HE Dr. Hanan Al Kuwari officially opened HMC’s new Neuroscience Stroke Service Unit.

MINISTER of Public Health HE Dr Hanan Mohamed al Kuwari, recently opened Hamad Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Stroke Service Unit, which is part of the new Neuroscience Institute at Hamad General Hospital.

The new facility features a Rapid Access Stroke Unit (RASU) and a Secondary Stroke Prevention Clinic (SSPC) providing an innovative and comprehensive approach to stroke care through early diagnosis and faster assessment and treatment.

“The opening of these new services is another step forward in the provision of stroke care. We have made enormous progress in recent years to improve the range of services we provide to stroke patients. We now see patients more quickly; they are treated by specially trained stroke teams, and ultimately we are able to help them recover faster. The Rapid Access Stroke Unit and Secondary Stroke Prevention Clinic build on these improvements by enabling us to quickly and effectively diagnose patients with suspected stroke and also to prevent strokes from happening in the first place,” said the Minister.

HMC receives around 1,600 stroke patients annually. Due to the high prevalence in Qatar’s population of risk factors for stroke – including diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, hypertension, and inactivity – the incidence of stroke is high, underscoring the importance of the new services.

How do I choose the right health care?

There are times when you fall ill but you have little idea which healthcare provider to choose from in Qatar, depending on your needs. Bearing in mind that Qatar has primary, secondary and tertiary care, many often go to secondary care or rush to the Emergency for minor ailments that one can take care of oneself by getting medicines from the pharmacy.

Have you received a flu shot this season?

Have you received a flu shot this season? If not, healthcare providers are urging people to get vaccinated. The Ministry of Public Health, Hamad Medical Corporation and Primary Health Care Corporation have been urging people to get vaccinated and will continue the campaign until the end of the flu season.
Health Minister visits Flying Eye Hospital

Dr. Naveed Akhtar said, “In addition to the delayed death than one in which the treatment is lower risk of permanent brain damage or strokes. A victim who is treated within a transient ischemic attack (TIA) can be

The aim of the new clinic is to reduce the risk of another stroke for patients who have recently had a stroke or transient ischemic attack, as well as those at high risk of having either form of stroke for the first time,” said Professor Ashfaq Shuaib, Director of HMC’s Neurosciences Institute.

The opening of the RASU means that thanks to a collaboration between neuroradiology, medicine, and emergency department teams, patients with a minor stroke or suspected transient ischemic attack (TIA) can be quickly transferred from Hamad General Hospital’s Emergency Department to this unit. Here, a team of stroke consultants and clinical nurse specialists will carry out a range of investigations to confirm if the patient has had a mini-stroke.”

Time is very important when treating strokes. A victim who is treated within a few hours of a stroke has a significantly lower risk of permanent brain damage or death than one in which the treatment is delayed.

Assistant Director of the Stroke Service Dr Naveed Akhtar said, “In addition to the RASU providing high-quality rapid assessments of suspected stroke cases, the new unit will help reduce the number of admissions to Hamad General Hospital, ease pressure on the Emergency Department and Acute Medical Care Unit, and enable other patients in need of urgent care to be seen more quickly by emergency care teams.”

Since opening in April 2018, the SSPC has delivered education, monitoring, and prevention services to more than 1,100 patients.

“The aim of the new clinic is to reduce the risk of another stroke for patients who have recently had a stroke or transient ischemic attack, as well as those at high risk of having either form of stroke for the first time,” said Professor Ashfaq Shuaib, Director of HMC’s Neurosciences Institute.

“Studies show that the risk of recurrent stroke is between five and 10 percent within the first 30 days and rises up to 40 percent within five years of the initial stroke. For this reason, it is essential that we provide suitable education and support for stroke patients to try to prevent any further incidents,” added Professor Shuaib.

All stroke patients are given an appointment date at the SSPC within six weeks of discharge from a HMC hospital. The SSPC runs eight clinics a week with services delivered by specially trained stroke consultants, clinical nurse specialists, educators, and pharmacists.
HEALTH CHECK TEAM

DOHA

The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), in collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), organized a blood donation campaign at West Bay Health Center.

