

QATAR NATIONAL DEMENTIA PLAN

2018-2022

SUMMARY



In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as] "uff," and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word. ﴿23﴾ And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, [My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up] [when I was] small. ﴿24﴾

(The Holy Quran/Surah Al Isra)



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Foreword



Dr. Salih Ali Al Marri

*Assistant Minister of Public Health for
Health Affairs*

Ministry of Public Health



Improving the healthcare services and related support for the population in Qatar has been a major priority of this government for many years now. We recognize that while we have a relatively young population, the percentage of elderly people living in Qatar is expanding and the need for more comprehensive health and ancillary care services for our geriatric population is essential.

Age is one of the greatest risk factors for developing dementia and as life expectancy is rising, the likelihood of people living longer and developing this condition is increasing. Dementia and the related, often debilitating, illnesses can have a devastating impact on the person who develops it, as well as their family and friends. In addition, the impact it has on the healthcare services, the community and the national economy has been evidenced in other countries around the world.

It is with this in mind that we have commissioned important projects designed to help us on our own journey as we move to a more elderly appropriate model of care; but also where we can share our knowledge and expertise with the global community.

The development of the National Dementia Plan 2018-2022 is a key milestone in the concerted effort by the Dementia Stakeholder Group, with the support of the Ministry of Public Health, to establish a framework for future dementia care planning and delivery. It is the result of a tremendous amount of collaborative work that has been undertaken over the past couple of years. Moreover, it is a testimony to the determination and devotion of key groups, professional and informal carers, to make a difference in the lives of people living with dementia.

This dementia plan outlines seven action areas to improve the quality of life for patients and carers. We are confident this plan will enhance knowledge and help to reduce the stigma that surrounds dementia.

Foreword



Professor Sube Banerjee

*Professor of Dementia and Deputy Dean
Brighton and Sussex Medical School-
Centre for Dementia Studies*

There can be no doubt that dementia is one of the greatest 21st century challenges faced by health and social care systems. It is a worldwide phenomenon and the growth in the numbers of those with dementia and the cost of the services needed to support them are a function of population ageing. They are therefore a consequence of the powerful success of public health initiatives that have driven up longevity by preventing premature mortality.

Dementia is a condition that requires of us a multiagency and multidisciplinary collaborative approach. It does not respect the boundaries we have created between primary and secondary care, between health and social care, and between what is done by services and families. It requires us not just to do more, but to do things differently. It is a real exemplar of the societal challenges of ageing, complexity and multimorbidity. If we make a system that works for dementia, then it will also work for all those in later life who are frail, with long term conditions and complex needs.

It has been a real privilege over the last year to work with the Qatar Dementia Working Group, inspirationally led by Dr. Hanadi Al Hamad, as they have developed the Qatar National Dementia Plan. I have been immensely impressed by the care they have taken in analysing the issues, the inclusiveness of their approach with the wide stakeholder group, never forgetting families, and the creativity with which they have formulated a national response to dementia at all levels. The commitment I have observed from the Ministry and its agencies in doing this, and doing it well, has been entirely exemplary. I have been moved by the testimony of Qatari families



living with dementia, and energised by the commitment and creativity of healthcare professionals dedicated to enabling them to live well with dementia.

The Qatar National Dementia Plan sets out a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by people with dementia and the families and services that care for them. It then offers an inclusive, multifaceted plan of action to meet and beat these challenges. It will drive up the quality of life of people with dementia and their family carers by driving up the quality of health and social care they receive. But it will do more than this; it also encompasses a commitment to prevention, stigma reduction, education, training, co-production of solutions, and research. It is an excellent and ambitious national strategy for dementia. I believe that as it is implemented, it will enable Qatar to become truly a world leader in the diagnosis and care of people with dementia.

Foreword



Dr. Hanadi Khamis Al Hamad

Chairperson of Geriatrics and Long Term Care Department at Hamad Medical Corporation

Focal Point for WHO Global Dementia Observatory project in Qatar and National Lead for Healthy Ageing – Qatar National Health Strategy 2018-2022

“Every 3 seconds someone in the world develops dementia.” (Alzheimer’s Disease International)

Dementia is one of the most significant global health challenges that we face today and an imminent social crisis of the 21st century. Dementia is a collective name for progressive brain syndromes which affect memory, thinking, behavior and emotion and the most well-known and common form of dementia is Alzheimer’s disease, which accounts for between 50 to 60 percent of all cases.

