

**Deanship of Graduate Studies**

**Al-Quds University**



**Evaluation of Breast Cancer Management  
in the Gaza Strip**

**Mo'min Khalil Eid**

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# **Evaluation of Breast Cancer Management in the Gaza Strip**

Prepared by

**Mo'min Khalil Eid**

BSc. of Nursing - Islamic University of Gaza-Palestine

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Yehia Abed  
School of Public Health

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Khaled Thabet  
Head of Oncology department at Shifa hospital

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## Thesis Approval

### Evaluation of Breast Cancer Management in the Gaza Strip

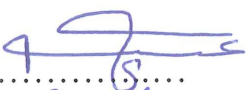
Prepared By: Mo'min Khalil Eid  
Registration No.: 21612194

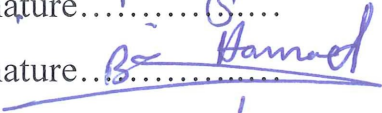
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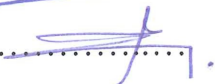
Master thesis submitted and accepted. Date: / /

The names of signatures of the examining committee members are as follows:

1. Head of committee: Prof. Dr. Yehia Abed
2. Internal examiner: Dr. Bassam Abu Hamad
3. External examiner: Dr. Sobhi Skaik

Signature..........

Signature........

Signature..........

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## **Dedication**

I would like to give praise and endless thanks to Almighty Allah for guiding me and giving me the strength, knowledge, ability and opportunity always thought my life.

I would like to dedicate this master dissertation to my family, especially to My father and mother, who have been totally devoted their lives for us and for their endless love, support and encouragement; the secret of my success is their du'aa.

To my brothers, sisters and my friends who gave me support and strength to continue my journey to the end.

To the health staff who spend their times in serving patients and alleviation of their suffering.

Special appreciation to patients for their cooperation and participation in this study the essence and spirit of which is derived and motivated by them and for them.

To all people in my life who touch my heart.

Thank you and may Allah bless all of you

**Mo'min Khalil Eid**

## **Declaration**

I certify that this entire thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master Degree is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any of its parts) has not been submitted for higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signature: .....

Mo'min Khalil Hussein Eid

Date:

## **Acknowledgement**

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May the Almighty Allah richly bless all of you

**Mo'min Kahlil Eid**

## **Abstract**

**Background:** Breast cancer is considered the most widely spread cancer in Palestine and worldwide, it is being claiming the lives of hundreds of thousands of women each year and affecting countries at all levels of modernization.

**Objectives:** This study aims to evaluate the management process of breast cancer in the Gaza Strip that affect in diagnosis and treatment processes serving breast cancer patients in the Gaza strip, to decrease the gaps in breast cancer management in order to decrease morbidities and mortalities that happened in addition to help health care providers and policy makers to formulate strategies for effective breast cancer management.

**Methodology:** The study is triangulated, descriptive and cross sectional one that was conducted in order to evaluate the breast cancer management in the Gaza strip. The qualitative data included interviews with key informants as well as focus groups and life histories with breast cancer patients. The quantitative data was represented by four checklists that identified the number of the available health workforce, available beds and rooms for patients, diagnostic equipment and facilities and checking the completeness of breast cancer patients files.

**Results:** The results of the study revealed that there are gaps and barriers facing breast cancer management in the Gaza Strip starting from patient chief complain, diagnosis process, and available treatment. Most of gaps and barriers are represented in inadequate health care human resources specially (oncologists in Gaza it equals (7) which represent about 0.4 per 100,000, pathologists (5) which represent about 0.3 per100,000, psychologists (1) which represents 0.05 per 100,000 and there is no any nutritionists), inappropriate infrastructure of oncology buildings with poor privacy, comfort and ventilation and deficiencies in necessary diagnostic equipment and supplies. Moreover, prolonged waiting times for patients. In addition, the results showed that there are gaps in referral systems between health facilities and health services abroad. Regarding the prevention and screening services for breast cancer, there is no any regular sustainable prevention programs for breast cancer except activities for screening. Breast cancer diagnostic services are facing many barriers and challenges that impede the early diagnosis of breast cancer. Some of crucial diagnostic facilities are very limited or unavailable in which are necessary for diagnosis as MRI, CT, PET scan, Gamma Camera, Linear accelerator, mammograms, tumor marker test, and other factors related to poor awareness of patients, cultural factors, physician and health system role. Regarding treatment options for breast cancer, there are several obstacles and barriers that affect negatively on the quality and completeness of care such as frequent shortages and interruptions in essential chemotherapy medications, and radiotherapy treatment is not available which consider one of the main treatment option for breast cancer patients, moreover there is no specific center for palliative care in Gaza. The information system, patients medical records and cancer registry are also facing many gaps. All of the previous factors affect negatively on the overall management process and quality of the health services provided to breast cancer patients.

**Recommendations:** The study recommended enhancing policies for breast cancer prevention, screening and management. In addition, to improve the infrastructure of both facilities and human resources for breast cancer management. The study also recommended the importance of improving the communication and coordination between health facilities. Improving and enhancing palliative care for breast cancer patients. In addition to improve the available information system, cancer registry and using ICD-O3 and for further research studies related to breast cancer management and control.

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