The campaign aimed at developing community awareness of the importance of donating blood while enriching the blood bank stock to save the lives of the injured and the sick, and those who are subject to various surgical procedures.

The Director of West Bay Health Center Dr Wafaa al Yousuf said that this type of campaign is a manifestation of solidarity in a society whose members care for one another.

Blood donation campaigns also raise the awareness of people about the importance of providing safe blood to help urgent cases resulting from road accidents or complex medical surgeries where a patient may require a single blood bag that costs the donor only a few minutes, she said.

Dr Yousuf added that blood donation has great humanitarian benefits as it gives us a new life-saving opportunity, and there is no other alternative to blood, and a single blood donation can save up to five lives.

Dr Yousuf said that blood donation also reduces the risk of cancer, pointing out that scientists believe that blood donation helps to reduce the growth of cancers in the body and patients who donate blood regularly are less likely to develop cancer than non-donors.

She also praised the accompanying procedures for the campaign at the centre, where a special car was provided for employees and visitors to donate blood.

PHCC organises blood donation drive at West Bay Health Center

Are you depressed and need to speak to someone?

HEALTH CHECK TEAM

DOHA

Are you stressed, depressed, or want to speak to someone? Then you need to look no further because the Ministry of Public Health recently launched Qatar’s first National Mental Health website sehanafsia.moph.gov.qa (Your Mind Matters), a resource to support good mental health and well-being of the people of Qatar.

To bring mental health awareness to the wider community in Qatar, the bilingual website under sehanafis.moph.gov.qa has been developed in collaboration between the Ministry of Public Health and key health partners, Primary Healthcare Corporation, Hamad Medical Corporation, Sidra Medicine and Nautar.

The website is an initiative of the Qatar National Mental Health Strategy (2013-2018).

The National Mental Health Website is a regulated and trusted online platform that hosts credible and up-to-date information on mental health in both Arabic and English to ensure that the general public in Qatar can access reliable information on mental health and wellbeing in one place.

A key aim of the website is to raise public awareness of mental health and reduce stigma associated with mental illness. This online resource will provide the public with information on wellbeing, mental health conditions, and how to access services in Qatar.

MoPH Assistant Minister Health Affairs Dr Salih Ali al Marri said, “In line with the National Mental Health Strategy pledge to deliver mental health information resources, the key initiative was to develop an online, reliable and culturally sensitive bilingual resource that would provide the wider public in Qatar with accurate information on mental health and services available in Qatar.”

He further said, “The website supports the delivery of the Strategy’s vision for good mental health and wellbeing for the people of Qatar supported by integrated mental health services with access to the right care, at the right time and in the right place.”

Acting Executive Director of the National Mental Health Programme Susan Clelland said, “Launching the website signifies a key milestone for the implementation of the Qatar National Mental Health Strategy, as it supports the delivery of the Strategy’s vision for good mental health and wellbeing for the people of Qatar.”

“It particularly supports the pledge to raise public awareness of mental health, reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and make mental health information resources widely available for the public”.

To find out more about the website and access online mental health resources, go to sehanafsia.moph.gov.qa
**How do I choose the right health care?**

The right care begins by choosing the right service.

### Self-Care / Pharmacy
- Mild headache
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Mild allergy
- Teething

### Primary Care
- Flu-like symptoms
- Mild vomiting
- Sore back
- Toothache
- Mild burn
- Both irritation
- Eye irritation or
- Earache
- Request a sick note

### Urgent Care for Adults
- Minor burn
- Puncture wound
- Minor laceration
- High-grade fever
- Severe headache
- Difficulty breathing

### Urgent Care for Children
- Food poisoning
- Electric shock
- Moderate burn
- Chicken pox / measles
- Bloody urine
- Intense abdominal pain

### Emergency Department or 999
- Suspected stroke
- Face drooping
- Arm weakness
- Speech problem
- Severe allergic reaction
- Broken bones
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Severe burn or bleeding

Health services for the elderly

Qatar’s health system has much to offer – not only a wide range of world-class treatment services to help people recover from ill-health, but also a growing range of wellness services to help them stay healthy and free from disease. However, understanding how to access these services is the first step towards realising the benefits of these services.

