



Interview with the Founder & Organiser of the International Conference for Special Needs Dubai, Ms Noura (Iris) Dapper and Ms Sarah Luenz, Head of PR & Marketing of the Net Portal Dubai-Info-Lounge.com

What is your business experience before founding ESS Medical Performance:

It is more than a 20 years professional background of business experience I, can look at.



Starting my business life in the age of 17, I did her exams in the medical field as a Surgeon's Assistant, a Pharmaceutical Consultant with final exams of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Cologne, Germany, and a Professor's Assistant & Secretary.

I continued and extended my career in the business field as the Assistant to the Vice President Human Resources Central Europe in an International Music concern and



General Manager's Assistant: in an International business in the area of Consumer Products.

Is there any other important experience what brought you to run such a Conference?

But in addition a highly important part of experience in the field of special needs came from my private life. In 1996 I a very serious accident and broke my leg several times. The result was to sit in a wheelchair for roundabout 5 month, I couldn't walk for another 12 month plus one more year until her leg recovered. From her doctor's I heard, that I will never be able again to walk in a normal way. During that time I felt herself how it is not being able to go where I wanted or to do what is necessary.

Getting back to health step by step, I was faced to another problematic situation. My father started suffering from Alzheimer's disease in 1998. Some change in memory is normal as we grow older, but the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are more than simple lapses in memory. People with Alzheimer's experience difficulties communicating, learning, thinking and reasoning — problems severe enough to have an impact on an individual's work, social activities and family life. I saw how my father losing his memory, difficulty performing familiar tasks, problems with the language, disorientation to time and place, poor or decreased judgment, problems with abstract thinking, misplacing things, changes in mood or behavior, changes in personality (getting more and more aggressive without knowing it), loss of initiative.

In the final stage of AD, my father became immobile, the extent that he required support to sit up without falling. With the advance of this stage, he lost the ability to smile and, ultimately, to hold up their head without assistance, unless their neck becomes contracted and immobile. In the end he didn't remembered me any more as his daughter.





Additionally in the end of 1999 I was informed by my mother's doctor that she felt sick with cancer. In the beginning in her tongue and jaw (both were removed by surgery), in 2001 the next cancer in her colon showed up (particularly removed by surgery too). In January 2004 the third type of cancer showed up in her liver including the information that the doctor's were not able to help her any more.

From that day on I travelled to Germany every four weeks to see my mother. The doctors and nurses told me, that it would be better for my mother if she didn't know about her situation.

The decision I had to make, including this close support, was really hard. The responsibility to look into my mother's face, knowing about her situation, and hide this information, was very often more than I could take.

But to know it would be better to give the most comfortable time to her – and to keep the information from her that she had only some more months to live – was the only thing I could do for my mother.

This hard time and to make such painful experience, but also to run a business in the same time, gives me my special background. I know how people in hard situations feel and I know the real meaning of "feeling helpless".



My decision was to combine all these experiences and knowledge and to set up a company, which offers a various field of services for those who are in a weaker position than I was that time – and in a country I felt in love with – Dubai!



What was your way to create this special project:

In the very beginning in August 2003 the services ranged from the support of Arabian patients, travelling for medical treatment to Germany, to V.I.P.-Services (from personal organisation to helicopters, from exclusive dinners and image campaigns to bodyguards)

and Special Arrangements (e.g. workshops and high-level incentives for national and international companies).

In the course of running the services I was approached by patients, their families but also companies to offer further support and solutions, especially for cases around the field of special needs. From 2003 to 2006 I collected all that information.

The consequence of all requests and notes was to establish a very special conference, which covers the interests and real needs of the people with special needs, their families, special needs centres and support for those, who are direct or indirect connected to the field.

The beginning was not easy. That is especially because there was no private company working in this field with a Conference – but cooperating with Governmental Bodies. It took a long time to proof the real interests in favour of the local community.



Thanks God I was able to establish close lines to partners in leading positions of the country as well as to partners who were really interested to engage themselves with the goal to support the people with special needs.

The result of this teamwork made already the first International Conference for Special Needs Dubai 2007 being a great success.



the common understanding and trustworthy cooperations are the base for further projects – from the second International Conference for Special Needs Dubai 2008 up to other future oriented projects.

The business fields of cooperation reaches from V.I.P.- Services, Personal Arrangements and Medical and Health Support to Exhibitions, Conferences and Special Events. All projects include the full service of Advertising, Public Relation and Marketing –

whenever a promotion needs glamour and glitz, advertisements need to reach that extra mile and the events have to be very special and memorable!

What is the International Conference for Special Needs Dubai 2008 about?

The second International Conference for Special Needs Dubai 2008 (ICSN) under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Juma Bin Maktoum Bin Juma Al Maktoum, which will be held on 18th & 19th November 2008 at Dubai World Trade Centre, Room Dubai C, Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The ICSN is covering the various fields of special needs care. One big part (in cooperation with a Governmental Body) is a special concept around the field of worklife.

The goal is to raise the awareness of companies, the further education for national employees working in the field, bringing people with special needs back to / into worklife etc.



Further education will be given to all those who are engaging themselves in the field of special needs care (all participants of special needs center are free of charge).



Included are training systems from latest technologies of care & treatment systems up to interdependence trainings etc.

Was there any special and exceptional moment for you?

With the Opening Ceremony of the ICSN 2007 I felt overjoyed about the reaction of His Highness Sheikh Juma Bin Maktoum Bin Juma Al Maktoum as he received the Appreciation Award for his trust and support.



On 26th November 2007 I felt highly honoured to receive the Appreciation Award under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President Dubai Civil Aviation Department, Chairman Emirates Airlines and Chairman Rashid Paediatric Therapy Center, which was forwarded by His Highness Sheikh Juma Bin Maktoum Bin Juma Al Maktoum, Acting Chairman Rashid Paediatric Therapy Center, for my engagement and support in favour of the children with special needs of the Rashid Paediatric Therapy Center.

Thank you so much for taking time from your busy schedule to meet with Dubai-Info-Lounge.com in June 2008.