

PRESS CLIPPING SHEET

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REPORTER:	Amina Abdul Salam

Project to reduce infant mortality

THE Ministry of Health and Population has launched a project aimed at reducing the rate of perinatal and neonatal complications by 50 per cent over the next three years. The announcement was made during a press conference held in Cairo recently by the Military Medical Academy, the Egyptian Association of members of the British Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Minister of Health Ahmed Emad confirmed the importance of maternal and child health. The project, entitled "Our Dream Will Come True", will contribute to improving Egypt's child health care services and raising the health awareness of mothers as well as upgrading the performance of medical teams at health units, schools and medical centres, according to Minister Emad.

Dr Murad el-Alfi, head of the committee in charge of implementing the project, mentioned that it would be supervised by the Ministry of Health, with the support of some businessmen. He added that the Galaa Armed Forces Hospital would be the first venue for the project.

"The project has been planned to cover all the governorates, at one and the same time, since scientific research has proved that nationwide coverage is required, to achieve a real reduction in the infant mortality rate, whose current range is between 42 and 70 per cent," said Dr el-Alfi.

The Executive Manager of the project, Dr Abba el-Alfi, noted that its aim was to reduce the complications and disabilities that afflict newborn infants, whose annual mortality rate, in the first month of their lives, is 14 per 1000 babies. She attributed

this high rate to premature birth caesarean delivery, breathing problems, malnutrition and a drop in breast feeding averages.

She stressed that the community children medicine programme was the foundation on which any process for the improvement of the health of newborns should be based.

Dr Abba pointed out that the fact that breast feeding rates had dropped to 13 per cent of the newborn population and only lasted four or five months, was a worrying indicator. She noted that the project had adopted the idea of training health staff to provide nutritional counseling at the health centres, as part of the project's services.

A specialised hospital will be constructed in the Suez Canal area, as an international research and educational centre and as a facility for medical tourism.



DR Ahmed Emad, the Minister of Health, stressing the importance of maternal and child health during a press conference that was held in Cairo recently.