limited evidence about why and how attacks on healthcare have become “normal” practice amongst many combatants, despite the likely tactical and strategic costs to themselves. However, there is an important challenge in front of us: how do we challenge or change an implicit norm of behaviour?

To discuss the topic, the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies – University of Geneva Faculty of Medicine and the Global Health Centre – Geneva Graduate Institute invites as a keynote speaker **Dr Ghassan Abu-Sittah**, Lord Rector, University of Glasgow; Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeon, Professor of Surgery, American University of Beirut; Honorary Senior Lecturer, Center for Blast Injury Studies, Imperial College London University; Visiting Senior Lecturer, Conflict & Health Research Group, Faculty of Life Sciences and Medicine, King's College London University.

DISCUSSION PANEL

LARISSA FAST

Director of the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute,
University of Manchester

AVRIL PATTERSON

ICRC Head of Health Unit

MAARTEN VAN DER HEIJDEN

Geneva Graduate Institute

MODERATORS

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