To begin with, the PHCC operates 26 health centers which are located across Qatar, delivering community-based primary care services. The health centers offer a wide range of preventive and diagnostic and treatment, and healthcare services including dental, antenatal care, immunization, pharmacy, ophthalmology, audiology, radiology and wellness services. These health centers include Madinat Khalifa, Umm Slal, Al Khor, Al Shamal, Al Kaaban, Gharrafat Al Rayyan, Lethwainiya, Al Daayen, Airport, Rawdat Al Khail, Umm Ghuwailina, Omar Bin Khatib, West Bay, Al Wakra, Al Thumama, Abu Baker Al Siddiq, Al Rayyan, Al Jumitiya, Al Shehantiya, Messeineer, Al Karaana, Abu Nakhla, Al Waab, Muaither and Al Wajba.

A health centre is the first point of contact for non-emergency conditions. If you need to get a medical advice, you should book an appointment at the registered health centre in your locality. You can call the PHCC customer service team, Hayyak, to assist with any enquiries by calling 107.

PHCC Managing Director Dr Mariam Abdul Malik said, “The guides focus on clearly explaining the first point of entry into the health system and highlight the role of primary healthcare. For all non-emergency conditions, primary healthcare is the first point of contact for the majority of patients in the healthcare system.”
To enlighten the public on how to choose the right healthcare provider, the Ministry of Public Health in collaboration Hamad Medical Corporation, Primary Health Care Corporation and Sidra Medicine, has launched a set of new healthcare guides aimed at making it easier for people to access the healthcare system and choose the right service for their healthcare needs.

Dr Abdul Malik, however, said the residents need to register at a health centre close to their locality. “Qataris can be treated at a health centre of their choice while the residents can be treated at the health centre they are registered in.”

HMC is the main provider of specialist healthcare in Qatar and has 12 hospitals — nine specialist hospitals and three community hospitals in addition to the national Ambulance Service, home and residential care and mental health services. These services differ from those provided at the primary health centres because they diagnose and treat complex cases that cannot be treated in a primary care setting.

The hospitals include Hamad General Hospital, National Center for Cancer Care and Research, Ambulatory Care Center, Women’s Wellness and Research Center, Heart Hospital, Communicable Disease Center, Al Khor Hospital, Al Wakra Hospital, Cuban Hospital, Hazm Mebaereek General Hospital, Qatar Rehabilitation Institute and Rumailah Hospital.

To be treated here, one needs a referral from a primary care provider. Referrals from PHCC and Research, Ambulatory Care Center, Women’s Wellness and Research Center, Heart Hospital, Communicable Disease Center, Al Khor Hospital, Al Wakra Hospital, Cuban Hospital, Hazm Mebaereek General Hospital, Qatar Rehabilitation Institute and Rumailah Hospital.

To be treated here, one needs a referral from a primary care provider. Referrals from PHCC

Health services for children

Health services for adults

Continuing Care Group Mahmoud al Raisi said, “HMC has made enormous progress as a provider of specialized healthcare services and it is vital that the people are fully aware of the care we provide and how to access our services.”

In addition, Sidra Medicine is a private hospital for public benefit established by Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Development. It offers specialised healthcare services to women, children and young adults in Qatar. Sidra Medicines services are not offered for free but if there is no specialist service available that is needed by the patient and Sidra Medicine is the only provider, then medical services are priced at government approved co-funding rate. For any enquiries one can call 4003 3333.

Sidra Medicine Chair of Medical Education and Division Chief of Pulmonology Professor Ibrahim Janahi, said, “Since opening our first outpatient clinics in 2016, Sidra has continued to expand the range of services we provide. We are now proud to play a significant role in the delivery of healthcare in Qatar. We are pleased to be a part of these healthcare guides which showcase the integrated nature of Qatar’s healthcare system.”

In case of emergencies such as suspected stroke (face drooping, arm weakness, speech problems), severe allergic reaction, broken bones, difficulty in breathing or chest pain, intense abdominal pain, severe burn or bleeding, among others, one should call 999 immediately.

[PHOTOS: WWW.GUIDETOHEALTHCARE.QA]
Hemya is here!!
Say goodbye to your misconceptions about Diet!

