Ministry of Health improves efficiency and access with new MoH Intranet Portal

By: **Maban Mansoori**, Sr. Web Specialist

Due to the rapid technology innovation, there was a demand to renew and improve the old MoH Intranet site. The MoH Intranet Portal project was initiated at the end of 2006. The project was sponsored by Microsoft Bahrain and it was implemented in collaboration with the following team members from Health Information Directorate:

• Maban Mansouri, Project Manager
• Hasan Ahmed, Systems Analyst.
• Rajesh Varghese, Technical Specialist

The revamped MoH Intranet Portal is a cornerstone in the Ministry's drive to enter the digital age and propels the Ministry forward as a leader in technology innovation. The main benefits of the portal are as follows:

• enable the department to establish a corporate identity
• improve collaboration and communication amongst its employees
• share and improve staff information and knowledge
• improve the decision-making process
• increase cost efficiencies
• improve overall output and efficiency.

The MoH Intranet Portal is comprehensive communication and collaboration system. This solution will enable MoH employees to better serve the needs of others and empower them to reach their full potential in the workplace. The Intranet Portal is aligned with Bahrain's eGovernment strategy to eliminate bureaucracy and improve workflow and efficiency.

The MoH Intranet Portal contains many new facilities and features. Each department will have its own site that can be updated and maintained directly through a content management system, eliminating time spent in referring to IT specialists. The Intranet Portal will feature multiple team sites, meetings and document workspace can and will be rich with informative material about MoH circulars, announcements, MoH events, health conferences, documents management and online forms. Each authorized user will have My Site which is a personal site that gives the user a central location to manage and store his documents, content, links, and contacts.

 The new MOH intranet portal was officially launched under the patronage of Dr. AbdulAziz Hamza, Undersecretary Ministry of Health (MOH) on the 24th September 2007.
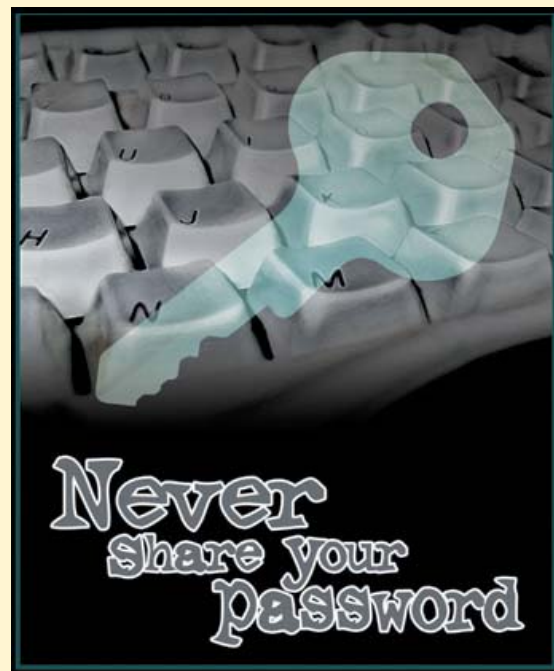
Password Security

By: Mohammed Atiya Neama

Your passwords are the keys you use to access your computer account. It is important to re-member why passwords are important: passwords are often the first defense against intrusion. They protect your information. In our personal lives, this means financial information, health data, and private documents. In a professional context, this may encompass any protected information: patient data, financial data, etc.

Fortunately, it is not hard to create strong passwords and keep them well protected.

What makes a strong password?

• Your Password must be changed regularly.

• Create a strong password to guard your account.

• Passwords should be complex including Upper and lower case letters, numbers and or symbols.

• Passwords must be at least 8 characters in length, but longer passwords are more difficult to crack.

• Never share your password with anyone

• Don't give your password out to anyone.

• Never provide your password over e-mail or based on an e-mail request. Any e-mail that requests your password or requests that you to go to a Web site to verify your password is almost certainly a fraud. This includes requests from the system administrator.

• Do not write your password down anywhere. Memorize your password, and destroy any written copies of it after you have done so.

• Don't make your password obvious (your name, home address, CPR no., mobile no. etc.).

• Avoid using words found in the dictionary. Password guessing programs try these first.

