

كلية طب وايل كورنيل في قطر Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Member of Qatar Foundation

Press Release

Initiative to create a new and healthy generation of young people

Doha – October 13, 2014: The health of thousands of children across the country will be improved now and into the future thanks to the vision of Qatar Foundation (QF) and Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q).

WCMC-Q is currently running its high-profile Sahtak Awalan – Your Health First campaign and under that initiative, with the vision and support of QF, children at all of Qatar Foundation's schools are now being served the healthiest meals possible during their lunch breaks. The healthy, nutritional, multi-course menu has been devised by AMLAK Services and is being cooked in their state-of-the-art kitchens. AMLAK Services is a subsidiary of AMLAK Holding which itself is a member of Qatar Foundation. Adopting Sahtak Awalan branding and health messages, children are also being encouraged to take responsibility for the food they eat and are learning about the benefits of certain foods. The aim is to create healthy eating habits at a young age, potentially improving the health of an entire generation and preventing obesity, diabetes and heart disease in years to come.

The initiative is symbiotic with QF's mission of developing sustainable human capacity and unlocking human potential. The scheme will also set an example for other schools to adopt, bringing healthier lunches to students at schools across the country.

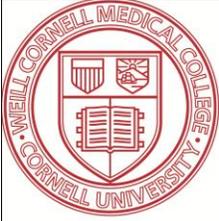
Commenting on the initiative, Buthaina Al Nuaimi, Executive Director of Pre-University Education at QF, said: "Instilling the benefits of healthy eating amongst Qatar's youth and building a health conscious society is paramount to Qatar Foundation's Community Development Pillar. This on-going five-year Sahtak Awalan campaign aims to educate the community about healthy living. Ultimately, through this knowledge sharing process, Qatar Foundation, along with its partners, will not only help ensure the well-being of future generations, but the long-term sustainability of the entire nation."

Dr. Javaid Sheikh, Dean of WCMC-Q, said an initiative like this could have a huge impact on children's health.

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Dr. Sheikh said: "Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is proud of its increasingly positive role within the community and is committed to the future of Qatar and helping it reach the targets set out in Qatar National Vision 2030.

"Our doctors understand the health issues that Qatar faces but know that these health issues can, for the most part, be dealt with effectively with a healthy diet and regular exercise. If we can encourage Qatar's children and young people to change their habits we can create a healthy generation able to make a real and active contribution to the goal of moving towards a knowledge-based economy. We strongly believe that habits and lessons learned at a young age are set in stone and will stay with the child for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Ahmed Al Hajjaji, CEO of AMLAK Holding said: "First and foremost, we take pride in WCMC-Q's Sahtak Awalan campaign, which is aimed at influencing people to make positive changes to their lives by eating healthily and exercising. We are delighted to be contributing to the overall health and well-being of the students and the community at large. The Catering Company at AMLAK Services Subsidiary, which works in coordination with Food Services department at QF Support Services, aspires to serve only healthy food options so helping to educate QF's students about a balanced and nutritious diet."

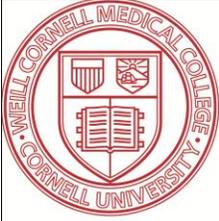
The QF schools' canteens project was officially launched on 7 September at the start of the new school year. Along with the new lunches, there are facts about nutrition and interactive displays in each of QF's school canteens, reinforcing the healthy eating message. In addition, there is information showing students in the senior schools how they can calculate their BMI to motivate them to adopt a healthier lifestyle, and information that emphasizes the health benefits of certain foods. Healthy recipe cards are available for students to cook with their parents and a Top Trumps game based around healthy foods has also been designed for the children to play among themselves.

To encourage children to eat healthily, Sahtak Awalan has devised a reward system with children receiving stamps in a book whenever they choose a healthy option. Once they have collected enough stamps they receive a badge.

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And it appears that the revamped cafeterias are already seeing results.

Qatar Academy student Abdulrahman Aldosri, aged 10, said: "I like eating fruit, especially cherries, which are my favorite. If you want to grow up to have a strong and healthy body you have to eat the right food and not lots of candies and french fries."

Seven-year-old Jay Sherwood, added: "I play football and if you drink lots of milk it gives you strong muscles and bones so your legs will be strong for running and kicking the ball."

The Sahtak Awalan – Your Health First campaign was launched in 2012 as a five-year initiative designed to curtail unhealthy habits and help improve the health of the nation. It has won high-profile support and is run in association with the Supreme Council of Health and in partnership with Qatar Foundation, the Supreme Education Council, Qatar Petroleum, Oxy Qatar, ExxonMobil Inc. and Qatar Olympic Committee.

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Photo 1: Abdulrahman Aldosri

About Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

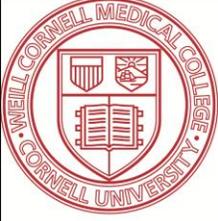
Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers pre-medical and medical courses leading to the Cornell University M.D. degree with teaching by Cornell and Weill Cornell faculty and by physicians at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Aspetar Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital who hold Weill Cornell appointments. Through its biomedical research program, WCMC-Q is building a sustainable research community in Qatar while advancing basic science and clinical research. Through its medical college, WCMC-Q seeks to provide the finest education possible for medical students, to improve health care both now and for future generations, and to provide high quality health care to the Qatari population.

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