Experience Hemya! A healthy diet center managed by Al-Ahli Hospital.
We will offer you a multisensory experience drawing on flavor and aroma.
If you suffer from overweight, obesity and its complications ... Hemya is here to assist you.

Hemya will offer you a tasty menu designed not only to be healthy but to capture a delicious and exciting range of flavors, textures and spices. It is prepared by our finest trained Chefs, supervised by our French Catering Manager. Our kitchen is HACCP certified.

You can create on our website: www.Hemya.com your own menu depending on the dietician recommendations and your food preferences. Daily, we will deliver 3 fresh main meals which will magnify each moment of your day.

Our menu changes on weekly basis, and every week you can enjoy more than 56 exquisite recipes full of fresh savors with regional and international flare!

- Hemya Shop : 4489 8777
- Hemya Dietitian : 5055 152 (8:00am - 8:00pm)
- For Appointment : 4489 8261 - 4489 8008 - 4489 8888
- Address : Ahmed Bin Ali Street, Al-Ahli Hospital, Ground Floor P.O.Box 6401 Doha, Qatar.

www.HEMYA.com

Your Way...
THE ENT Department at Al-Ahli Hospital offers a broad range of services carried out by a highly qualified team of consultants, nurses and allied health professionals. The department is equipped to deal with both minor and complex diseases of the ear, nose and throat through treatment and surgery.

“Our department started around in 2009. Since then it has grown significantly and now it is one of the biggest ENT departments in the country. We have all the latest technology, not only in clinics but also in the operating room,” said Dr Aref Awa, Consultant Otolaryngology at Al-Ahli Hospital.

“We treat adults and children of all ages as well as providing all types of ENT services and treatments including surgeries. From 2011 and until now we have seen a three-time increase in the number of patients turn over. We are trusted by guests and they like our facilities because we can offer a good service,” he added.

Around 800 patients receive treatments at the ENT department’s outpatient clinics in a month. Among them 40 percent are pediatric and 60 percent are adult patients.

The ENT department has been recognised by an Australian accreditation body for its standards.

The ENT department at Al-Ahli Hospital is staffed with highly trained and qualified physicians. They provide the most up-to-date methods for diagnosis, medical and surgical treatment and rehabilitation of guests with diseases of the ear, nose, throat, head and neck, including allergy and disorders of the upper respiratory system in both adults and children of any age. The department works closely with other medical and surgical specialties to provide a multidisciplinary approach for the diagnosis and treatment of a broad range of disorders, especially with the hearing and balance department.

OUTPATIENT CLINIC SERVICES:
Endoscopic diagnosis and surgical treatment of various disorders of the nose and paranasal sinuses that affect breathing and sinus health, sleep disorders and snoring.
A complete set of endoscopes, both rigid and flexible, for full evaluation of the upper airway.
Surgical removal of ear/nose/throat/head and neck, and facial skin tumours.
Advanced Examination of the vocal cords and evaluation of important acoustical properties of the voice.
Evaluation and treatment of various headache sub-types.
Microscopic and Endoscopic ear evaluation for precise diagnosis of different ear problems, plus hearing and ears evaluation tests.
The clinic is equipped with the latest high resolution video and documentation system for endoscopic and microscopic applications. This will ensure an outstanding image quality for optimum diagnosis and facilitate archiving of clinical findings for further use during follow-up evaluations.

OUTPATIENT CLINIC PROCEDURES:
Radiofrequency assisted Somnoplasty procedures for managing cases of snoring, sleep apnea and breathing problems, as out-patient clinic procedures. It is minimally invasive, safe, and effective method, causing much less pain compared to classical surgery, and avoids general anesthesia.
Excision of head, neck and face skin tumours with reconstruction, scar revisions, abscesses and hematomas drainage.
Insertion of ear ventilation tubes to treat middle and inner ears problems.
Various endoscopic ear, nose and throat procedures including control of nasal bleeding, removal of foreign bodies, excision of nasal airway adhesions and polyps.
Management of head, neck and face lacerations/injuries/trauma.

