

## Press release

# **Sidra Medicine opens Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine clinic - Appoints Dr. Lisa Thornton as Division Chief of Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine**

**2 December 2017**

Sidra Medicine, a member of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development and Qatar's new hospital for children, young people, and women, is marking [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) (IDPD) on 3 December by announcing the launch of its Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine clinic. Sidra Medicine is also proud to announce that Dr. Lisa Thornton - the former University of Chicago, Director for Pediatric Rehabilitation – has been appointed as the Division Chief of Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine.

The clinic helps manage the health of children with physical disabilities such as paralysis, cerebral palsy and brain damage. Patients are currently referred internally from Sidra Medicine's own in-house teams, as well as Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC). The service will be expanded to accept referrals from doctors who practice outside of these institutions in 2018. The clinic expects to see more than 1,000 patients in its first year.

The clinic's focus will be on a multidisciplinary, community-based approach - working with young patients and their families under the leadership of Dr. Thornton, who has over 20 years of experience in the field. The IDPD's theme this year "transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all", also aligns with Dr. Thornton's philosophy of strengthening the support network around a child and helping parents throughout the journey by empowering them with knowledge and guidance.

"During my research before moving to Qatar, I found a series of favourable articles on Qatar supporting children with disabilities and the commitment made by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser, to improving the lives of these children. I was grateful to see the kind of openness that Qatar has to this population and saw a chance to be part of its efforts. I feel privileged to be part of Qatar's strategy to help children with special needs get to adulthood with dignity and with family and community support. Sidra Medicine is most definitely a beacon of learning and discovery and I am delighted to be part of it and to join a diverse and dedicated team of specialists who are all committed to ensuring improved outcomes for patients and families alike," said Dr. Thornton.

The Rehabilitation Clinic ensures the patient is seen by Dr. Thornton together with a physical therapist and an occupational therapist. Combining the collective expertise of a child's rehabilitation team allows for the development of a more tailored, holistic approach for every child. As part of this wide-ranging spectrum of care and support, the family will also receive a personalized plan on what to expect regarding the impact their child's disability will have on their lives, and receive guidance on the best ways to help their child reach their full potential.

"Every child regardless of their level of mobility deserves to have a complete, enjoyable and happy childhood. That's what every parent wants for their child. We teach the parents how and what to do over a certain timescale. If it becomes apparent that this goal cannot be reached, then we help the parents to reframe their 'normal' and work towards a revised goal. At the end of the day, we want the child to achieve optimal function. If the child can be happy in a wheelchair, that is a good result and we will help parents to understand that life with a disability can be full and complete," said Dr. Thornton.

Speaking about the clinic's broader, long-term vision for creating a community-based ecosystem, Dr. Thornton emphasized that a child with a disability is just as healthy and capable as those without physical disabilities and should be encouraged to pursue any interest, be it sports, music or travel. "There are already a number of programs and activities in Qatar designed to enable participation for children with physical disabilities. More collaboration between the various program owners and healthcare entities will help create a supportive and extensive community," Dr. Thornton concluded.

Dr. Thornton holds three board certifications in Pediatrics, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, a mark of skill and dedication achieved by fewer than 300 practitioners in the U.S. where Dr. Thornton practiced before moving to Qatar.

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#### Notes to editors

- Sidra Medicine's mission is to be a beacon of learning, discovery and exceptional care, ranked among the top academic medical centers in the world.
- Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, represents the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser who serves as its Chairperson.
- Sidra Medicine's values are trust, care, teamwork, transparency, innovation and efficiency
- Sidra Medicine will provide world-class healthcare services for children, young people and women in Qatar and internationally
- Sidra Medicine's research program will help develop ground-breaking treatments, technologies and techniques, especially in the areas of Maternal Fetal Medicine, Genetics and Genomics and Maternal Diabetes and Metabolic Syndromes
- Once fully operational, Sidra Medicine:
  - Will become the leading pediatric hospital in Qatar.
  - Will be the only specialist center treating pregnant women with fetal complications.
  - Will handle 275,000 outpatient appointments, 11,000 procedures, 100,000 emergency attendances and deliver over 9,000 babies.
  - Will feature 140 clinic rooms, 10 operating theatres, 400 beds, 100 per cent single rooms with a private bathroom, a birthing center and emergency department.
  - Will employ 2,000 nurses, 600 doctors and 800 other health care professionals, as well as administrative staff.
- Sidra Medicine outpatient services launched on 1 May 2016 and now operates 47 clinics and services related to pediatric and obstetrics care for the children, young people and women of Qatar.
- Sidra Medicine is located in Education City, Doha.
- For further information, please visit <http://www.sidra.org/>