

Trainee physicians impress visiting doctors

Doha – March 13, 2016: Doctors from renowned US teaching hospitals visited Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) to hear about the college’s curriculum and meet its students and faculty.

The US doctors are all responsible for residency programs in the US, and the majority of WCM-Q students apply to such residencies once they have completed their medical degree. The annual Residency Program Directors’ Symposium allows the directors to learn more about WCM-Q and also gives students the opportunity to ask questions in an informal environment, ascertaining what the directors look for when accepting students into residency programs.

Dr. Marcellina Mian, WCM-Q’s Associate Dean for medical education, said, therefore, that the annual visit by residency program directors was hugely beneficial as it allowed the college to showcase its curriculum, faculty, facilities, and most importantly, its students.

Dr. Mian said: “This symposium allows us to demonstrate that we are world-class and that we are producing doctors who are of the same caliber as any US medical college.”

This year 13 directors visited the college, most of whom had never been to Qatar before.

Dr. Andrew White, associate professor of pediatrics and director of the pediatric residency program at Washington University School of Medicine, was one of them.

Dr. White said he was very impressed both with the college and with Qatar.

He said: “The curriculum appears to be all-inclusive, challenging and innovative, it’s very similar to what we have in the US and in some aspects it’s more advanced.”

Dr. Richard Hoffman, residency program director at Chesterfield Family Medicine, which is affiliated with Virginia Commonwealth University, echoed Dr. White’s comments and said it had been an eye-opening experience for him.

Dr. Hoffman said: “Before this visit I think WCM-Q would have been considered a small medical school that I personally did not know much about and what I had heard was anecdotal. However, looking at this, your facilities are comparable to Western medical schools and the amount of work done in this short period of time has been remarkable. The amount of clinical experience open to students is really very good.”

The residency program directors spent four days in Qatar, during which they learned about WCM-Q’s curriculum, its facilities and programs. They met with the college’s student body who asked the directors about the residency programs they lead, and heard about the experience of WCM-Q alumna Nadia Merchant, who graduated in 2011.



The US doctors also visited Hamad Medical Corporation and toured WCM-Q's research laboratories, learning more about the college's biomedical research program and its focus on diseases prevalent in the region.

Dr. Michael Jibson, director of psychiatry residency education at the University of Michigan, praised the universality of the research programs.

He said: "Nearly all the medical students engage in at least a brief experience of research and they clearly understand what that research is about and its wider context. That would be exceptional in the US."

There was also praise for WCM-Q's policy of offering third year medical students the chance to spend time at its sister campus, Weill Cornell Medicine in New York.

Dr. Jibson said that it was a "wonderful idea" and "incredibly important" particularly as WCM-Q views itself as part of the US medical education system.

Dr. Robert Rohrbaugh, residency program director for the Department of Psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine, agreed, adding: "New York exposes them to a different system of care. The schools have slightly different ways of doing things and the ability to work in that milieu is very important."

WCM-Q's students have an excellent record for being accepted into US residency programs. Last year, all graduates who entered the National Residency Match Program were successful. In 2014 also, 100 per cent of those who went through the match process were accepted into a US program. It is a goal of WCM-Q to have its graduates return to Qatar upon completion of their training to contribute to the growth of the country's healthcare system in line with the standards of excellence set out in Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Health Strategy.

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Photos Captions:

Photo1: Qatari Student Ahmad Al-Shahrani – Class of 2017 presenting during the symposium

Photo2: Dr. Marcellina Mian, WCM-Q's Associate Dean for medical education

Photo3: Focus Groups

Photo4: Group Photo

About Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar

Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers a comprehensive six-year medical program 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, WCM-Q is building a sustainable research community in Qatar while advancing basic science and clinical research. Through its medical college, WCM-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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