WCMC-Q hosts symposium on Health Care in the Middle East

The changing paradigm of health care in the Middle East, with a special focus on Qatar, was the subject of a symposium held by Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar and co-hosted by Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and the Supreme Council of Health in November. The purpose of the Continuing Medical Education (CME) Symposium was to provide a platform for discussion and information exchange on health care and its priorities with a view to improve health care services in Qatar and the Middle East.

It was also an opportunity to bring together medical education professionals, research faculty, medical students, physicians and health care providers, who all benefited from the seminars and discussions. Dr. Ravinder Mamtani, Professor of Public Health and Associate Dean for Global and Public Health, organized the event with support from other faculty members at WCMC-Q.

Dr. Mamtani said, “Health care delivery continues to evolve and present challenges and opportunities worldwide, although the situation in the Middle East and in Qatar is unique and deserves special mention. Health care delivery has become multifaceted with changes in patient and health care practitioner priorities from curative care to comprehensive, evidence-based integrative and preventive approaches to disease and patient management. This changing health care paradigm presents challenges, but also offers many exciting opportunities for health care professionals.”

Honoured guests who attended the event include Dr. Hanan Al-Kuwari, Managing Director of HMC, who spoke about Qatar’s National Health Strategy and Dr. Mohammed Al-Thani, Director of Public Health at the Supreme Council of Health who spoke about the lessons learnt so far in injury prevention in Qatar. Dr. Javaid Sheikh, Dean of WCMC-Q, gave a presentation on improving the quality of health care in the State of Qatar, whilst Dr. Ismail Helmi, Deputy Director of Medical Education at HMC, led a panel discussion in the afternoon. This was followed by a presentation from Dr. Ibrahim Al Janahi, Senior Consultant and Head of Pediatric Pulmonology Section, and Program Director of Pediatric Residency Training Program at HMC who spoke about Pediatric Residency.

Leading health care practitioners from the United States also presented at the event such as Dr. John Norcini, President and CEO at the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER) in Philadelphia, US, who gave a presentation on improving health care through education and Dr. Albert Lowenfels, Professor of Surgery and Professor of Community and Preventive Medicine at New York Medical College, US who gave a presentation titled, Achieving Optimum Health Care in Qatar: How Can it Be Done?

Finally Professor A. Donny Strosberg from the Department of Infectology, Scripps Research Institute in Florida spoke about innovative biotechnological approaches in the treatment of chronic diseases and Stephen S. Seeling, J.D., Vice President for Operations, Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) in...
Vice President for Operations, Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) in Philadelphia, gave advice on navigating entry into US Graduate Medical Education training programs.

Applauding the large turn out for the event, Dr. Mamtani said, "Those in the health care sector can benefit from this symposium as new trends emerge in Qatar and the Middle East. Important issues health care providers need to be aware of include innovative biotechnological interventions in the treatment of chronic diseases, accreditation of health institutions, the increasing burden of obesity and non-communicable diseases and premature mortality from motor vehicle and other injuries, among other trends.”