Although each person will have a very personal experience of dementia, those affected by the condition will eventually be unable to care for themselves and need help with all aspects of daily life. This progressive decline in a person’s cognitive abilities often has devastating consequences for the person diagnosed with dementia as well as the family members who typically bear the main burden of care.

The Qatar National Dementia Plan (QNDP) was borne out of the recognition that, unless addressed, the human and economic costs related to this condition will rise at an accelerated pace in the future, highlighting the need to keep dementia as a public health priority in the country.

Following my appointment as Qatar’s focal point for the WHO - Global Dementia Observatory, we established the Qatar Global Dementia Observatory (QGDO) Team. This team comprised core stakeholder groups from different disciplines

including Geriatrics, Old Age Psychiatry, Internal Medicine, Nursing and Occupational Therapy.

My priority, working alongside my team, was to enlist the help, guidance and assistance of wider stakeholder groups vital to the development of our Qatar National Dementia Plan. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Health, in consultation with numerous stakeholders within Qatar, and in collaboration with international policy experts from WHO, as well as the technical expert, Professor Sube Banerjee, we are pleased to have delivered this Qatar National Dementia Plan.

Our combined efforts are helping to ensure that dementia is given the strategic attention and priority as set out in the Qatar National Health Strategy 2018 - 2022. Whilst our plan ensures focus on increasing public awareness, improving diagnosis, and enhancing support for our dementia patients and carers equally, it also addresses the growing need for targeted research



and innovation in this field. Through the plan we will also work on protecting the rights of people living with dementia.

I am thankful and privileged to have the opportunity to work in this very important health improvement area for the elderly in Qatar. I am equally delighted to be able to work with so many amazing and dedicated professionals in the QGDO team who have been instrumental in developing this plan and who are working daily to improve the lives of our older citizens with dementia and other illnesses.

What we have achieved is truly the result of genuine collaboration and a shared vision between multi-sectoral stakeholders. The Ministry of Public Health has embraced our efforts wholeheartedly and its support and commitment has been invaluable.

My personal appreciation however, goes to the family members who have contributed their time and expertise to developing the Qatar National Dementia Plan. Their unique knowledge and willingness to help others dealing with dementia, now and in the future, has been a huge blessing. They have helped our strategic plan to be practical and truly patient centered.





ABOUT DEMENTIA

About Dementia

Dementia is an overall term that describes a condition when the brain is damaged by diseases, such as Alzheimer's or a series of strokes. Dementia includes a wide range of symptoms: deterioration in memory and thinking skills, and other symptoms severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities.

Dementia is one of the major causes of disability and dependency among older people worldwide; however, it is not a normal part of ageing. Dementia has physical, psychological, social and economic impact on caregivers, families and society which adds to the complexity of developing effective services.

Alzheimer's disease accounts for 50 to 60 percent of dementia cases; vascular dementia (which occurs after a stroke) is the second most common dementia type.

The facts



Someone in the world develops dementia every 3 seconds.



Dementia became a trillion dollar disease in 2018.



Worldwide, around 50 million people have dementia, and this number is projected to reach 150 Million by the year 2050.



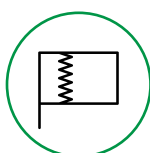
Dementia is the 7th leading cause of death worldwide (World Alzheimer's Report 2018).



While dementia mainly affects older people, there is a growing awareness of early onset dementia which starts before the age of 65.