OPERATIVE PROCEDURES:
Radiofrequency-assisted latest Somnoplasty and Coblation procedures for nose/palate/tonsils and adenoids, for patients with snoring, obstructed breathing, and sleep apnea, without surgery, with minimal pain and with very fast recovery and return to normal diet.
Advanced Endoscopic Sinus Surgery with state-of-the-art equipment for treating a wide variety of inflammatory disorders of the nose and paranasal sinuses, including chronic refractory sinusitis and nasal polyposis.

Advanced Endoscopic procedures include:
- Endoscopic Septoplasty and Turbinoplasty for treatment of chronic nasal obstruction, and repair of Septal perforations.
- Minimally invasive approaches to the paranasal sinuses.
- Endoscopic resection of tumors of the nose and the paranasal sinuses.
- Endoscopic treatment of Epiphora (in collaboration with Ophthalmology).
- Endoscopic repair of skull base defects.
- Endoscopic treatment of nasal bleeding.
- Endoscopic approach to the pituitary gland (in collaboration with Neurosurgery).
- Endoscopic repair of congenital nasal anomalies.
- Bronchoscopy/Tracheoscopy and Esophagoscopy, both diagnostic and for removal of foreign bodies.
- Facial reconstructive surgeries, including Rhinoplasty, Otoplasty, Scar Revisions, and repair of facial defects.
- Care of the professional voice including phonosurgical procedures for excision of vocal cord nodules, polyps, and for the management of vocal cord mobility disorders.
- Microscopic ear surgery for the treatment of ear infections in children and adults including different types of ventilation tubes placement, repair of eardrum perforations and surgical correction of hearing disorders.
- Management of salivary disorders using open surgical procedures and endoscopic technology (Sialendoscopy).
- Head and neck surgical oncology with reconstructive procedures.
- Management of head and neck and facial trauma.
Do you know anyone with unusual memory loss?

Catherine W Gichuki
Doha

Do you know any 65-plus person suffering from unusual memory loss? If yes, then let the person visit the Hamad Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Memory and Cognitive Clinic, which is designed for the early diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment of severe memory loss among the elderly.

HMC Chairperson of Geriatrics and Long Term Care and the National Health Strategy Lead for Healthy Aging, Dr Hanadi al Hamad recently said the country’s aging population and greater awareness of conditions like dementia and Alzheimer’s disease are contributing to greater demand for her department’s services.

Dementia symptoms may include a disturbance in memory, thinking, orientation, and the ability to comprehend information. It can also affect one’s language and judgment and can cause changes in behaviour. The symptoms of dementia can become severe enough to reduce a person’s ability to perform everyday activities. According to Dr Al Hamad, it’s important to seek medical advice if one suspects a memory problem.

“Memory loss is not a normal part of aging but is common among the elderly. Greater public awareness of the importance of receiving professional advice and medical assistance for memory problems has led to an increase in the number of patients we see.”

She added that in many cases, cognitive decline and memory loss can be prevented and even reversed. The key is to optimise brain function.

“I urge anyone with a family member who they feel might be showing signs of unusual memory loss to visit our Memory and Cognitive Clinic for a comprehensive and confidential diagnosis. “Early diagnosis and the right treatment is very important to help mitigate the symptoms and can often reduce the rate of deterioration of the patient’s cognitive functioning.”

Since 2013, the Memory and Cognitive Clinic at HMC has cared for thousands of patients.

Healthy diet, exercise key for mental health of young adults

Catherine W Gichuki
Doha

Exercise and healthy diet can help improve the symptoms of mental disorders in young adults. Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) consultant of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Dr Saleem Khaldoon al Nuaimi said the most common mental health issues among children aged up to 18 years of age are anxiety, depression, self-harming behaviour or issues related to natural or normal issues that may affect children, hyperactivity, mood regulation difficulties and autism. Among these disorders, the most common is related to mood disorders in adolescents while the most common in children below the age of 12 is related to Neurodevelopmental Disorders, specifically Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD).

He said if a child is being bullied at school, he/she will present with clear depressive symptoms. However, they are not clinically depressed because once the bullying stops they get better at once. Consuming a healthy is very important when it comes to mental disorders, advised Dr Al Nuaimi.

