

PRESS RELEASE

**HBKU'S QATAR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE JOINS WITH HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TO WELCOME STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO CANCER BIOLOGY AND  
THERAPEUTICS PROGRAM**

**19 clinicians and researchers represent Qatar as part in innovative new global initiative**

Doha, October 26, 2015 – The Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), one of Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU) three specialized national research institutes, is holding a workshop in Doha in collaboration with the Harvard Medical School Office of Global Education from October 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>. The workshop is the first element of the Harvard Medical School Cancer Biology and Therapeutics program (HMS-CBT), a 12-month non-clinical blended-learning certificate program that provides participants with advanced training in key aspects of cancer research and treatment.

The program's first intake includes 63 clinicians and scientists from around the world, with 10 Qataris among 19 participants representing Qatar. Alongside experts from Harvard Medical School (HMS) and QBRI, the faculty participating in the workshops include experts from Hamad Medical Corporation and Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar.

QBRI and HMS announced the signing of an agreement to establish the program in June 2015. Over the next year, students will take part in a wide range of workshops, lectures, and interactive webinars. The residential workshop in Doha is the first of three, and will be followed by similar workshops in London and at Harvard Medical School in Boston in 2016 that will expand on the program's key themes. At the program's outset, participants are assigned to teams to work together across national boundaries and time zones. Throughout the program, students have access to senior faculty from Harvard Medical School and will be equipped with a deep understanding of cancer biology, cancer screening, diagnosis and personalized treatments. Topics being discussed and investigated include neoplasia and the pathology of cancer, breast cancer in the Middle East, cervical cancer, childhood leukemia, melanoma, cancer immunotherapy, and various approaches to studying cancer.

On Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, participants were welcomed at the beginning of the first day of the program by Dr. Hilal Lashuel, QBRI's Executive Director, and Dr. Ajay K. Singh, Associate Dean for Global and Continuing Education at HMS. They introduced the program's directors Dr. Peter Howley and Dr. Ed Harlow from Harvard Medical School, and Dr. George D. Demetri, Director of the Ludwig Center at Harvard, all of whom are globally recognized as leaders in the field of cancer research. This was followed by a series of faculty and student discussions around the subject of cancer as "*The Emperor of All Maladies*".

Dr. Lashuel commented: "It is a pleasure to meet the first cohort of exceptional students in the HMS-CBT program and host them in Doha. The HMS and QBRI partnership represents a strong collaborative commitment to provide specialized training in cancer research and therapeutics to future leaders in biomedical science.

"This partnership has led to a program that encourages a valuable exchange of ideas and the building of a global network of experts. It also gives participants unique opportunities to directly interact with and learn from distinguished scientists from Harvard Medical School, many of whom have made discoveries that have transformed cancer biology and therapeutics over the past decades. Collaborating in programs such as this one helps QBRI build Qatar's capacity in healthcare and research, highlighting Qatar's leadership role regionally and as an emerging global center for healthcare innovation."

Dr. Ajay K. Singh, said: "Our three outstanding CBT program directors, Harvard Medical School faculty members Dr. Peter Howley, Dr. Ed Harlow and Dr. George Demetri marshaled the expertise of other leaders in the field of oncology to bring a novel educational approach to understanding cancer biology and the challenges and opportunities presented by therapeutic strategies."

Dr. Peter Howley, who is Professor of Microbiology and Immunobiology at Harvard Medical School as well as being one of the CBT program directors added: "The CBT program was designed for students from around the world to learn about cutting-edge concepts in cancer biology and therapeutics. The program actively encourages an exchange of ideas between students and faculty, and we are excited to have students from diverse backgrounds who want to develop their knowledge of cancer research and treatment."

At the conclusion of the program, participants will be awarded a certificate of completion by HMS and will have had the opportunity to develop an understanding of the scientific underpinnings of cancer biology and pharmacology, as well as gaining significant insights into drug development pertaining to cancer.

Program participant Sara Saleh Al Khawaga, who qualified in Qatar as a Doctor of Medicine from Weill Cornell and who is currently a student on the Ph.D. in Biological and Biomedical Sciences program at Hamad bin Khalifa University, noted: "The blended-learning experience of the CBT program will provide me with deep knowledge and understanding of the cancer biology that shapes modern preventive and therapeutic approaches. This unique opportunity will allow me to establish collaborations and exchanges with other experts in our region and across the world. The program participants are diverse, and all of us, as clinicians and cancer researchers, have the chance to collaborate and work together, exchange ideas, and build a network in order to fight this malady."

"Having such a program in Qatar is an important and influential step in the development of cancer research here. This HMS and QBRI collaboration provides us, the participants, with specialized training in cancer research and therapeutics that will help us to become successful leaders in biomedical research. The program will enhance the development of cancer research in Qatar and provide potential for superior cancer care. As a Ph.D. student hoping to pursue a career in cancer research, having the opportunity to participate with experts from Qatar, HMS and worldwide will definitely be a significant step in my career."

To learn more about the program, please visit <https://hms.harvard.edu/departments/cancer-biology-therapeutics-program>.

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### About Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI)

Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) is a national research institute within Hamad bin Khalifa University. As a national research institute, QBRI aims to improve and transform healthcare through innovation in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases affecting the Qatari population and the region. As a disease-focused institute, QBRI concentrates on applying integrative and multidisciplinary approaches to provide novel insights into the molecular basis of grand challenges of breast cancer; type 2 diabetes; and neurological disorders such as autism and epilepsy, and the development of novel biomarkers, diagnostic and therapeutic strategies to facilitate early diagnosis, treatment and management of these devastating diseases towards improving personalized medicine and healthcare.

For more information, please visit [www.qbri.org.qa](http://www.qbri.org.qa)

### About Harvard Medical School

Harvard Medical School ([hms.harvard.edu](http://hms.harvard.edu)) has more than 7,500 full-time faculty working in 11 academic departments located at the School's Boston campus or in one of 47 hospital-based clinical departments at 16 Harvard-affiliated teaching hospitals and research institutes. Those affiliates include Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Cambridge Health Alliance, Boston Children's Hospital, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Hebrew Senior Life, Joslin Diabetes Center, Judge Baker Children's Center, Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Massachusetts General Hospital, McLean Hospital, Mount Auburn Hospital, Schepens Eye Research Institute, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and VA Boston Healthcare System.

### About Hamad bin Khalifa University

Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is an emerging research university building upon unique collaborations with local and international partners. Located in Education City, HBKU seeks to provide unparalleled opportunities for scholarship, teaching, discovery, and learning for all of its students through an array of interdisciplinary programs.

HBKU's partners are Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Texas A&M University at Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Northwestern University in Qatar, HEC Paris in Qatar, and UCL Qatar.