

ELIMINATING VIRAL HEPATITIS TO BE MAJOR FOCUS AT WISH 2018

Innovative Research led by QF Initiative will Support World Health Organization's Target of Eliminating Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C by 2030

Doha, Qatar, February 03, 2018: The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), an initiative of Qatar Foundation (QF), has announced that viral hepatitis will be one of nine research topics that will form the focus of the WISH 2018 conference. WISH 2018 will take place at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) from November 13-14.

Viral hepatitis, a disease of the liver caused by an infection that results in the death of around 1.34 million people globally per year, will be investigated by an international group of experts in the field of infectious diseases in the months leading up to November's summit. The group's findings will be presented in a report that will be published in time for WISH 2018 and will be discussed in depth during a panel session to be held during the prestigious event. The aim is for the report to produce policy recommendations that can have a positive impact on the management of viral hepatitis and support global efforts being made to prevent transmission – particularly in vulnerable populations.

The WISH research group is being led by Professor Margaret Hellard, Deputy Director, Burnet Institute, which is based in Melbourne, Australia. Professor Hellard boasts more than two decades of clinical and research expertise, including using new technologies, such as social media, for health promotion and prevention interventions.

Professor Hellard said: "I agreed to chair the WISH viral hepatitis forum because the vision and mission of WISH strongly aligns with what I believe is currently required from the global healthcare community. The World Health Organization has set ambitious targets to eliminate hepatitis B and hepatitis C as a public health threat by 2030. This is achievable, but it requires a sustained approach.

"I'm delighted that viral hepatitis will be under the spotlight at WISH 2018. The event will bring together the world's leading experts and decision makers to discuss the major policy and health system barriers to achieving viral hepatitis eradication. Through the presentation of innovative investment cases, the aim is to identify future pathways to ensure the ambitious 2030 global targets can be met without any country falling behind."

Sultana Afdhal, Acting CEO, WISH, commented: "WISH works diligently towards creating a healthier world through global collaboration. By convening experts from Qatar and around the world to conduct research on viral hepatitis we are focused on tackling a serious disease that is sometimes referred to as a silent killer, since its symptoms can easily go unnoticed.

"Qatar has a long history of supporting efforts to combat viral hepatitis and thanks to a successful screening and vaccination program, it has one of the lowest incidences of viral hepatitis globally. Indeed, Her Excellency Dr. Hanan Al Kuwari, Qatar's Minister of Public Health, chaired a meeting at last year's



World Health Assembly in Geneva that emphasized the importance of making a determined effort to deal with viral hepatitis and other communicable diseases.”

As with previous summits, WISH 2018 will once again gather the world’s healthcare leaders at QNCC to highlight and address some of the world’s most pressing healthcare challenges. WISH, which hosts its showcase Doha summit biennially, has quickly established itself as a major highlight on the global healthcare calendar for the thousands of high-level policy-makers, academics, and professionals in attendance. It has also become a key platform for the dissemination of healthcare innovation and best practices.

WISH 2018 will feature nine groundbreaking research forums, each led by an internationally renowned expert in their field. Between them, the forums will highlight and address some of the world’s most pressing challenges across topics that cover medical, ethical, technological, and humanitarian aspects of healthcare.

As part of an ambitious program for WISH 2018, the summit will also showcase organizations from around the world that are shaping the design, delivery, and financing of care. A specially picked group of young innovators will also be given a platform for sharing their novel ideas with a global audience of healthcare policy-makers and influencers.

WISH 2018 will also feature reports on its ongoing impact locally and globally on issues previously highlighted at the summit, such as autism, and will feature an increased array of community-based events across Qatar. Examples of healthcare innovation in action will be presented within ‘The WISH Hub’ – an interactive space that will showcase novel healthcare products, host informal discussions, and provide hands-on experience of technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

Viral hepatitis is the second research topic to be made public ahead of November’s summit. Last month, eye health was announced as the first WISH 2018 topic for research focus during a visit to Doha by Her Royal Highness Sophie, the Countess of Wessex, and Global Ambassador for the International Federation for Combatting Preventable Eye Diseases.

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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, science and research, 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 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>