Mohammed: Sr. Security Assurance

Ministry of Health eServices

By: Maban Mansoori

The Ministry of Health has recently introduced new eServices on the MoH website to the patients and site visitors. The website now provides new facilities for the patients such as showing the readi-ness of their X-ray results at Salmaniya Medical Complex and Health Centers. Moreover, the patients and blood donors can check their blood type and the date of test or donation done.

This is in addition to other eServices provided by the website such as appointments at Salmaniya Medical Complex Outpatient Clinics, appointments at limited private practice clinics, medication price lists and more.

In fact, the Ministry of Health has future plans to enhance and increase the electronic services in order to support the Bahrain eGovernment strategy for enabling electronic services for the vari-ous constituents.

Maban: Sr. Web Specialist

www.moh.gov.bh

Automation of Pharmacy Prescription Forms at Salmaniya Medical Center

By: Nooriya Ebrahim Yousif

Pharmacy drugs consumes a large portion of the Ministry of Health budget. The drugs are issued by consultants and doctors in all health facilities including Salmaniya Medical Complex Inpatient and Outpatient Clinics. The outpatient clinics of SMC receive around 800 patients on daily basis, each having a pharmacy prescription containing five drugs at minimum. The demand on pharmacy drugs is increasing year by year, the thing that requires proper management and dispensing controls to be in place at SMC pharmacy. In order to do that, a committee was formed and chaired by H.E. the Minister of Health and contains MoH Top Executives as well as key representatives from SMC Administration, Pharmacy, Directorate of Materials Management, Directorate of Finance and Health Information Directorate.

The committee reviewed the process it takes the drug from the acquiring stage to the dispensing stage when the patient receives it at the pharmacy counters. The objective was to ensure that available drugs are prescribed to the patients on their visits to the hospital clinics ,on time.

One of the solutions to these problems was to review the process of prescribing and dispensing drugs. Since Information Technology is the enabler for automating and improving business processes, HID in coordination with SMC Pharmacy initiated a project sometimes in November 2006 to handle the automation of pharmacy prescriptions. The aim of the project was to generate automated Pharmacy Prescriptions Forms from the current Health Information System (MDIS). The objectives of the project were:

• To allow the issue of drugs to those patients who have a registered appointment in the system.

• To eliminate using the paper prescription forms.

• To better control the issuing of pharmacy drugs.

The implementation of the new automated prescription started in January 2007 as a pilot for six months. In July 2007, when the pilot has proved successful, the old prescription forms were terminated except for exceptional cases.

This had great impact in reducing the number of prescriptions and savings on cost of issuing drugs to unauthorized people reached around 25%.

The new system prints the prescription form along with the appointment slip from the appointment booking screen together with the patient, clinic and appointment details. The appointment and the prescription form are given to the patient who presents it in on the appointment day. The doctor writes his prescription on this form and there is no necessity to stick patient labels on

From left Susil, Hussain, Nooriya and Rehab — Progress meeting for project team

the form as the details are already printed on it. Walk in patients have to be registered in the system to receive the same prescription form.

On the appointment day, when a patient arrives to the clinic without the prescription form the system allows printing of extra copy of the appointment slip along with the prescription form. Only authorized users are allowed to print extra copies.

The new automated features of printing the automated prescription form have introduced many benefits to the patient as well as the ministry:

• No additional patient queuing and no significant extra waiting time.

• The elimination of unauthorised issue of drugs from the pharmacy.

• More accurate patient statistics due to the compulsory registration in the system.

•Cost savings such the cost of labels which will be eliminated on pharmacy prescription as the patient details will be printed, and the cost of pre-printed pharmacy prescription forms.

Automating Pharmacy prescriptions was done as an interim solution, apart from the long term solution of implementing comprehensive Pharmacy Management System within Health IT Program. The new system will form part of a robust Order Communication Solution, which is fully integrated to the Electronic Health Records System.

Nooriya: Sr. Computer Systems Analyst

Hussain, Lamya and Nooriya
Prescription entry of SMC pharmacy

HID activities

Launching of MoH Intranet Portal

General Knowledge Competition

activities

Football Activity

Eid Al Fetir Breakfast