

QATAR CRITICAL CARE CONFERENCE EDITORIAL

The inaugural Qatar Critical Care Conference with its Qatar Medical Journal Special Issue – An important milestone

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EDITORIAL



Dr. Ibrahim Fawzy Hassan

Local Host and QCCC 2019 Conference Chair

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is an honour to welcome everyone to the first Qatar Critical Care Conference (QCCC). It has been a long journey to make it happen, but this event has been much awaited by the local critical care community. Over the last few years, we have hosted a number of related events of various scales, ranging from Critical Care Grand Rounds targeting Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) critical care clinicians, ran specialised courses, through to organising an international medical

conference on extracorporeal life support in 2017.¹ This inaugural QCCC event is the fruit of much planning and collaboration. The programme spans from 28th to 31st October 2019 and consists of two days of pre-conference workshops and two days for the main conference.

The vast majority of the pre-conference workshops will be held in the state-of-the-art ITQAN Clinical Simulation and Innovation Centre located within Hamad bin Khalifa Medical City. Although the facility is yet to be officially inaugurated and opened, we have the privilege to have been granted access to it as a way of showcasing our forthcoming continuing professional development capability. "Itqan" in Arabic means *quality and striving for perfection*, which is very much in line with the mission of our established Critical Care Network (CCNW).² Simulation-based education is an area in which we have started to be very active through various immersive courses as well as innovative technological developments to train our extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) specialists.^{3,4}

The scientific part of the conference will be hosted in the iconic Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel in the West Bay area. It includes a varied selection of topics presented by many renowned experts in their respective domain. This comprehensive programme with a line-up of lectures and workshops addressing e-CPR, ECMO simulation, ECMO cannulation, hemodynamics and so much more will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences to improve patient care in Qatar and beyond. We anticipate that the programme will appeal to a broad audience and hence will bring together clinicians from all professions involved with caring for acutely ill patients. It is QCCC's aim to connect and explore new insights and expertise at a national and international level through networking with other professionals in a multidisciplinary setting. We hope that

during this event many fruitful discussions will take place and that it will enhance opportunities for collaboration to develop everyone's practice in critical care.

The HMC Critical Care family has a capacity of 163 and 109 intensive care unit (UCI) beds, respectively for adult and paediatric patients, across 7 hospitals spread throughout Qatar. These numbers are complemented by another 52 adult and paediatric beds from non-HMC hospitals. This gives us a national ICU bed capacity of 11.8 per 100,000 inhabitants considering a current population of nearly 2,750,000 inhabitants.⁵ Although this number remains below the international benchmark which can be considered to be around 15/100,000 population,⁶ this quota in Qatar has more than quadrupled over the last ten years, which represents a very significant improvement in the care that can be provided to acutely ill patients. Within HMC only, it is supported by a workforce of 159 intensive care physicians, 1122 intensive care nurses, and many other clinical staff, all of whom undergo a well regulated programme of continuing professional development and are licensed to practise by the Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners (QCHP).⁷ The work they do across the various sites is coordinated and monitored by the CCNW² who ensures the best level of care, up-to-date technology, and evidence-based practices are consistently adopted for the wellbeing of our patients.

Once again, on behalf of the Scientific and Organizing Committees, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to Doha and we hope that you enjoy and gain meaningful insights during the conference regarding our local critical care setting and practices, but also learn from the experiences and best practices shared by our international guest speakers.



Prof. Guillaume Alinier

Guest Managing Editor, Qatar Medical Journal QCCC Special Issue and Abstracts Chair of the QCCC Scientific Committee.

Dear Contributors and Conferences Delegates,

Welcome to this special issue of the Qatar Medical Journal (QMJ) which has been dedicated to the inaugural conference of the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) Qatar Critical Care Network (QCCN) which celebrates its fifth anniversary in 2019. I would like to start by thanking everyone who has supported this arduous publication endeavour through their extended abstract submission(s) and the reviewers for the valuable feedback they have provided to the authors to ensure this publication is a representative legacy of the calibre of this conference which includes many local and international experts in their respective field of practice or interest. All the accepted abstracts are being published Open Access thanks to the support of the conference sponsors and this contributes greatly to the sharing of experiences and best practices worldwide, but also showcases the good work that is being done in Qatar in the domain of critical care thanks to

the work of dedicated clinicians and the leadership of the CCNW.²

Being the Guest Managing Editor of the special issue of a journal is an honour but also an arduous task, especially when a large number of submissions from international authors needs to be handled. It is the second time that I have accepted to take on that role for Qatar Medical Journal as the previous time was in 2017 on the occasion of hosting the South West Asia and African Chapter (SWAAC) of the Extracorporeal Life Support Organisation (ELSO) in Doha.¹ This was only a couple of years after HMC had established its Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) programme, and it was a very successful event with many of its associated open access publications having been downloaded hundreds of times from the QScience.com publishing platform.

Working on this new Special Issue really made me reflect on how the domain of critical care is vast and encompasses so many aspects of patient care and so many professions and specialties. The topics of the abstracts published in this special issue of QMJ cover dietetics,⁸ sepsis,⁹ delirium,^{10,11} physical therapy,¹² end of life care and organ donation,^{13,14} dealing with families,¹⁵ as well as education and training of clinicians,^{16,17} to only highlight a few. Critical care is fast moving as new clinical practices and technological innovations are adopted and contribute to continuously improving patient care. This is especially true in Qatar where significant investments are constantly made to develop and support healthcare in a strategic way.¹⁸ At HMC, the critical care phase that some patients have to go through so their medical needs can be met is well integrated across all stakeholder departments that can possibly be involved.² The patient's journey through the healthcare system can be seen as a continuum of care facilitated by the fact that all parties involved belong to the same overarching organisation, HMC, which is the government funded main

provider of secondary and tertiary healthcare in Qatar. This means that from initial contact with the Ambulance Service bringing a patient to the Emergency Department for example, right through to rehabilitation and even possible access upon discharge to a mobile healthcare service supported by family physicians, nurses, and paramedics, patients can expect the same high standards of care.¹⁹ Critical care provision relies on multidisciplinary communication during transition of care as well as during any acute episode. This needs to be underpinned by medical knowledge and understanding of the potential contributions of other professions as nothing can be left to chance when a patient's life is hanging by a thread. The present collection of editorials and abstracts brings different perspectives on a broad range of topics which should be highly relevant to all clinicians involved with critical care and

contribute to improving patient outcome and satisfaction, and hence that of the multidisciplinary team members also involved in caring for them.

We hope that the Qatar Medical Journal Special Issue publications on critical care meets your needs and expectations. The complete record of QCCC publications including additional open access abstracts and editorials relating to this conference will be made available in Qatar Medical Journal at the following link: <https://www.qscience.com/content/journals/qmj>. Thanks again to everyone for your contributions, and beyond our email communications, I now hope to meet you in person during the conference!

Keywords: critical care, Qatar, multidisciplinary, conference, editorial

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