

## MEDICAL EXPERTS TO EXPLORE KEY BIOMEDICAL TOPICS DURING QATAR BIOBANK CONGRESS

---

**Doha, Qatar, February 21, 2017:** A number of leading biomedical experts will address topics relating to precision medicine during the second edition of the Qatar Biobank Congress, which takes place from March 14 - 15 at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC).

Held under the theme ‘The Impact of Biobanking on Precision Medicine Initiatives’, the conference will bring together top medical practitioners and researchers in biobanking, genomics and personalized medicine to discuss the field of biomedical science and the growing use of precision medicine to improve clinical outcomes.

On the first day of the conference, Dr. Asmaa Al Thani, Chair of Qatar Genome Programme Committee and Board Vice Chairperson of Qatar Biobank, will explain how the Qatar Population Biobank Project aims to establish a research enterprise platform to achieve significant improvement in diagnostic and prognostic intelligence required to deliver personalized healthcare.

Addressing the topic of ‘Population Biobanks: Goals and Perspectives’, Professor Elio Riboli, Professor of Cancer Epidemiology and Prevention at Imperial College London, will highlight how population cohorts have greatly contributed to increased scientific understanding of the causes of chronic diseases. Prof. Riboli will offer key insights into the unique role of cohorts in research focused on the interaction between genetic and epigenetic characteristics in combination with environmental exposures and endogenous and metabolic characteristics.

Professor Khawla Al-Kuraya will deliver a paper entitled ‘Genomic Cancer Research: Identification of Molecular Signature of Common Diseases’ that will examine how the study of different human populations offers insights into disease pathogenesis, based on genomic analysis of colorectal cancer in Saudi Arabian patients.

During the panel discussion on ‘The Importance of Human Disease Biobank’, Professor Peter Riegman of Erasmus University in Rotterdam, Netherlands, will present his paper on ‘Tissue Bank and Digital Pathology’. The session will explore the role of tissue banking in accessing the promises of precision or personalized medicine, especially where new targets need to be discovered for new therapies, accompanied by the need for the discovery of new biomarkers.



Dr. Mohammed Ghaly from the Research Centre for Islamic Legislation & Ethics (CILE) at the College of Islamic Studies (CIS), part of Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU), will host an informative session entitled, 'Islamic Ethical Deliberations on Genomics (1993-2015): Main Approaches, Key Questions and Future Research Agenda'. Dr. Ghaly's presentation will shed light on ethical deliberations within the Islamic tradition on genomics.

A number of notable speakers will lead panel discussions throughout the conference, including Dr. Maher Sughayer, Director of KHCCBIO Tissue Bank in Jordan; Dr. Runjan Chetty, Program Professor, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, University of Toronto; Edward Abrahams, Ph.D. President, Personalized Medicine Coalition (PMC), Washington, D.C.; Dr. Abdelbaset Buhmeida, Professor and Senior Scientist Coordinator, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah; and Dr. Nahla Maher Afifi, Scientific and Education Manager and Acting Director of Qatar Biobank.

For more information about Qatar Biobank, please visit:

[www.qatarbiobank.org.qa/home](http://www.qatarbiobank.org.qa/home)

**ENDS**

### **About Qatar Biobank**

Qatar Biobank, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is a population-based platform where biological samples are provided by participants. Through the collection of samples and information on the health and lifestyles of Qatari citizens and long-term residents, Qatar Biobank aims to make vital medical research possible for scientists in Qatar, the region and the world.

Launched in 2012 in collaboration with the Supreme Council of Health, Hamad Medical Corporation and supported by expert scientists from Imperial College London, Qatar Biobank completed the two-year operational pilot phase in 2015 marked by the official inauguration of the state-of-the-art facility by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation and Vice Chairperson of the Supreme Council of Health.

To learn more about Qatar Biobank and how to become a contributor, please visit:

[www.qatarbiobank.org.qa](http://www.qatarbiobank.org.qa)

Twitter: @QatarBiobank



**For more information:**

Please contact Abed Shirzai, +974 7021 8259, [abeds@bljworldwide.com](mailto:abeds@bljworldwide.com)