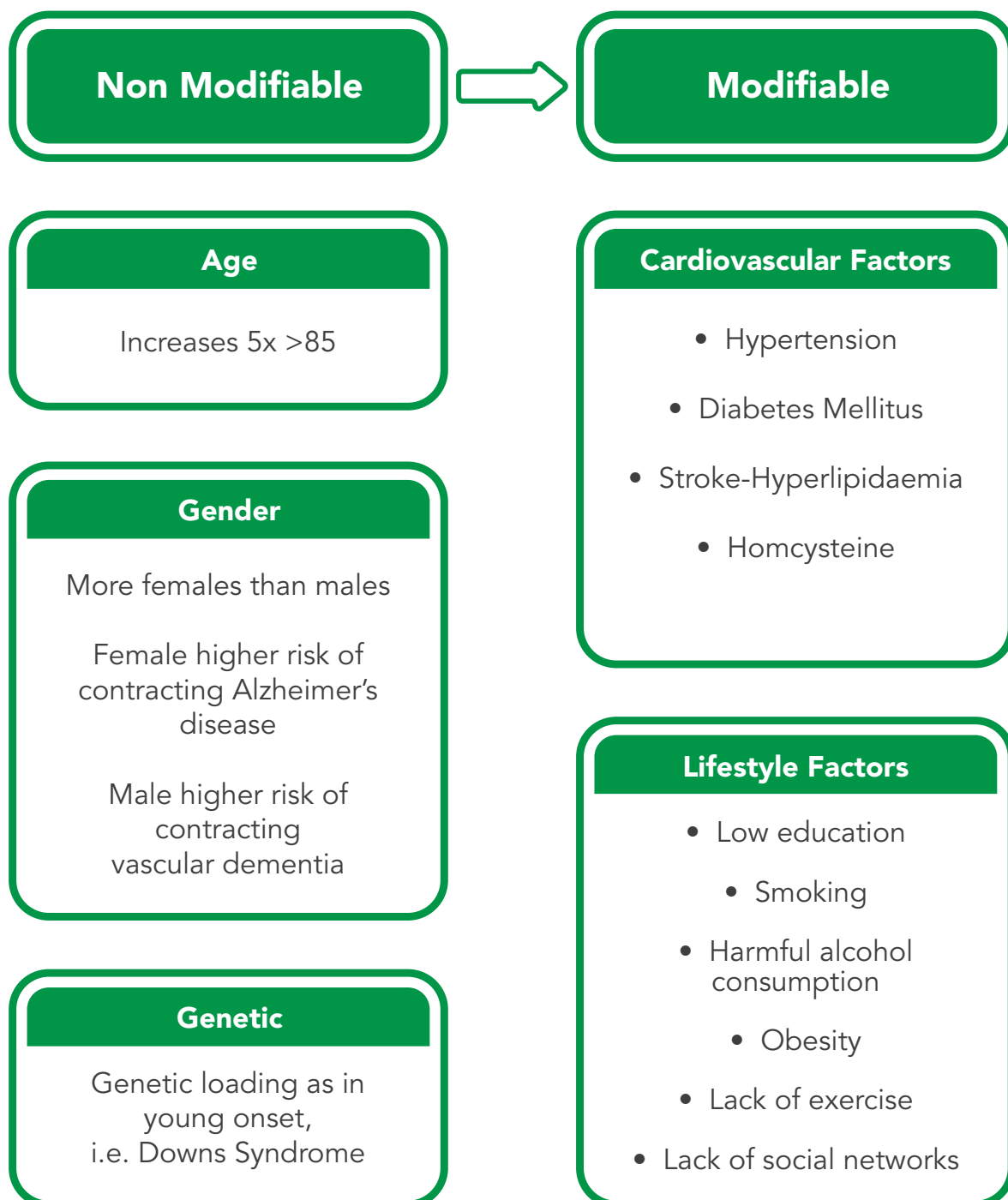
Dementia has a physical, psychological, social, and economical impact, not only on people with dementia, but also on their carers, families and society at large.



Based on 2017 UN population estimates of those over 60 years of age residing in Qatar, there is a chance that over 4400 people currently have dementia. This figure is expected to rise ten-fold with over 41000 people expected to have some form of dementia by the year 2050 if no cure or improved prevention is in place.

Risk factors for dementia

Although age is the strongest known risk factor for dementia, it does not exclusively affect older people nor is it an inevitable consequence of ageing. Some research indicates the development of cognitive impairment may be impacted by lifestyle related risk factors, such as physical inactivity, obesity, unhealthy diets, tobacco use and harmful use of alcohol, diabetes, and midlife hypertension, similar to other non-communicable diseases. Depression, low educational attainment, social isolation, and cognitive inactivity, may also impact the development of the condition. These are considered potentially modifiable risk factors which represent promising targets for intervention.





GLOBAL RESPONSE TO DEMENTIA

Global Response to Dementia

In May 2017, the global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017-2025 was adopted by the 70th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. The endorsement of the global dementia action plan represents an international commitment to improving the lives of people with dementia, their carers and families.