“Diet plays a very important role though it’s not clear what role it is, but those who consume a poor diet tend to suffer from common medical problems like obesity, heart problems and depression. Part of healthy eating is like taking Omega 3 and Vitamin D supplements.”

According to him, there is evidence to show that Vitamin D deficiency plays a key role in mood disorders among people. Helping the young adults to build resilience is one of the most important factors to prevent mood and anxiety disorders.

“They can improve the symptoms by maintaining an active lifestyle and being more physically active in sports.” Use of e-gadgets is also associated with depression and anxiety.

He also advised people to stay away from things that can cause mental illnesses like drugs such as cannabis, smoking (especially for mothers as it is associated with certain mental disorders in children if women smoke during pregnancy).

Having healthy families and social relationships is very important, he pointed out.

“In Qatar, bullying is a common problem, which is a social problem. If schools can reduce the bullying problem, it’s going to reduce depressive symptoms among people.”
Have you received a flu shot this season?

HAVEd you received a flu shot this season? If not, healthcare providers are urging people to get vaccinated. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) have been urging people to get vaccinated and will continue the campaign until the end of the flu season. The most common types of influenza viruses that are spreading in Qatar are H1N1, H3N2 as well as B influenza viruses.

Note that the vaccination will not stop one from getting the flu but the symptoms will not make someone to be admitted in hospital. One can browse www.stoptheflu.qa for information about the vaccine – including myths and facts – as well as where one can get the vaccine for free in Qatar.

HMC Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr Abdullah al Khal said getting vaccinated early helps ensure protection. He said flu vaccines are available in HMC outpatient clinics, primary health centers across the country, and in a number of private sector clinics and hospitals.

“Flu vaccine is highly contagious viral infection of the respiratory tract. The flu virus spreads from person to person through the inhalation of respiratory droplets from someone who is infected. It can also spread through contact with a contaminated surface.

Symptoms of the flu include fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. Some individuals may also experience nausea and vomiting.”

Dr Al Khal said chronic medical conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease, cancer, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, kidney and liver disease, and obesity can significantly increase the risk of influenza complications.

Also, he said pregnant women, older adults, and young children below the age of five could also be at a high risk of severe influenza.

According to him, complications of flu can include pneumonia, bronchitis, asthma flare-ups, heart problems, and ear infections.

“The best way to protect yourself from influenza is to get vaccinated,” he noted.

MoPH Head of the Vaccination Section Dr Soha Albayat said, “Vaccination is an important element of the Public Health Strategy, especially in communicable disease control and healthy aging components. Immunization and improved treatment have reduced mortality and morbidity rates in Qatar and across the world in recent years.”

PHCC Subject Matter Expert-Public Health, Clinical Affairs Dr Khalid Hamidi said influenza is usually an uncomplicated illness, which is characterised by sudden onset of constitutional and respiratory symptoms such as fever, myalgia, cough, sore throat, rhinitis and headache and resolves in 3-7 days in the majority of individuals.

“It is also essential to practice good hygiene by properly and frequently washing hands and protecting coughs and sneezes (coughing or sneezing into a tissue or an elbow) to help prevent the spread of seasonal influenza.

“People who have flu-like symptoms should stay at home to avoid infecting others.”

Besides, the flu vaccine, other steps people can take to help protect themselves from the flu and other viruses include:

- Washing hands often and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Using an alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth whenever possible.
- Avoiding crowds when the flu is most prevalent in your area.
- Practicing good health habits, including getting plenty of sleep, exercising regularly, drinking plenty of fluids, eating a nutritious diet, and managing stress.

For more information, visit www.health.qa.
Patterns of ATV-related injuries in Qatar reveal safety lessons for the public

HEALTH CHECK TEAM

WITH the winter months and camping season going on, the Hamad Trauma Center’s Hamad Injury Prevention Program (HIPP) is warning about the risks of unsafe All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) use.

According to a report that combines data from Al Wakra Hospital’s Emergency Department, Hamad Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Ambulance Service, and Hamad Trauma Center, during each year between 2010 and 2017, the Qatar Trauma Registry recorded a 25 percent annual increase in the number of ATV-related injury victims admitted to the National Trauma Center. The maximum increase was of child victims, which made up 40 percent of those injured. There was also a 34 percent increase in the number of female victims.

