



# Guide to Cancer Services in Qatar





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The majority of Qatar's population has, either directly or indirectly, been affected by cancer. Most people know a family member, friend or colleague who has been diagnosed with one of the many forms of cancer and know the impact this has on their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

To effectively deal with this disease and to significantly decrease its impact, the healthcare system in Qatar provides high-quality care, the best possible support, and the best possible patient experience to those diagnosed with cancer.

Over the years, Qatar's healthcare sector has made significant advances in identifying, diagnosing and treating the disease. Its commitment to continue improving cancer services includes the provision of the best care and support, easy access and a clear pathway for those diagnosed with cancer.

However, the provision of cancer services is complex as they are provided in a variety of settings. Identifying where to start can be overwhelming. A clear cancer care pathway and easy navigating system is a key step toward a successful patient experience.

It is important when cancer is suspected to achieve a rapid and definitive diagnosis to allow treatment to begin promptly. This should be supported by clear information on when and how to start.

This guide provides those with a suspicion or diagnosis of cancer with all the information they need to easily access the cancer services in Qatar, to clearly navigate the system and to have a convenient experience in their treatment journey.





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## Who provides Cancer healthcare services for you in Qatar?

### PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CORPORATION



#### Get to know Primary Health Care Corporation

Primary Health Care Corporation operates 27 health centers across Qatar, delivering community-based primary care services to Qatar's population in all parts of the country. These primary health centers provide a wide range of preventive, diagnostic and treatment healthcare services, including dental, antenatal care, immunization, pharmacy, ophthalmology, audiology, radiology, wellness services, and cancer screening services including breast and bowel cancer screening.

Primary health centers should be the first point of contact for patients with non-emergency conditions (patients with emergency conditions should visit an HMC emergency department or call 999 for an ambulance). If your primary care doctor determines that more specialist care is required, they will refer you to an HMC hospital.



#### How can you get an appointment at a primary health center?

All expatriate residents of Qatar can register at their local health center when obtaining a health card. Qatari nationals can make an appointment at any primary health center. To get an appointment at the health center you are registered at, follow either of the steps below:

- Visit your registered health center in person to arrange an appointment
- Call the PHCC customer services team, "Hayyak" on 107 and they will schedule an appointment for you.





## What cancer services are provided at PHCC?

In collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation, PHCC has established the Urgent Suspected Cancer Referral Pathway for any patient with suspicion of cancer to be referred and seen quickly by a specialist, sometimes as quickly as within 48 hours. After consultation, suspicious cases are referred to HMC for further assessments and investigation.

In addition, there are screening services available at primary health center for the early detection of breast and bowel cancer. This is a national, population-based program that aims to promote education, awareness and early detection of breast and bowel cancer in Qatar

The dedicated breast and bowel screening services are provided at the following health centers:

1- Al Wakra Health Center, 2- Leabib Health Center, 3- Rawdat Al Khail Health Center.

In addition to a Mobile Screening Unit providing the service across Qatar.

To learn more about the "Screen for Life" program and to check if you are eligible visit:

<http://screenforlife.qa/>

Alternatively, contact the call center at 8001112 for enquires or to get an appointment for breast or bowel cancer screening







## How can you contact Primary Health Care Corporation?

Primary Health Care Corporation's dedicated customer service team, Hayyak, is available to assist you with any enquiries 24 hours a day by telephone on 107.



## Do you have to pay for services at primary health centers?

Qatar residents with valid health cards are entitled to subsidized consultations and prescriptions.

- Any citizen or resident in Qatar must apply for a health card to access the health care facilities in Qatar.
- The health card fee is 50 QR for Qatari citizen and 100 QR for residents in Qatar. PHCC services are free of charge for Qatari citizens and very low and affordable cost for residents with a valid health card.
- Breast and bowel cancer screening is a free service for people who have a valid QID and valid health card.