The Global Action Plan on the Public Health Response to Dementia 2017 – 2025

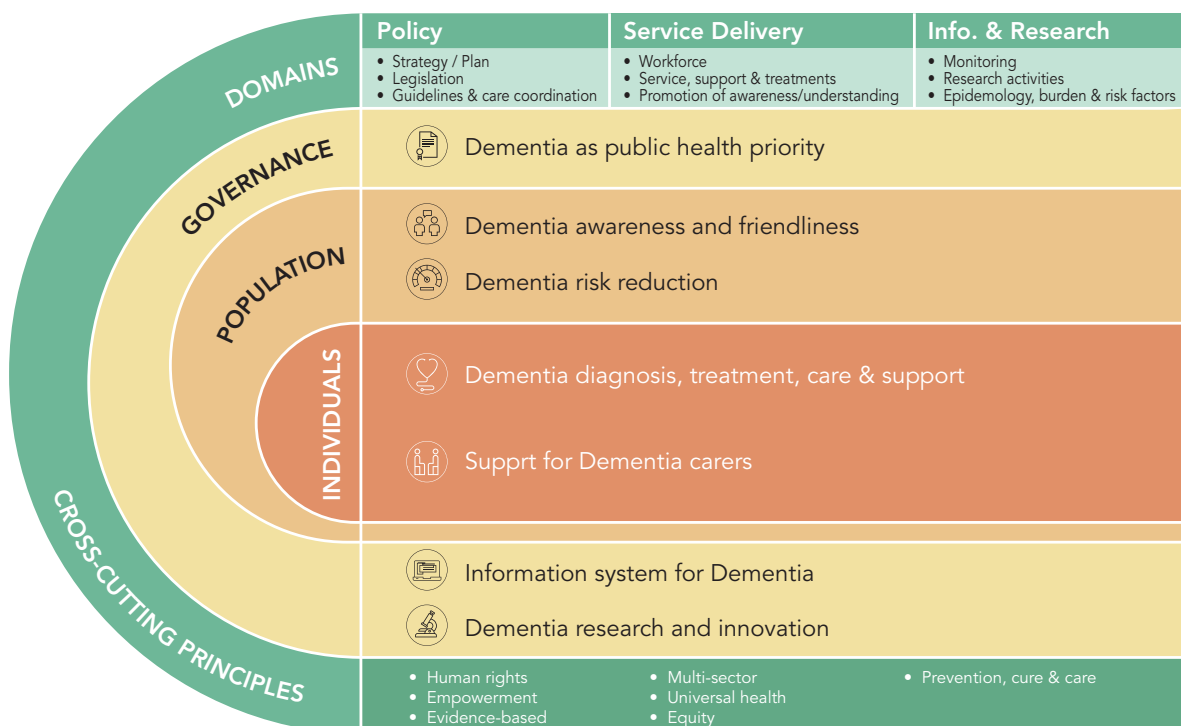
Vision

A world in which dementia is prevented and people with dementia and their carers live well and receive the care and support they need to fulfil their potential with dignity, respect, autonomy and equality.

Goal

To improve the lives of people with dementia, their carers and families, while decreasing the impact of dementia on them as well as on communities and countries.

Global Dementia Observatory Action Areas







QATAR SITUATION REVIEW

Qatar's Vision

"To deliver dementia care and support for individuals, their carers and families to enable them to live with dignity, respect, autonomy and equality".

Qatar Situation Review

The Dementia Working Group examined the Strengths and Weaknesses (internal environment) as well as the Opportunities and Threats (external environment) regarding dementia in Qatar.

Strengths

- Commitment at national level to design and implement a national plan for dementia.
- Agreement at national level on the need for a well-organized and effective Dementia Care Pathway.
- The existence of a skilled and highly motivated Dementia working group (GDO), which increases general awareness and provides support to develop the Dementia Plan.

Weaknesses

- Diagnosis of dementia is surrounded by stigma.
- There is no current knowledge about the prevalence and incidence of dementia, service utilization, and the level of unmet demand for service.
- In Qatar there is only one designated Memory Clinic; while other HMC departments and some private sector providers offer dementia diagnosis, there is a lack of uniformity and coordination between the services
- Lack of agreed pathways and guidelines.

Opportunities

- Early diagnoses improve quality of life for patients and carer
- Qatar is member of WHO Global Dementia Observatory.
- Dementia is reflected in National Health Strategy 2018-2022 under healthy ageing HA-10

Threats

- Limited availability of required and appropriately trained staff.
- Coordination challenges between various health and social sectors.
- Absence of dementia legislation.
- Lack of specialized dementia community support services.