“Each year more than 75 ATV-related injury victims sustain severe injuries to their head, chest, extremities, and abdomen. These injuries are severe enough to require surgery or ICU admission. Children and females are at most risk of injury because they often do not have the necessary weight and strength to adequately control an ATV moving at high speed. For these reasons, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons does not recommend that children younger than 12 years operate ATVs,” says Dr Rafael Consunji, Director of the HIPP.

Al Wakra Hospital’s Emergency Department receives between 35 and 40 patients each year with ATV-related injuries. The parts of body that receive maximum injuries are the arms and head, with most victims of ATV accidents receiving abrasions on their chest, arms, legs, and back.

Dr. Consunji strongly recommends that all ATV drivers and passengers are fully clothed, wearing goggles, gloves, and boots, and using a helmet at all time they operate an ATV.

“One-third of the victims of ATV accidents are children under 18 years of age, with around 40 percent getting injured while riding pillow. Dr Consunji says it’s important to remember that ATVs are designed for only one user.

“ATVs are not designed to be used for riding pillow and the control of the vehicle is made more difficult with a passenger on board. Riding with or as a passenger increases the chances of weight imbalance and instability. Weight imbalance and instability are common causes of crashes and roll overs,” says Dr Consunji.

Also, ATV’s are heavy, complex machines that most children are not developmentally capable of safely operating. Dr Consunji says the size, power, and weight of an ATV requires complex decision-making, impulse control, and strength which are not present in young children.

December, which is traditionally the peak of the camping season, is when Hamad Trauma Center begins to see more patients who are injured while riding ATVs,” says Dr Consunji.

“Most of the patients we see with ATV injuries are youths between the ages of 12 and 29.”

Representatives from the Hamad Trauma Center, Al Wakra Hospital, and the Ambulance Service all agree that driving an ATV in Qatar should not be risky. They agree on the clear lessons to be learnt from the experiences of victims of ATV-related accidents, and contend it’s everyone’s responsibility to apply these lessons.

The other safe camping recommendations include ensuring tents are made of materials that are resistant to fire, heat and cold, there is a distance of at least five metres between tents, and cooking areas and fire-pits are placed away from the tents.

Smoking in areas where fires could start should also be avoided. Portable propane stoves should be turned off when not in use, fuel canisters should be stored safely, and safety equipment like fire extinguishers, fire blankets, and first-aid kits should be easily and readily accessible.

It is also recommended to keep a close eye on the activities of young children.

Dr Sadiya Al Kohji, National Health Strategy Lead for Children and Adolescent Health, says the organisation launched an adolescent-friendly health service at a number of its health centres two years ago.

She says the PHCC’s efforts to prevent and manage identified risk factors, such as accidents, noncommunicable diseases, risky behaviours, mental health, and adolescent reproductive health, align with the National Health Strategy 2018-2022 aim to prioritise and empower children and adolescents.

“The National Health Strategy 2018-2022 has identified children and adolescents as a key priority area and is committed to improving the health and well-being of children and adolescents in Qatar. Through the National Health Strategy, there will be focus on developing key initiatives and strategies to ensure safety and reduce high-risk behaviours among children and adolescents. This will be achieved through specific policies, regulations, and awareness programs targeted at parents, children, and adolescents which will address issues such as the risk of ATV-related injury and health literacy overall.”

Through the National Health Strategy, there will be a focus on developing key initiatives and strategies to ensure safety and reduce high-risk behaviors among children and adolescents. This will be achieved through specific policies, regulations, and awareness programs targeted at parents, children, and adolescents which will address issues such as the risk of ATV-related injury and health literacy overall,” says Dr Al Kohji.

Last year, HMC officially launched the Qatar Trauma Registry, the first and only national trauma registry in the Arab world.

Through the Qatar Trauma Registry, clinicians and other public health officials have access to the data needed to make better decisions to reduce trauma incidents in the country.
HMC’s Sealine Medical Clinic serving campers for 9th year

“The clinic is located very close to the seashore, on the same site where it has been located for the last four years. The clinic is located close to popular camping areas to facilitate easier access should healthcare services be required by residents or visitors.”