To find out more about the Primary Health Care Corporation in Qatar, please visit the link below:

[https://phcc.qa/portal\\_new/index/index.php?limit=home](https://phcc.qa/portal_new/index/index.php?limit=home)



## HAMAD MEDICAL CORPORATION



### Get to know Hamad Medical Corporation

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) is the main provider of specialist healthcare in Qatar and one of the leading hospital providers in the Middle East. HMC's network is made up of twelve hospitals as well as the national Ambulance Service, home and residential care, and mental health service. The dedicated clinical teams at HMC deliver specialist healthcare services to patients. These services differ from those provided at primary health centers as they diagnose and treat complex cases that cannot be treated in a primary care setting.



### How can you get an appointment at a Hamad Medical Corporation hospital?

Getting an appointment is simple and convenient, just follow the steps below.

**Step 1:** Visit your primary healthcare provider (Primary Health Care Corporation or private clinic). Your primary care doctor will refer you to HMC if specialist care is required.

- Referrals from private clinics need to be taken in person to the relevant HMC hospital
- Referrals from PHCC health centers are made automatically

**Step 2:** Once your referral has been received by HMC, you will be sent an SMS acknowledging receipt.

**Step 3:** When an appointment becomes available you will be contacted with the date, time and location. Once processed, you will also receive an appointment notification by SMS.

**Step 4:** You will receive an appointment reminder SMS five days before your appointment and another SMS one day before.

If you have been referred urgently by your doctor, you will be contacted much sooner. Please make every effort to attend this appointment.





## Do you have to pay for services at HMC?

Qatar residents with a valid Qatar ID and health card are entitled to heavily subsidized consultations and prescriptions. Without these documents, patients will be charged a higher fee for services. Emergency medical services are provided free of charge.



## How can you contact HMC?

HMC's dedicated customer service team, Nesma'ak, is available to help with all questions and inquiries. Nesma'ak teams are on hand in all HMC hospitals to assist patients and visitors and they can also be contacted via:

**Telephone:** 16060

**Email:** [nesmaak@hamad.qa](mailto:nesmaak@hamad.qa)

**Opening hours:** Sunday to Thursday 7am to 10pm- Friday 2pm to 10pm- Saturday 10am to 6pm.

Nesma'ak staff speak many languages to make your experience as smooth as possible.





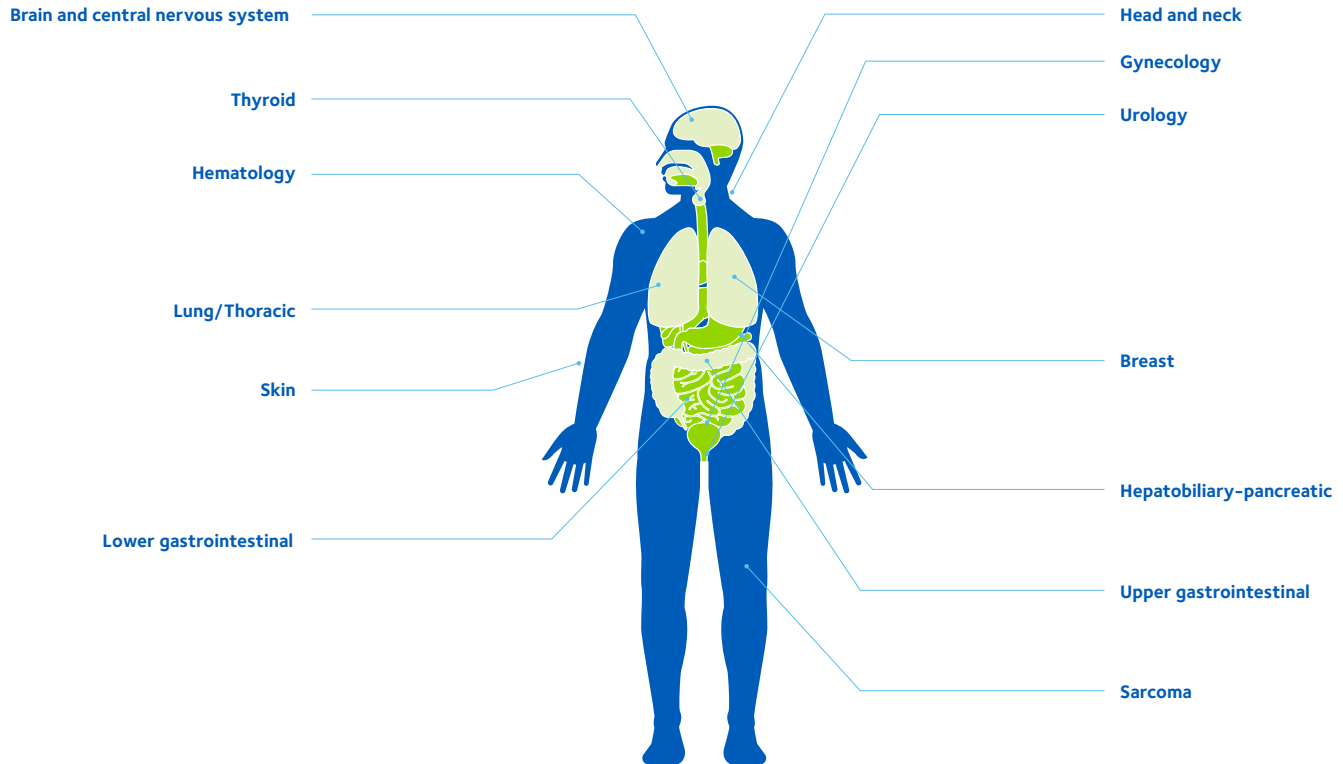
## **What are the types of cancer treated in HMC?**

