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Sidra Opens Qatar's First Women's Perinatal Mental Healthcare Clinic

Clinic dedicated to providing mental health support for women during pregnancy and postpartum period

15 March, 2017 (Doha, Qatar) — Sidra Medical and Research Center (Sidra) launched Qatar's first dedicated Women's Perinatal Mental Healthcare Clinic today. The outpatient based clinic will provide essential mental health support and treatment for women during pregnancy and for up to a year after giving birth.

Clinical services include initial evaluations, medication management and psychological therapies. Women can be seen for a wide range of pregnancy related mental health difficulties including anxiety (such as fears related to giving birth and baby's well-being), depression and problems adjusting to pregnancy and transition to motherhood.

The team of Sidra professionals will provide guidance and counselling for mothers facing difficulties with attachment and bonding and issues relating to previous trauma and loss. The clinic will also seek to provide support for those with more serious disorders such as postpartum psychosis, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

The clinic is under the leadership of Dr. Felice Watt, Perinatal Psychiatrist and Division Chief for Women's Mental Health at Sidra. The clinic team includes Dr. Sawssan Ahmed, Clinical Psychologist and Safia Ahmed, Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Dr. Felice Watt, Division Chief for Women's Mental Health said, "Pregnancy, birthing and the first year after a baby's life signify periods of major change for a woman and her family. Just as it is important for the mother to take care of her physical health and that of her baby's – it is equally important that she cares for her emotional health. Mental health issues are common during this period and the right support and treatment can have a lasting positive impact on the mother, infant, and the entire family. Our women's mental healthcare team will provide culturally sensitive, woman and family centered support and treatment during this important time."

As the only comprehensive perinatal mental health services in the country, the Sidra Women's Perinatal Mental Healthcare Clinic will receive referrals from Sidra's Obstetrics Clinic, Hamad Medical Corporation and Primary Health Care Corporation. Plans are underway to expand the team further with additional perinatal psychiatrists and clinical psychologists.

Dr. Muhammed Waqar Azeem, Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Sidra said, "The opening of our perinatal mental healthcare clinic is another major Sidra milestone. The services are a critical extension of the specialist and maternity care that we currently provide during a woman's motherhood journey – from fetal maternal to obstetrics care. It is based on Sidra's ethos of providing patient and family centered care that will promote recovery and wellness for our female patients."

Some of the common conditions that will be seen at the Sidra Women's Perinatal Mental Healthcare Clinic will include:

- Psychiatric conditions comorbid during pregnancy and postpartum
- Attachment and Bonding Issues
- Post-Partum Depression
- Symptoms of Psychosis
- Ante-natal Depression - moderate to severe
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Social Phobia
- Sleep Issues
- Mood Disorders including Bipolar disorder
- Delirium
- Family Issues
- Bereavement and Loss
- Self-Harm/Injury and Suicidal thoughts.
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- ENDS -

About Sidra Medical and Research Center

Sidra Medical and Research Center will be a groundbreaking hospital, research and education institution, focusing on the health and wellbeing of children and women regionally and globally.

Sidra represents the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser who serves as its Chairperson. The high-tech facility will not only provide world-class patient care but will also help build Qatar's scientific expertise and resources.

Sidra will be a fully digital facility, incorporating the most advanced information technology applications in all its functions. Designed by renowned architect Cesar Pelli, Sidra features a main hospital building and a separate outpatient clinic. The main hospital will initially have 400 beds with infrastructure to enable expansion to 550 beds in a subsequent phase.

Sidra opened its Outpatient Clinic on 1 May 2016 with the launch of three clinics – Dermatology, Pediatric General Surgery Consultation and Obstetrics. These clinics are supported by radiology, pathology, pharmacy and laboratory facilities. The Sidra Outpatient Clinic offers outpatient services for women and children through a referral based system in partnership with other healthcare providers in Qatar. More clinics and services will be rolled out over the course of 2016.

Sidra is also part of a dynamic research and education environment in Qatar and through strong partnerships with leading institutions around the world, Sidra is creating an intellectual ecosystem to help advance scientific discovery through investment in medical research.

For more information please visit www.sidra.org.



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