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Sidra Appoints Professor Khalid Hussain as Program Director for Research in Children's Services

Pediatric Diabetes and Obesity Key Research Focus

Doha, Qatar, 14 June 2017 – Sidra Medical and Research Center (Sidra) has appointed Professor Khalid Hussain as Program Director for Research in Children's Services. Prof. Hussain is currently the Division Chief of Pediatric Endocrinology and Vice Chair of Pediatric Research at Sidra.

In his capacity as Program Director, Prof. Hussain aims to integrate the clinical services with the ultramodern research facilities available at Sidra to lay the platform for undertaking high powered translational research that will ultimately bring tangible benefits to patients. Understanding disease mechanisms will allow the development of potentially new personalized treatments – a key focus for the patient and family focused care offered by Sidra.

Prof. Hussain and the endocrine team have established specialist clinics for children with diabetes at the Sidra Outpatient Clinic and the aim is also to establish specialized obesity clinics. He works with a multidisciplinary team of consultant endocrinologists and diabetologists, insulin pump experts, endocrine nurses, diabetic educators and highly specialized dieticians to provide care for children with all endocrine conditions including diabetes.

Commenting on Prof. Hussain's contribution to clinical research at Sidra, Dr. Abdulla Al Kaabi, Executive Chair of the Children's Services Clinical Management Group, Executive Vice Chief Medical Officer and Member of the Board of Governors said, "This is a very important appointment at Sidra as we aim to advance our clinical research capabilities to bring in new treatments and medication capabilities to address common diseases like diabetes and obesity that are affecting our children in Qatar. Prof. Hussain is actively establishing national and international research partnerships and collaborations to map out the availability of resources in Sidra and Qatar that will support the agenda for child health research."

Diet, lifestyle factors and genetic and environmental factors have demonstrated that diseases like diabetes and obesity can have a long-lasting as well as generational impact. Qatar has been listed with a high prevalence of diabetes along with impaired glucose tolerance amongst its population^{1,2,3}. The Ministry of Public Health in Qatar is actively leading joint efforts through its National Diabetes Strategy to lower the rate of diabetes prevalence and morbidity. One of the key outcomes is to ensure easily accessible services that will deliver improved care, patient experience and technological innovations for both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes⁴.

"I am honoured to be given the responsibility to lead a series of clinical research programs dedicated to tackling diabetes and obesity. We have over 1200 children with diabetes coming to our clinics. In collaboration with key scientists at Sidra, we are embarking on an ambitious research project to understand the molecular mechanisms of these conditions in the children. We will be using the latest research techniques (genomics, proteomics and metabolomics) to interrogate the disease mechanisms," said Prof. Hussain.

Prof. Hussain is a member of the *European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE)* and the *Endocrine Society*, the largest global membership organization representing professionals from the field of

endocrinology. Watch Prof. Hussain talk about the clinical research at Sidra [here](#) including the perspective of some of the clinic's diabetic patients and their families.

“What we are embarking on is a great example to showcase the merging of two of the Sidra pillars – patient care and biomedical research. Every step we take towards collaboration not only amongst the research medical community but also with our patients and their families - brings us one step closer to Sidra providing personalized care for our patients,” concluded Prof. Hussain.

Professor Hussain's research interests have previously focused on understanding the molecular mechanisms of hypoglycemia, how hypoglycemia leads to brain injury and understanding the molecular basis of rare syndromic forms of diabetes mellitus and pancreatic development.

Prior to joining Sidra, Prof. Hussain was an Honorary Consultant Pediatric Endocrinologist at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London UK. In addition, he was also Professor of Pediatric Metabolic Endocrinology at The Institute of Child Health, University College London.

Prof. Hussain is an internationally recognized expert in the field of childhood hypoglycemia and rare types of diabetes mellitus. He has published extensively in the field of glucose physiology with more than 300 peer-reviewed manuscripts published in journals such as NEJM, Science, Nature Genetics, Cell Metabolism, EMBO, JCI, PNAS, HMG, AJHG, Diabetes, Diabetologia and JCEM.

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1. IDF Diabetes Atlas. 6th ed. Brussels, Belgium: International Diabetes Federation. 2014.
2. Majeed, A., et al., Diabetes in the Middle-East and North Africa: an update. Diabetes Res Clin Pract, 2014. 103(2): p. 218-22.
3. Tuomilehto, J., et al., Prevention of type 2 diabetes mellitus by changes in lifestyle among subjects with impaired glucose tolerance. N Engl J Med, 2001. 344(18): p. 1343-50.
4. Qatar National Health Strategy: Project Name: 1.7 Diabetes Service Design (accessed 14 June 2017) - <http://www.nhsq.info/strategy-goals-and-projects/comprehensive-world-class-healthcare/diabetes-service-design/project-in-detail>

About Sidra Medical and Research Center

Sidra Medical and Research Center will be a groundbreaking hospital, research and education institution, focusing on the health and wellbeing of children and women regionally and globally.

Sidra represents the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser who serves as its Chairperson. The high-tech facility will not only provide world-class patient care but will also help build Qatar's scientific expertise and resources.

Sidra will be a fully digital facility, incorporating the most advanced information technology applications in all its functions. Designed by renowned architect Cesar Pelli, Sidra features a main hospital building and a separate outpatient clinic.

Sidra opened its Outpatient Clinic on 1 May 2016 and offers outpatient services for women and children through a referral based system in partnership with other healthcare providers in Qatar.

Sidra is also part of a dynamic research and education environment in Qatar and through strong partnerships with leading institutions around the world, Sidra is creating an intellectual ecosystem to help advance scientific discovery through investment in medical research. For more information please visit www.sidra.org.

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