HMC is leading the way in providing a range of evidence-based care for patients with cancer. Through its state-of-the-art facilities, the most advanced technology, and highly-skilled staff, HMC treats all types of cancer as shown in the diagram.

Childhood cancers - a term most commonly used to designate cancers that arise in children before the age of 18 years are treated in Sidra

If your doctor suspects you may have a cancer or if you need further investigation, you will be referred to one of HMC's hospitals based upon your condition







## What is the suspected cancer referral process and patient pathway?

The suspected cancer referral is a process designated for patients with symptoms suggestive of cancer. Children, adolescents and adults who may have suspected cancer are referred to see a specialist urgently to investigate their symptoms further.

A cancer pathway is the patient's journey from the initial suspicion of cancer through clinical investigations, patient diagnosis and treatment.

All patients with a suspicion or diagnosis of cancer are referred to the various cancer specialist teams from the following providers:

- Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCC) by using the Urgent Suspected Cancer (USC) form or through routine referral.
- Internal HMC referrals from other consultants within HMC.
- Other cancer multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs)
- Private providers.
- Clinicians whose patients are returning to Qatar following treatment overseas.

All patients referred to the specialist cancer services are seen in a specialist clinic by a clinician who has been designated as privileged for this specialty. Further investigations will be done, and a definitive diagnosis should be reached in 14 days.





## **What are the cancer services available in Women's Wellness and Research Center (WWRC)?**

- You may be referred to the WWRC if there is a concern that you have a cancer of the gynecological system (i.e. Vulva, Vagina, Cervix, Womb or Ovary).
- Within the outpatients' department there is a dedicated cancer clinic where the specialist team will see you. The clinic is arranged so that clinical examinations can be undertaken, and additional tests can be done if required. There are facilities for specialist scans (for example, Ultrasound, CT and MRI scans) as well as pharmacy services. If you need to have an operation, this will be performed at the WWRC. This could be a biopsy or a major operation such as a hysterectomy



## **What are the services available in Hamad General Hospital (GH)?**

- You may be referred to Hamad General Hospital for investigations if your symptoms suggest possible Breast Cancer, thyroid cancer, neurological cancers, cancers in the Gastro-intestinal or hepatobiliary/pancreatic tract, cancers in the head or neck or lung/thoracic cancer. You may visit the Bone and Joint Centre if there is a need to review your bone health.
- If you have a cancer diagnosis of any of the kinds listed above and need to have an operation, this will be carried out at Hamad General Hospital.



