

## **WORLD INNOVATION SUMMIT FOR HEALTH AND HAMAD MEDICAL CORPORATION HOLD EVENT TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT DEMENTIA**

*Experts lead Series of Talks on Best Care Practices for Dementia*

**Doha, Qatar, 2 November 2016:** The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) and Hamad Medical Corporation's (HMC) Department of Geriatrics collaborated recently on a community engagement event to raise awareness about dementia.

The event, held at Qatar Foundation Headquarters in Education City on 26<sup>th</sup> October, was designed to evaluate the increasing effects and growing challenges of dementia on society in Qatar, and to raise awareness among the general public of this global problem. The programme's activities included a series of talks by leading world experts in the study and care of dementia patients. Those in attendance heard first-hand accounts of caregivers who shared their perspectives and personal experiences on caring for patients with dementia.

WISH, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), is strongly committed to highlighting the growing problem of dementia as a global public health challenge. In 2015, WISH published a report on dementia, entitled 'A Call to Action', inspired by the need for global alignment to find national and international solutions. This alignment found expression in the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Dementia Observatory, a process in which Qatar plays a key role. Since that time, WISH has provided a range of support to Qatar's health leaders in developing policy and provision of care.

Egbert Schillings, CEO of WISH, said: "Dementia is often overlooked amid more immediate health concerns. However, one out of three people die with dementia and all of us at some point will have the experience of a loved one being diagnosed with dementia. That is why we were delighted to co-host this community event with HMC, so as to give people a 360 degree view of dementia. We had a clinical perspective from both geriatrics and psychiatry, an ethical view thanks to the Qatar Islamic Cultural Center, and that of a caregiver. Everyone left deeply touched as well as enlightened. WISH is committed to helping advance the dementia agenda, both at a policy level and within the community."

HMC Geriatrics Department Chairperson and Focal Point for Elderly in Qatar Dr Hanadi Alhamad said: "Qatar was among three countries, including Tunisia and Jordan, to be nominated to be part of the global dementia observatory. Since we accepted to be part of the WHO, there is a clear programme we now follow. An awareness campaign is mandatory and will help fight stigmatisation. We encourage the use of words like 'memory loss' or 'memory impairment' instead of dementia as well as educating family members of patients on this issue."

Dementia is an overall term that describes a condition when the brain is damaged by diseases, such as Alzheimer's or a series of strokes. Dementia includes a wide range of symptoms: deterioration in memory, thinking skills, and other symptoms severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities. Dementia is one of the major causes of disability and dependency among older

people worldwide; however, it is not a normal part of ageing. Dementia has physical, psychological, social and economic impact on caregivers, families and society which adds to the complexity of developing effective services.

For further information about WISH, please visit [www.wish-qatar.org](http://www.wish-qatar.org) and Twitter @WISHQatar.

### **Image Captions:**

**Image 1:** Egbert Schillings, CEO of WISH, welcomes world renowned speakers at the recently-held dementia community event, organised by WISH and HMC.

**ENDS**

### **About the World Innovation Summit for Health:**

The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through international summits and a range of ongoing initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research and industry.

Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organization that is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercializing solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>