HEALTH AND BIOMEDICAL EXPERTS TO DISCUSS KEY TOPICS AT INTERNATIONAL BIOBANKING CONFERENCE

Conference will feature scientists and Biobanking experts from around the world

Doha, Qatar, March 18, 2019: Internationally renowned health practitioners and biomedical experts are set to address the International Biobanking Conference 2019. The conference, taking place from March 25-27, is organized by Qatar Biobank, a member of Qatar Foundation and part of Qatar Foundation for Research, Development, and Innovation.

Held in partnership with the European and Middle Eastern Society for Biopreservation and Biobanking (ESBB), the conference is supported by BBMRI-ERIC, a European research infrastructure for biobanking, and the International Society for Biological and Environmental Repositories (ISBER).

The conference, taking place at the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel, will be held under the theme of ‘Quality Matters: A Global Discussion in Qatar’ and will discuss quality in the global biobanking sector. It will bring together local and international experts on biobanking and personalized medicine, scientists, researchers, and medical practitioners.

Participants will also have the chance to discuss the role of biobanks in healthcare, the importance of population biobanks, the use of big data and Artificial Intelligence in medical research, and the role of international collaborations in improving biobanking.

Dr. Richard O’Kennedy, Vice President for Research, Development, and Innovation, QF, will deliver the opening remarks at the conference, highlighting the incredible progress Qatar has made in enhancing its scientific research landscape.

Dr. Jim Vaught, Chief of the Biorepositories and Biospecimen Research Branch at the U.S. National Cancer Institute, and Editor-in-Chief of ‘Biopreservation and Biobanking’, the official journal of ISBER, will deliver a keynote address on the first day of the conference. His talk will shed light on the importance of quality management for international biobanking collaborations.

Dr. Asmaa Al Thani, Board Vice Chairperson of Qatar Biobank and Chairperson of Qatar Genome Programme Committee, will take part in a high-level panel discussion on the role that population-based biobanks play in understanding genetic disorders, and the effect of environmental changes on populations. The panel discussion will highlight established industry practices and how best to improve preventative treatment.

Professor Zhengming Chen, Lead Principal Investigator at China Kadoorie Biobank – one of the world’s largest blood-based prospective studies – will highlight the importance of population biobanks for a healthcare system. Professor Chen will address how chronic diseases – such as stroke, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, which are the leading causes of disability and death worldwide – can be controlled using precision medicine.
Dr. Ahmed Elmagarmid, Executive Director of Qatar Computing Research Institute, part of QF member Hamad Bin Khalifa University, will deliver a presentation about the use of technologies in medical research. Dr. Elmagarmid will talk about the opportunities and challenges of big data and Artificial Intelligence in advancing medical research, and how Qatar is progressing in this area.

Speakers will include Ms. Marianne Henderson, Senior Advisor for Division Resources, Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics and Senior Advisor on Biobanking at the Center for Global Health of the U.S. National Cancer Institute, who will discuss how population research is helping scientists to understand the causes of diseases, and provide pathways for effective prevention.

Dr. Samya Ahmad Al Abdulla, Senior Consultant of Family Medicine and Executive Director of Operations at Qatar’s Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), will share insights from PHCC’s experience in preventative screening for common chronic diseases, in an effort to identify healthcare needs of patients that could lead to early diagnosis and treatment.

Meanwhile, Dr. Salha Bujassoum Al Bader, Senior Consultant of Medical Oncology at the National Center for Cancer Care and Research in Qatar, will discuss using personalized medicine to improve the quality of cancer care in Qatar and throughout the world. She will share insights on how personalized treatment will help health practitioners reduce side effects of the conventional treatment.

The conference will feature other notable speakers from Qatar and around the world to lead vital discussions over the three days. To find out more about the program, please visit www.ibcq19.com

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About Qatar Biobank

Qatar Biobank, a long-term health initiative, was launched by Qatar to reduce the number of chronic illnesses in the population and improve the health of future generations through medical research on the causes of prevalent illnesses. This is done by gathering biological samples and information on the health and lifestyle of Qatar’s people.

In the next few years, research based on the samples and information gathered by Qatar Biobank will reveal the effect of lifestyle, environment and genetics on Qatari population. I will also provide insight into the reasons why certain individuals develop specific illnesses. Qatar Biobank is a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, and works in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Hamad Medical Corporation.

To learn more about Qatar Biobank and how to become a contributor, please visit: www.qatarbiobank.org.qa

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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 Amir, 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, please visit: www.qf.org.qa

For any media inquiries, please contact: pressoffice@qf.org.qa