

QATAR BIOBANK REACHES NEW MILESTONE BY SCREENING 20,000th PARTICIPANT

QF member enables medical researchers to understand drivers of common diseases in Qatar

Doha, Qatar, March 9, 2019: Qatar Biobank, a member of Qatar Foundation and part of Qatar Foundation Research, Development, and Innovation, has welcomed its 20,000th participant as part of its unique medical research initiative to understand the drivers of mainstream health challenges in Qatar.

Launched in 2011, Qatar Biobank enables researchers and healthcare professionals to access the data and biological samples that it collects from the local population, in an effort to develop customized medical solutions to the various diseases and health issues prevalent in the country.

Dr. Asmaa Al Thani, Board Vice Chairperson of Qatar Biobank and Chairperson of Qatar Genome Programme Committee, said: “The screening of 20,000 participants is an achievement for us all.

“We are one step closer to accomplishing preventative treatment for the healthcare challenges that our population faces. The success of the medical research at Qatar Biobank, and ultimately the realization of precision medicine, depends on how actively the people of Qatar contribute to our program.

“I thank everyone who has so far registered for Qatar Biobank, and encourage everyone to join us in improving the efficiency of healthcare of the country, which is an important national duty.”

Qatar Biobank and Qatar Genome Programme, also a QF member, have completed the development of the first Qatari gene chip, ‘Q-Chip’. It is the first local gene array designed and based on data from thousands of Qatari genomes sequenced over the past three years, and represents a major step in gaining insights into the health of the local population, including the prevalence of diabetes, obesity, and vitamin D deficiency.

Qatar Biobank welcomes registration from Qataris over the age of 18, and adult expatriates who have lived in Qatar for at least 15 years.

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

All participants receive feedback within approximately two weeks after their initial visit. However, Qatar Biobank immediately notifies participants who are found to have serious or life-threatening conditions.

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

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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's population. It 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

For more information, please contact Abed Shirzai: +974 7021 8259, abeds@blijworldwide.com

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