Ali Al Khater
Chief Communications Officer at HMC

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) recently officially opened its Sealine Medical Clinic, located in the southern part of the country near Mesaieed City. This is the ninth consecutive year that the healthcare organisation has operated the clinic and will remain open until mid-April.

HMC Chief Communications Officer Ali al Khater said HMC operates the clinic each year to ensure medical care, and specifically emergency medical services, are available for residents during the busy camping season.

Al Khater, who is also the Chair of the Ministry of Public Health’s Healthcare Communications Committee, said, “The opening of the Hamad Medical Clinic at Sealine signals the beginning of what will no doubt be another busy camping season. Our annual operation of this clinic demonstrates HMC’s commitment to providing the best possible healthcare to campers in the Sealine and surrounding areas.”

Al Khater noted that HMC and the Ministry of Municipality and Environment collaborate each year to establish the clinic. He said the location of the clinic provides easy access for both campers and other visitors and efficient transfer to hospital for patients with more serious medical conditions.

“The clinic is located very close to the seashore, on the same site where it has been located for the last four years. The clinic is located close to popular camping areas to facilitate easier access should healthcare services be required by residents or visitors,” said Al Khater.

He thanked the Ministry of Municipality and Environment for its continued commitment to the clinic, noting recent improvements such as the paving of the road leading to the clinic which has allowed for easier access.

He further thanked Mohamed al Dosari, the Project Supervisor for the Hamed Medical Clinic and the clinic staff, including doctors and nurses, Ambulance Service staff, and clinic administrators for their dedication to caring for patients.

He said it is only through the collaboration of many people that HMC is able to continue providing this important service throughout the camping season.

Al Khater also urged campers and others who frequent the area to respect safety and security procedures and to take the necessary precautions when enjoying recreational activities.

Consultant at HMC’s Medical Administration Department and Medical Supervisor of the Sealine Medical Clinic Dr Hamid Ghareeb said the clinic operates every weekend during the camping season, opening each Thursday at 3pm and remaining open until Saturday at 5pm.

The clinic also provides services during public holidays, and receives patients with minor health concerns, as well as emergency cases.

He noted that there is also a helicopter landing area to transfer patients who have urgent medical needs or severe injuries, to hospital.

Operations Manager for HMC’s Ambulance Service Saleh Nasser al Mejareh al Marri said that in addition to its regular round-the-clock emergency coverage in the Sealine area, the Ambulance Service will permanently station two ambulances and two 4x4 emergency vehicles in the area.

He said the Ambulance Service is ready to transport emergency cases from the desert to the clinic or hospital, or to the helicopter landing area, as required.
HE Dr. Hanan Mohamed al Kuwari, recently opened Hamad Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Stroke Service Unit, which is part of the new Neuroscience Institute at Hamad General Hospital. The new facility features a Rapid Access Stroke Unit (RASU) and a Secondary Stroke Prevention Clinic (SSPC) providing an innovative and comprehensive approach to stroke care through early diagnosis and faster assessment and treatment.

“The opening of these new services is another step forward in the provision of stroke care. We have made enormous progress in recent years to improve the range of services we provide to stroke patients. We now see patients more quickly; they are treated by specially trained stroke teams, and ultimately we are able to help them recover faster. The Rapid Access Stroke Unit and Secondary Stroke Prevention Clinic build on these improvements by enabling us to quickly and effectively diagnose patients with suspected stroke and also to prevent strokes from happening in the first place,” said the Minister.

HMC receives around 1,600 stroke patients annually. Due to the high prevalence in Qatar’s population of risk factors for stroke – including diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, hypertension, and inactivity – the incidence of stroke is high, underscoring the importance of the new services.

SMOKING IN CLOSED PUBLIC SPACES IS PUNISHABLE BY LAW

According to Article 17 of Law No. 10 of 2016 on the control of tobacco and its derivatives:

Without prejudice to any more severe penalty stipulated in any other law, a penalty of not less than one thousand (1000) Riyals, not exceeding three thousand (3000) Riyals shall be imposed on anyone who smokes cigarettes or tobacco or its derivatives, or permits smoking, in closed public places where smoking is prohibited.

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