## **What are the cancer services available in the Ambulatory Care Center (ACC)?**

- You may be referred to Hamad General Hospital for investigations if your symptoms suggest possible urological cancer or if you need an endoscopy or colonoscopy test.
- If you are diagnosed with a urological cancer and you need to have an operation, this will be done in the Ambulatory Care Center.





## What are the services available at the National Center for Cancer Care and Research (NCCCR)

NCCCR is the premier and the only specialist hospital in Qatar providing care for cancer patients who require ongoing treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy and treats blood conditions.

- If you have symptoms that suggest a possible haematological or blood cancer, you will be referred to the NCCCR
- NCCCR offers patients a range of dedicated, specialized investigations and care and a unique range of services including urgent care, hematology and oncology as well as palliative care.
- NCCCR also offers patients with cancer treatment options that incorporate the latest technology in the field of minimally invasive procedures. This technology includes the following:
- Magnetic Resonance Image Guided Adaptive Brachytherapy, an advanced technique used to treat cervical cancer
- MR-Guided Focused Ultrasound for the treatment of cancer that has spread to the bones.
- Robotic Radiosurgery System (CyberKnife), a robotic system that delivers pain-free, non-surgical high-dose radiation therapy with extreme precision.
- Blood stem cell transplantations via the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation Unit, which can be an important part of treatment for some cancers.

**Additionally, NCCCR provides a wide range of support services that include:**

- Palliative care, a program that helps people who have a life-limiting illness and those whom the primary goal is quality of life. It takes a holistic approach to address the full spectrum of a patient's needs, from the physical and emotional to the spiritual and social.
- A Psycho-Oncology and Quality of Life Clinic to help patients and their families cope with their diagnosis and treatment.
- A special Quality of Life Clinic for adolescent and young adult (AYA) patients with cancer operated by NCCCR in collaboration with the Pediatric Oncology team.
- Genetic education and counseling, helping patients develop a risk assessment if they have a personal and/or family history of cancer.

To learn more about the clinical services in NCCCR please click the link for the clinical services:

<https://urlzs.com/CZXjd>



## About the Emergency Services in NCCCR

- The Urgent Care Unit provides Urgent Care to patients who are known to have a cancer diagnosis and with symptoms associated with ongoing cancer treatments. A dedicated team at the unit strives to enhance efficient transition into the hospital by providing accurate triage assessment for all patients who arrive at the unit.
- The unit has a total of five beds and one isolation room and is staffed by four medical professionals in oncology and hematology. We see up to 500 patients per month and co-ordinate our services with other departments within the NCCCR, such as pharmacy, physiotherapy, radiation oncology etc.

To contact the Emergency Care Unit at NCCCR please call: (44397179)



## Advanced treatment technology

HMC also offers patients with cancer treatment options that incorporate the latest technology in the field of minimally invasive procedures. This technology includes the following:

- Magnetic Resonance Image (MRI) Guided Adaptive Brachytherapy, an advanced technique used to treat cervical cancer
- MRI-Guided Focused Ultrasound for the treatment of cancer that has spread to the bones.
- Robotic Radiosurgery System (CyberKnife), a robotic system that delivers pain-free, non-surgical high-dose radiation therapy with extreme precision.
- Blood stem cell transplantations via the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation Unit, which can be an important part of treatment for some cancers.







## What is the multidisciplinary approach for cancer care?

People with cancer and those with a suspicion or diagnosis of cancer are cared for by a team of healthcare professionals, each with their own expertise. This is known as the multi-disciplinary approach and these are some of the people who will be involved in your care:

- Advanced Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Patient Pathway Coordinator (to arrange your appointments and provide you with information you may need about investigations and follow up treatment plans)
- Radiologist (a doctor who examines the body with x-rays, ultrasounds and scans, they may also carry out a biopsy)
- Surgical oncologist (a surgeon who removes the tumor and nearby tissue during surgery. He or she also performs certain types of biopsies to help diagnose cancer.
- Pathologist (a doctor who examines the tissues and cells removed during a biopsy of surgery)
- Medical Oncologist (a doctor who specializes in treating cancer with drugs)
- Radiation Oncologist (a doctor who specializes in treating cancer with radiotherapy)
- Chemotherapy Nurse (trained to give chemotherapy drugs)





## **SIDRA MEDICINE**

### **Get to know Sidra Medicine**

Sidra Medicine is an ultramodern, academic medical center providing specialized healthcare to women, children and young persons in Qatar. It is a private hospital for public benefit.