SEVEN ACTION AREAS FOR QATAR

Seven Action Areas for Qatar

Despite approximately fifty million people worldwide living with dementia, currently very few countries have formulated national dementia plans. Qatar is one of the few developed nations, and the only Arab country, working on a dementia plan for its local population.

The aim of the Qatar National Dementia Plan is to set out the vision for future services for people with dementia, their families and carers. This will be achieved by increasing public and professional awareness of dementia, encouraging timely diagnosis and early intervention, improving post-diagnostic treatment and care. Improving all our services to become dementia-friendly will help in enhancing the quality of life of individuals with dementia and their carers in the State of Qatar.

This plan sets out seven action areas that address those areas of dementia care which will have the most impact on improving the quality of care.

The action areas are built around these seven areas of the World Health Organization global action plan on dementia and the GDO.



Dementia as a public health priority



Dementia awareness and friendliness



Dementia risk reduction



Dementia diagnosis, treatment, care and support



Support for dementia carers



Information systems for dementia



Dementia research and innovation



Dementia as a public health priority

This plan aims to ensure dementia is a public health priority in the State of Qatar. This dementia plan sets out a broad public health approach to improve the care and quality of life of people with dementia and their families carers. The Qatar National Dementia Plan will be articulated and integrated into the recently launched “Healthy Ageing” area of the Qatar National Health Strategy 2018-2022.



Dementia awareness and friendliness

Raising awareness is central to the successful implementation of this plan. There is currently a lack of awareness and understanding of dementia, resulting in stigmatization, barriers to diagnosis and care, and negative impacts on carers, families and society physically, psychologically and economically.



Dementia risk reduction

Alzheimer's Disease is the most common neurodegenerative condition that presents with dementia in the older population.

It is now known that brain changes typically begin many years before people show symptoms, which suggests that a window of opportunity exists to prevent or delay the onset of these conditions. While there is no cure for dementia, early identification and modification of risk factors can make a difference to people's life. Intensive risk factor modification, especially during middle age (45-65years) has the potential to reduce the risk of developing a substantial proportion of dementia illnesses.



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Dementia diagnosis, treatment, care and support

Essential to high quality dementia care is timely diagnosis followed by subsequent comprehensive care to enhance quality of life for individuals living with dementia and their support carers. This plan recognizes there is a growing need for a system that offers good quality care from diagnosis to the end of life. This means a system with increased awareness, early recognition, a timely reliable diagnosis, and post diagnosis support.



Support for dementia carers

Dementia not only affects the individual with the disease, but also their family and carers. Dementia changes family relationships, leaves people socially isolated and affects both the health and finances of the family. All too often families sacrifice their own well-being to ensure their loved one has the best care possible. This plan aims to provide comprehensive support for all individuals caring for patients with dementia.



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Information systems for dementia

This dementia plan aims to improve the use and collection of data from a range of areas relating to dementia. Policies can only be effective when the results are measured and that is certainly the case for dementia. This plan will improve the way in which information on dementia and related conditions is being recorded and implement a standardized method of collection.



Dementia research and innovation

Dementia is a collective name for progressive brain syndromes which affect memory, thinking, behavior and emotion and the most well-known and common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, which accounts for between 50 to 60 percent of all cases. Bringing together world-leading expertise in biomedical, care, public health, and translational dementia research centered around the need for innovative, patient centered science will help unlock our understanding of the mechanisms underlying the development and progression of dementia.



IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The plan, which will be rolled out over the next four years (2018-2022), entails not only substantial human and financial investment but also joint planning between different government entities, health and social care staff, individuals with dementia, their families and carers.

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) will have a key role in ensuring the necessary resources are available to implement and drive the plan forward and monitor its effectiveness. Several appointed task forces will be responsible for implementation, monitoring and evaluation; each will have a dedicated focus area:



HEALTH SYSTEMS

Responsible for implementation of screening and diagnosis, care pathway and care coordination, and e-health.



AWARENESS & EDUCATION

Responsible for developing education plans, including training materials and workshops and awareness campaigns.



RESEARCH

Responsible for conducting survey analyses, prevalence research, the registry, social research and Qatar contributes to the global research on dementia.

