RED NOSES
In Laughter there is Hope
مؤسسة الأنوف الحمراء الدولية–فلسطين

Training Programmes for Healthcare Clowns: Enhancing the Clowns' Skills to Bring Humour and Laughter in Palestine

At RED NOSES Palestine (RNPS), we believe in the transformative power of humour and joy. Beyond bringing smiles to those in need, we are committed to ensuring the legacy of healthcare clowning continues to thrive. That's why our workshops are at the heart of our

mission: training our team of clowns who will carry forward the spirit of laughter, compassion, and resilience.

Building Healthcare Clowning Skills with Purpose

Our workshops are more than just lessons in humour—they are immersive training programmes that combine creativity, empathy, and professionalism. Through a carefully crafted curriculum, participants learn essential clowning techniques, including improvisation, physical comedy, musicality, and non-verbal communication.

Our experienced trainers, themselves seasoned healthcare clowns, guide trainees through interactive sessions designed to enhance their performance and connection skills. They also emphasize the importance of sensitivity in working with vulnerable groups, especially children with disabilities, ensuring that every interaction brings comfort and joy in equal measure.

The Artistic Director of RNPS, Daoud Totah commented: "As an Artistic Director, I see every training as an opportunity to guide our clowns in embracing vulnerability and creativity. It's through this journey that they discover the true essence of healing—where humour becomes a language of empathy, and each gesture carries the potential to touch a soul in need."

Strategic organisational development, as well as the training and education of our healthcare clowns and office staff are crucial components required for the healthy growth and adaptability of the RED NOSES group.

RNPS ensures the implementation of the vision, mission, and strategy to the group, by continuously facilitating several capacity-building activities throughout the year. Fostering leadership potential, know-how exchange, and quality monitoring, as well as training for fundraising and communication staff, we guarantee that our beneficiaries receive our services with the highest excellence possible.

RNPS, a branch office of RED NOSES International, offers a developed curriculum to maintain delivering high artistic quality standards and is constantly investing in the training of its artists. With the implementation of a solid and unified curriculum with RED NOSES International (RNI), the RED NOSES group seeks to remain in the vanguard of artistic quality by providing the best possible training and education for its healthcare clowns.

The RNI Curriculum is obligatory and comprises a total of 476 hours, including eight study units ranging from artistic to psychosocial studies, social studies, healthcare studies, health environment, sociology, and communication. It includes practical experience in the hospital, as well as the commitment to attend regular supervision. Most of the trainings are held at the International School of Humour (ISH) in Vienna and bring together healthcare clowns from over eleven countries on a regular basis.

In 2024, RNPS conducted 16 online trainings and 4 local trainings. The online workshops cover a diverse range of topics designed to deepen understanding and enhance skills in healthcare clowning. Key areas include the ethics and principles of RED NOSES International (RNI), the theory and history of hospital and healthcare clowning, and the psychological aspects of working with patients across different age groups. Participants also explored humour as an effective communication tool, sociological and cultural paradigms, social identity, and strategies for both internal and external communication. These workshops provide a comprehensive foundation for anyone involved in the field of healthcare clowning.

The local training includes topics such as continuous learning, geriatric workshops, and an annual meeting to review and refresh knowledge and lessons learned.

The journey of a RED NOSES Clown

Joining our team means embarking on a journey of continuous learning and development. Inspired by the vision of creating a world where everyone can thrive emotionally, socially, and creatively, we are dedicated to supporting our RED NOSES artists in making a real impact through their work.

In the Pre-Clown stage, RED NOSES team members and local Artistic Directors constantly have their eyes open to identify interesting new artists and promising talents in their local areas. With an aim to find new artists, the Pre-Clown programme is designed to prepare young artists for auditions and support promising talent.

To become a RED NOSES clown and be accepted as a RED NOSES artist, applicants need to go through an audition process. RED NOSES local teams raise awareness and interest to encourage a wide variety of interesting new artists to audition.

Once accepted, new artists are required to successfully complete the RED NOSES Curriculum. All the partner organisations are committed to the RED NOSES Curriculum and all artists are required to complete the certification process.

To obtain the RED NOSES International Certificate, the artists are required to complete all Curriculum units. Since the Curriculum's introduction in 2015, over 279 of the active 464 RED NOSES Clowns have successfully completed the Curriculum.

"The training taught me that being a healthcare clown isn't just about making people laugh—it's about being present, listening with my heart, and using humour to create moments of joy and comfort when they're needed most." Said by a healthcare clown at RNPS.

Empathy at the Core

Healthcare clowning isn't just about making people laugh; it's about understanding human emotions and creating meaningful connections. Our workshops instill in trainees the ability to listen, observe, and adapt to the needs of their audience—whether it's a child in a hospital room, an elderly patient in a care home, or a community recovering from trauma.

Through role-playing scenarios and real-life case studies, trainees gain a deeper understanding of the impact a healthcare clown can have, ensuring they are equipped not just as performers but as compassionate caregivers.

Fostering Creativity and Confidence

For many participants, joining our workshops is a transformative journey. They discover untapped talents, overcome stage fright, and gain the confidence to step into the world as agents of change. By nurturing their individuality and encouraging collaborative creativity, we empower them to develop their unique clowning personas.

Impact Beyond the Workshops

The impact of our training programmes extends far beyond the workshops. Graduates of our workshops become integral members of the RNPS family, bringing joy to hospitals, elderly homes, and community centres across the region. Their work creates ripples of positivity, inspiring others and proving that laughter truly is a universal language.

A Growing Community of Joy-Makers

Over the years, our workshops have cultivated a vibrant community of healthcare clowns dedicated to spreading joy where it's needed most. These clowns not only enrich the lives of those they encounter but also raise awareness of the importance of humour in healing. Together, they form a network of joy-makers who are transforming lives, one smile at a time.

Our workshops are more than just a training ground—they are a gateway to celebrate humanity through humour. Over time, we continue to prove that laughter is a beacon of hope even in the most difficult times. Next year, we will amplify our impact throughout our new project, Humour Gives Hope: Strengthening the mental health of vulnerable children & adolescents in Palestine through Health Clowning" project, funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMSGPK). This initiative will prioritise empowering children with disabilities and fostering inclusive environments.