Established by Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, Sidra Medicine embraces best practice medical education, innovative biomedical and clinical research and discovery, and exceptional patient and family focused care.



### **What are the cancer services available in Sidra?**

With an expert multidisciplinary team including pediatric hematologists and oncologists, specialist nurses and allied health specialists, Sidra Medicine provides comprehensive Child and Adolescent Cancer and Blood Diseases services to children and adolescents up to 18 years of age.



### **Sidra Medicine diagnoses and treats all types of childhood cancers**

Treatment is according to International co-operative Group protocols such as those of the Children's Oncology Group, "Société Internationale Oncologie Pédiatrique" and others. Chemotherapy is given at Sidra Medicine while Radiation services are provided by Hamad Medical Corporation.





### **Hematology Oncology Outpatient Clinic**

Hematology Oncology Outpatient Clinic provides outpatient appointments and infusion services clinic is in the Sidra Medicine Inpatient building, Floor 1A. Working hours are 7.00a.m. - 3.00p.m., Sunday to Thursday.



### **Child and Adolescent Hospital Inpatient Services**

Cancer and blood disorder patients requiring inpatient care are cared for in Ward 4B of the main hospital building. All patients with suspected cancer are seen within 48 hours of referral.



### **For Emergency Referral**

Patients diagnosed with cancer requiring acute management can also be seen through the Sidra emergency department.







### **Do you have to pay for services at Sidra Medicine?**

Yes, there are minimal charges for outpatient visits and overnight stays.

Please contact 4003 333 for details including co-payment options for outpatient prescriptions.



### **How can you contact Sidra Medicine?**

For general inquiries about Sidra Medicine, please call their call center on 4003 3333.



### **Where is Sidra Medicine located?**

Sidra Medicine is in Education City. For more information visit [www.sidra.org](http://www.sidra.org)







## **Qatar Cancer Society (QCS)**

### **Get to know QCS services.**

Qatar Cancer Society is a non-profit humanitarian charity founded in 1997. It works under Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities under the leadership of Dr. Sheikh Khalid Bin Jabr al-Thani, Chairman of the Board, a member in the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) and a founding member of the International Cancer Prevention Consortium (ICPC).



### **What types of service QCS provide for individuals living with cancer?**

Being a non-profit humanitarian charity organization, QCS doesn't provide any clinical. However, it provides a wide range of support services including,

#### **Financial support**

The Society covers the costs of cancer treatment through an internal policy and auditing. Educational and Psychosocial Support

QCS provides support for cancer patients, survivors and their families. The support covers a wide range of aspects physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

#### **Advocacy program**

Through partnerships with many institutions concerned with the most important issues for individuals living with cancer, QCS works on their behalf individuals with cancer to "advocate" for their rights through and provide them with the support required at all level.



### **What kind of support can you get from QCS?**

QCS provides tailored and comprehensive programs that are implemented to cover all aspects of patients need throughout their treatment journey and beyond.





## Who can get the support from QCS and how?

Any cancer patient/ survivor living in Qatar regardless of his/her nationality is welcomed to contact QCS to get the support required.



## How can you get an appointment at QCS?

**The QCS can be reached via the following channels:**

**Telephone:** 44847777

**Fax:** 44847778

**Email:** [info@qcs.qa](mailto:info@qcs.qa)

Alternatively, they can visit the QCS building between Sunday - Thursday from 7:30 am- 2:00 pm



## Do you have to pay for services at QCS?

Qatar cancer society is non-profit humanitarian charity and work under Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities. All services provided by QCS are free of charge.



## Where is QCS located?

QCS office located at Al Sadd, Barwa Towers, Tower 2, building 2, floor 20.