The National Lead for 'Healthy Ageing' population group (Qatar National Health Strategy 2018-2022) will be the focal person for the plan, who will ensure the necessary communications and media strategy is implemented. The 'Healthy Ageing' task force, working along with the dementia working group (GDO), will be responsible for implementation and support. Furthermore, individuals living with dementia and their carers and family members are directly involved in all stages of the implementation process.

Evaluations will be conducted every six months by an external consultant. The resulting report will be submitted to the core GDO team and the Ministry of Public Health.

Qatar National Dementia Plan

Priorities

Years 1 and 2

- Launch of Qatar National Dementia Plan (QNDP) in 2018
- Establish National Dementia Care Pathway
- Establish National Dementia Guidelines
- Dedicated fund for ongoing national dementia awareness program and campaign
- Establish dementia education and training program for health and social care staff (Dedicated budget for developing for dementia skilled workforce)
- Initiate Multiprofessional Specialist Memory Assessment Center (a funded center with a fully dedicated team of Geriatricians, Neurologists, Geriatric Psychiatrists, Neuropsychologists, Occupational Therapists and Social Workers).
- Develop a Qatar National Dementia Registry
- Establish a Qatar Dementia Carer's Society / Association
- Initiate a Dementia Risk Reduction Program aligned with Non-Communicable Diseases Risk Reduction Strategies
- Enhance services to have specialized inpatient services for patients with dementia
- Establish dementia care centers, and carer support services
- Initiate dementia friendly projects aligned with WHO working towards Qatar becoming an 'elderly friendly' country
- Measure progress using identified indicators

Years 3 and 4

- Multispecialty Multidisciplinary - Memory Assessment Centers established
- Introduce a legal framework to support and protect the rights of people with dementia (Develop a subject matter expert team)
- Establish Driving Assessment Centers
- Design and conduct Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) for all elderly in health care settings (this is in alignment with Healthy Ageing Initiative HA - 05 within the National Health Strategy 2018-2022)
- Establish dementia as a research priority area in Qatar



QATAR STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

National Dementia Stakeholder Group

Ministry of Public Health

The Ministry has taken the lead in setting up a National Dementia Stakeholder Group that is chaired by the Assistant Minister of Health. Sections of the Ministry that are important for this plan are the Public Health Department and the Mental Health Department who work closely with their counterparts in Hamad Medical Corporation and Primary Health Care Corporation.

Primary Health Care Corporation

Primary Care Services will play a central role in the implementation of the Plan enabling a streamlined Referral Pathway for our patients when they first make contact with healthcare services through primary care centers.

Qatar University Center for Humanities and Social Science

Qatar University Center for Humanities and Social Science has started to do research work on reviewing literature from the Middle East and qualitative research on the perception of dementia and how we talk about it. Social research is important because the results can be used to inform daily practice and/or policies.

Family Caregiver's Group

A carers group has been created that includes individuals who feel it is important to give a voice to people who are living with dementia and cannot speak out themselves. This group wants to push the national conversation and be involved in awareness raising, promotion of early diagnosis, improving information provision, including a special website and improving the services from a consumer point of view.

Hamad Medical Corporation

As the largest public sector provider of secondary and tertiary healthcare, HMC currently leads the provision of geriatric care, including specialist dementia care. The Geriatrics Department (which runs the Memory Clinic), Psychiatry Department, Continuing Care (including Home Health Services) provide expert advice and clinical care for patients with dementia.

Ehsan Center for Empowerment and Elderly Care - A division within Qatar Foundation for Social Work (QFSW)

As a nongovernmental organization it provides important services for the elderly population as a whole. This includes social care services and activities as well as day care centers. These services are appropriate for people with dementia in relatively early stages of the disease, but do not provide medical supervision or expertise for more advanced cases. Ehsan also supports awareness activities through their network, with and resources such as informative and educational newsletters.

World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH)

WISH has helped put dementia on the agenda in Qatar by including dementia on the agenda of its Health Summit in 2015 and hosting an Eastern Mediterranean Region meeting in December 2016, which resulted in the publication of a Dementia report.

Other Ministries

The Traffic Department, in the Ministry of Interior, is involved in driving issues and has set up a committee to look into establishing driving guidelines for people with cognitive impairment. The Ministry of Justice will be involved in legal questions like guardianship and mental health law. The Ministry of Administrative Development Labor and Social Affairs is equally important in executing the dementia plan.



