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## **Center for International Rehabilitation Chosen by Iraqi Ministry of Health to Train Country's Medical Personnel in Care of War Wounded**

***World Bank subsidizes training sessions now underway in Bosnia of more than 100 Iraqis***

**CHICAGO (October 18, 2007)**—The Center for International Rehabilitation (CIR) and the Iraqi Ministry of Health have formed an alliance, funded by the World Bank, to provide medical training in Bosnia through December 2007 to 110 Iraqi physical therapists, rehabilitation center managers and hospital-based physicians who provide care to the civilian war wounded in Iraq. The CIR, the only US Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) working directly with the Iraqi Ministry of Health and World Bank to assist the Iraqi war wounded, is committed to improving care for those disabled by war.

“The Iraq war has taken a terrible toll on the country’s civilian population and left many people with significant disabilities,” said CIR president Dr. William Kennedy Smith. “As an organization founded to help people and countries rebuild after conflict, we are dedicated to working with Iraqi healthcare professionals and the ministry of Health to deliver the best possible care to the civilian war wounded in Iraq. We feel it is important to do this. Important for the Iraqis and important as well as for ourselves and for our country.”

The program, which is part of the Ministry’s Emergency Disability Project (EDP) subsidized by the World Bank, combines academic course work with hands-on training. Course materials were developed in collaboration with professionals at the Northwestern University Department of Physical Therapy and the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Instruction is being provided by professionals affiliated with CIR and University of Illinois Clinical Center (UKC) in Tuzla, Bosnia, which hosts the six training sessions. In all, 110 Iraqi medical professionals will receive comprehensive instruction by the end of the year. The CIR and UKC, which previously worked together to help rehabilitate victims of the Balkans war in the 1990s, covered all travel, lodging, food and session costs for the Iraqis.

Courses include the following:

- Three four-week sessions for 70 physical therapists focusing on amputee, neurologic, pediatric and general rehabilitation. (September through October)
- One two-week training session for 20 rehabilitation center managers in community-based rehabilitation; health systems (politics, economics, financing), change management; human resource management; planning and needs assessment; integrative leadership; and standard operating procedures. (October)
- Two two-week sessions for 20 hospital-based physicians on specialized content areas of rehabilitation including spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, amputee and medical rehabilitation. (November through December)

Goals of the Iraqi Ministry of Health’s Emergency Disability Project (EDP) include improving services at 14 Iraqi rehabilitation centers, fostering legal protections and creating a social framework of inclusion for people with disabilities. The EDP program, which calls for strengthening partnerships with NGOs, is subsidized by the World Bank, an essential source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world.

The Center for International Rehabilitation, based in Chicago, is a not-for-profit Non-Governmental Organization that seeks to improve the lives of people with disabilities in countries affected by war by providing rehabilitation and training programs and mobility aides, and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities worldwide. For more information on the programs of the CIR, please visit our website at [www.cirnetwork.org](http://www.cirnetwork.org).

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