## **Qatar Red Crescent (QRC)**

### **Get to know Qatar Red Crescent**

Qatar Red Crescent operates a number of health centers in Qatar providing a wide range of primary care services in the country. These services include general medicine, ear nose and throat, cardiology, ophthalmology and dentistry. If you have a valid Qatar ID card and a valid health card you can access the full range of care services at Ministry of Public Health primary health centers operated by Qatar Red Crescent. 80% of medication prescriptions are subsidized by the Ministry of Public Health.



### **What cancer services does Qatar Red Crescent provide?**

Qatar Red Crescent does not provide any specialist cancer services. However, the Ministry of Public Health primary health centers operated by Qatar Red Crescent should be the first point of care for male expatriate residents who are registered with them, if they have any signs or symptoms of cancer. If appropriate, Qatar Red Crescent will then refer these patients to HMC for specialist cancer investigations and diagnosis.



### **How can you get an appointment at a Ministry of Public Health primary health centers operated by Qatar Red Crescent?**

- Patients with non-urgent conditions can visit any of the four health centers to be seen by a doctor without a scheduled appointment. A valid health card is required.
- Qatar Red Crescent accepts referrals from HMC facilities
- Any patients requiring urgent care can visit either of the two Qatar Red Crescent operated centers that provide urgent care without a scheduled appointment and regardless of their visa status.







## How can you contact Qatar Red Crescent?

If you have a general question about Qatar Red Crescent services, you can speak to one of their customer service staff by telephoning 16002. Their staff speak many languages to make your experience as smooth as possible.



## Where are the MOPH primary health centers operated by Qatar Red Crescent located?

To enable you to conveniently access the care services you need, Qatar Red Crescent runs three health centers in Doha and one in Dukhan. All four health centers listed below provide primary care services while urgent care is provided only at Al Hemaila and Mesaimeer centers.

### Al Hemaila Medical Center

Building 265, Street 35, Al-Taqa Street, Zone 81.

Telephone: 4040 8666

Opening hours: Saturday to Wednesday: 24 hours a day

Thursday: 6.30am to 10.30pm

Friday: 6.30am to 2.30pm

### Mesaimeer Health Center

Building No. 60, Street Number 1119, Zone 56,

Mesaimeer.

Telephone: 4040 8550

Opening Hours: 24 hours a day

### Zekreet Health Center

Dukhan Service Road, Zone No. 86, Dukhan

Support Services Area, Al-Ruwais West,

Dukhan, Qatar.

Telephone: 4040 8713

Opening hours:

Sunday to Wednesday: 6:30am to 10:30pm,

Thursday to Saturday: 6:30am to 2:30pm

### Fareej Abdul Aziz Health Center

Opening hours:

Sunday to Wednesday: 6:30am to 10:30pm,

Thursday to Saturday: 6:30am to 2:30pm





### **How do cancer services in Qatar compare to other countries?**

The transformation of Qatar's cancer services in recent years has resulted in the development of a comprehensive, high-quality service that is among the very best in the world.

### **Fast and efficient access to care**

Ensuring patients with a suspicion of cancer are diagnosed and treated as quickly as possible is of great importance. For this reason, Qatar has set itself some of the most challenging standards in the world for the time taken for patients to be seen, diagnosed and treated for cancer.

### **Internationally-accredited services**

All of the hospitals in HMC have been accredited by Joint Commission International (JCI). In addition, cancer services undergo peer review programmes of quality assurance and the NCCCR has received endorsement from the European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO) as an integrated cancer and palliative care service.

### **Advanced cancer treatment technology**

HMC is able to offer cancer care that incorporates the latest technology in the field of minimally invasive procedures, investigation and diagnostic tests as well as stem cell and bone marrow transplant.

### **Comprehensive support**

Roles have been established for patient pathway coordinators and clinical nurse specialists to support patients through their cancer experience. These people help patients navigate their way through the systems and provide information and support to help patients make decisions about their treatment and care. In addition, the Qatar Cancer Society is there to offer support, empowerment and advocacy for those living with and beyond cancer. NCCCR also hosts psychological and palliative care services for support of patients and their families.



