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## Psychosocial aspects of caring for dementia and Alzheimer in Qatar

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In 2012, the World Health Organization (WHO) projected a threefold increase in dementia cases over the next decade. This declaration, coupled with a notable increase in dementia cases locally, led the state of Qatar to evaluate and improve its healthcare provision for people with dementia. The most notable project was the establishment of the WHO global dementia observatory team in partnership with Hamad Medical Corporation, as well as a dedicated civil society organization Ehsan that cares for the wellbeing of elderly community members. The observatory project is the first of its kind in the Middle East and Arab region, and considered as one of several projects dedicated to people with dementia and Alzheimer in Qatar. Based on research project on dementia in Qatar, this presentation will reveal the work on dementia and Alzheimer in Qatar from the caregivers' and professionals' views. A multidisciplinary research team from the Center for Humanities and Social Sciences and the College of Medicine at Qatar University conducts the study, which is generously supported by civil society organization Ehsan-Center for Elderly Care and Empowerment, and in close collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation. The study seeks to address the question: How are people living with Dementia and Alzheimer cared for in Qatar? Since the question is addressing processes, dynamics and attitudes, the researchers used qualitative research methodology. For collecting the data, the researchers used ethnographic-archival strategies that included the following tools: Open deep interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus groups interviews, active observations, and analyses of relevant documents. Drawing on all these data resources, the presentation will illuminate the psychosocial challenges that stand in the family's journey in caregiving and their psychosocial needs. Privileging caregivers and professionals' perspectives, this qualitative study explores the medical, religious and socio-cultural facets of dementia and Alzheimer care in Qatar. It will explore the integrated work between the different intervention agents of the formal and informal systems. The presentation will shed the light on the hidden, but heavy burden of care associated with caregiving and seeks to identify how pathways of care can be enhanced. Family decision-making and the navigation of patients from informal care within the domestic sphere to formal institutional care is also probed extensively in the research. Preliminary findings indicate that while elderly with dementia are greatly remembered in Qatar by families and several health care institutes, there still exists a need to promote social awareness of the disease in order to enhance support for caregivers translating into enhanced quality of life for people living with dementia in Qatar and by extension, the broader Middle East.