

QATAR BIOBANK WELCOMES 10,000th PARTICIPANT

Qatar Foundation member aims to build a healthier population

Doha, Qatar, November 7, 2017: Qatar Biobank recently welcomed its 10,000th participant, a major milestone in the medical health research initiative's history. By reaching this significant number, Qatar Biobank is strongly advancing its mission to improve the health of the local population.

Launched in 2012, Qatar Biobank, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is a population-based initiative in which volunteer participants provide biological samples and information on their health history and lifestyle. Through these samples, Qatar Biobank enables medical researchers and healthcare professionals to gain a clearer picture of health issues facing Qatar and the region.

"The success of Qatar Biobank is dependent on participation by the local population, especially Qatari youth, and reaching 10,000 participants is a clear indication of the importance our people place on their health now and in the future," said Dr. Asmaa Al Thani, Chairperson of the Qatar Genome Programme Committee and Board Vice Chairperson of Qatar Biobank.

"We are proud of this milestone, and are eager to welcome more participants to contribute to this important national initiative," added Dr. Al Thani.

Qatar Biobank welcomes Qataris over the age of 18, and adult expatriates who have lived in Qatar for at least 15 years, to take part in this pioneering medical research endeavour.

Researchers have already been able to use Qatar Biobank's samples to gain important insights into the health of the local population, including the discovery of high levels of diabetes, obesity, and vitamin D deficiency. These findings will enable researchers to make recommendations to healthcare providers and policy-makers to better tailor their actions to address specific conditions.

"Most medical treatments have been developed through the study of Western populations, and there has been a lack of large-scale biomedical research based on populations in the Arab world," said Dr. Nahla Maher Afifi, Education and Scientific Manager and Acting Director of Qatar Biobank.

“Qatar Biobank is aiming to develop targeted medical treatments within the country, improving the health of the population. As more participants contribute samples, we are better able to support the creation of targeted, effective healthcare solutions.”

A visit to the Qatar Biobank includes standard medical tests such as blood pressure and lung function. However, the tests carried out by Qatar Biobank also include new screenings that are not included in other large-scale biobanks, including advanced imaging techniques to measure whole-body composition and the health of carotid arteries, and a treadmill test to measure physical fitness.

All participants have the opportunity to receive feedback approximately two weeks after the initial visit, though Qatar Biobank immediately notifies participants who are found to have serious or life-threatening conditions. If necessary, participants will be referred to an appropriate clinic within Hamad Medical Corporation for further diagnosis or treatment.

Qatar Biobank’s main facility in Hamad Medical City recently expanded its capacity by 50 percent, enabling more visitors to pass through the approximately three-hour process each day.

“I want to express our deepest thanks to everyone who has so graciously taken part in Qatar Biobank since our doors opened,” said Mohammed Al Dosari, Head of Communications and Participant Recruitment at Qatar Biobank, and the first person to register at Qatar Biobank. “Reaching the 10,000 milestone is a great start, and I urge those who are eligible to register to continue to build a healthier future for Qatar.”

For more information about Qatar Biobank, please visit:
www.qatarbiobank.org.qa/home

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About Qatar Biobank

Qatar Biobank, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, is a population-based platform where biological samples are provided by participants. Through the collection of samples and information on the health and lifestyles of Qatari citizens and long-term residents, Qatar Biobank aims to make vital medical research possible for scientists in Qatar, the region and the world.



Launched in 2012 in collaboration with the Supreme Council of Health, Hamad Medical Corporation and supported by expert scientists from Imperial College London, Qatar Biobank completed the two-year operational pilot phase in 2015 marked by the official inauguration of the state-of-the-art facility by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation and Vice Chairperson of the Supreme Council of Health.

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, 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>

