

## **WISH TEAMS UP WITH LFC FOUNDATION TO HOST COACHING WORKSHOP TO HELP CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN QATAR**

**Doha, Qatar, May 20, 2017:** The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) and Liverpool Football Club's official charity, LFC Foundation, recently held a workshop to brief Qatar-based coaches on skills for establishing local football training programs for children with autism.

The event brought together various government, health, and education organizations, in advance of a one-week football training program scheduled to take place later this year in Qatar.

Andrea Cooper, Head of LFC Foundation, said: "It's a great privilege for LFC Foundation to be invited to Qatar by WISH to deliver a workshop and meet with various partner agencies to discuss our experience of supporting children with additional needs. We hope that with our support WISH can develop innovative styles of practice and create more inclusive opportunities for children and young people to participate in sport."

After leading the workshop, LFC Foundation community coach, Ryan Moignard, met with local coaches and several parents of autistic children to discuss effective ways of socially integrating children with special needs through sport.

Since its inception in 2013, children's health has been a core research area for WISH. To date, WISH has worked with its global community of healthcare experts to create two evidence based reports; 'Mental Health and Wellbeing in Children' and 'Autism: A Global Framework for Action'. WISH, an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), has also made it a priority to highlight innovations that expand access to effective mental health treatment and the care of people with autism.

Egbert Schillings, CEO, WISH, said: "Every child deserves to fully realize their potential. For those with special needs, that must include exploring and enjoying sports. In April, Qatar launched its National Plan for Autism, which highlights the need to create more opportunities to do just that. Since football is the single most popular sport in the world, we thought it only natural to team up with LFC Foundation to establish a local program to train coaches on working with children on the autism spectrum. The ultimate goal is to give them a football league of their own."

Participating organizations include Qatar Autism Families Association, Hamad Medical Corporation, Shafallah Center for Children with Special Need, Evolution Sports Qatar, Child Development Centre, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Qatar Foundation Recreation Services, Qatar Paralympic Committee, Renad Academy, Qatar Institute for Speech and Hearing, and GEMS American Academy, Qatar.

WISH's partnership with the LFC Foundation represents its commitment to establishing a sustainable program that supports Qatar's National Mental Health Strategy, 'Changing Minds, Changing Lives 2013-2018'.

To read the full WISH 2016 report: 'Autism: A Global Framework for Action', please visit:  
<http://bit.ly/2fH1sbn>

#### **Photo caption**

**Image 1:** LFC Foundation community coach, Ryan Moignard, addresses a workshop organized by WISH to brief Qatar-based coaches on skills for establishing local football training programs for children with autism.

**-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 non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.



QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global research and development challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

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