



6th Annual MENA Metabolic & Genetic Conference

14-16 May 2026 | JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai, UAE

AN INITIATIVE BY



SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS





CONFERENCE PRESIDENT &
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE CHAIR

Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran

Senior consultant and Division Chief, Genetic and Genomic Medicine, **Sidra Medicine and Hamad Medical Corporation, Qatar**, Professor, **Weill Cornell Medical College, Qatar & New York-USA**, Visiting Scientist, **Boston Children's Hospital-USA**

Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi

Consultant Pediatrician, Inborn Error of Metabolism and Clinical Genetics, Pediatrics Department, **Salmaniya Medical Hospital**, Assistant Professor, Pediatrics Department, **Arabian Gulf University, Bahrain**



CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT

Speaker Faculty



Dr. Abeer Al Sayegh
Senior Consultant in Medical and Cancer Genetics, Head of Genomics, **Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care and Research Center, Oman**



Dr. Ahmad Abou Tayoun
Director, **Dubai Health Genomic Medicine Center**; Associate Professor of Genetics, **Dubai Health, UAE**



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Head & Consultant of Pediatric Neurology Unit, Pediatric Department, **Al Sabah Hospital, Kuwait**



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Dr. Ayman El Hattab
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Dr. Dana Marafi
Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, **Kuwait University, Kuwait**



Dr. Fatma AlJasmi
Chair of Genetics and Genomics Department, College of Medicine and Health Sciences, **United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain**; Consultant, Biochemical Genetics, **Tawam Hospital, Abu Dhabi, UAE**

Speaker Faculty



Prof. Fuad Al Mutairi
Program Director, MGFP, Associate
Professor, Consultant of Medical Genetics,
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Dr. Haitham Elbashir
Consultant, Head of Neurosciences Center of
Excellence and Pediatric Neurorehabilitation
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Ms. Hajer Al Mulla
Genetic Counselor, **Hamad Medical
Corporation, Qatar**



Dr. Hind Alsharhan
Clinical and Biochemical Geneticists,
Assistant Professor, Pediatric Department,
Faculty of Medicine, **Kuwait University,
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Consultant Development and Behavioural
Paediatrician, **NMC Royal Khalifa City,
Abu Dhabi, UAE**



Dr. Husain Malalla
Consultant, Pediatric Neurologist,
Salmaniya Medical Complex, Bahrain



Dr. Khalid Al-Dasuqi
Attending Physician, Pediatric
Neuroimaging, **Sidra Medicine, Qatar**



Dr. Khalid Al Thihli
Senior Consultant, Clinical and Biochemical
Geneticist, Genetic and Developmental
Medicine Clinic, **Sultan Qaboos
University Hospital, Muscat, Oman**



Prof. Majid Alfadhel
Chairman Genetics and Precision
Medicine Department, Director of Medical
Genomic Research Lab and Deputy Executive
Director of **King Abdullah International
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Division Chief and Consultant Pediatric
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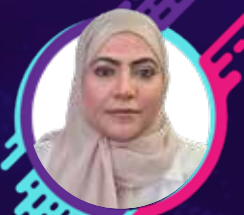


Prof. Malak Alghamdi
Medical Geneticist, **King Saud University
Medical City, Riyadh, KSA**



Dr. Maryam Busehail
Consultant, Inborn Error of Metabolism
and Clinical Genetics, **Salmaniya
Medical Complex, Bahrain**

Speaker Faculty



Dr. Maryam Al Shehhi
Consultant Clinical Geneticist, **Sheikh Khalifa Medical City, Abu Dhabi, UAE**



Dr. Mehtab Iqbal
Consultant Pediatric Neurologist Division Chief, **Pediatric Neurology Tawam Hospital, UAE**



Prof. Moeen AlSayed
Professor of Genetics, College of Medicine, Director, MSc Genetic Counselling Program, **Alfaisal University**, Chairman, Department of Medical Genetics, **King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Center, Riyadh, KSA**



Dr. Mohamed Babiker
Consultant Paediatric Neurology, **Mediclinic Al Jowhara Hospital, UAE**



Prof. Mohammed Ghaly
Professor of Islam and Biomedical Ethics, Research Center for Islamic Legislation & Ethics (CILE); Head, College of Islamic Studies, **Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar**



Dr. Mohammed Almannai
Section of Medical Genetics, **Children's Hospital, King Fahad Medical City, Riyadh, KSA**



Dr. Mohammed Almuqbil
Consultant Pediatric Neurology, Medical Genetics, and Biochemical Genetics, **King Abdullah Specialized Children's Hospital, King Abdulaziz Medical City**; Assistant Professor, of Pediatric Neurology, College of Medicine, **King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Science, King Abdulaziz Medical City, Riyadh, KSA**



Dr. Nadia Alhashmi
Senior Consultant, Clinical & Biochemical Geneticist, **National Genetic Center (NGC), Royal Hospital, Muscat, Oman**



Dr. Nikil Sudarsan
Consultant, Pediatric Neurology, **Kings College Hospital, Dubai, UAE**



Dr. Noora Butti
Adult Hematologist and BMT Consultant, Acting Head of Department of Hematology and BMT, **Bahrain Oncology Center, King Hamad University Hospital, Bahrain**



Dr. Osama Aldirbashi
Senior Consultant Clinical Scientist, Metabolic Lab, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, **Hamad Medical Corporation, Doha, Qatar**



Dr. Reem Al-Sulaiman
Chairman of Medical Genetics Department, Senior Consultant Genetic Counseling (ABGC Board), Lead of Genetic Counseling Directory, Assistant Chair of Rare Disease and Research Committee, and Vice President of Qatar Network of Medical Genetics, **Hamad Medical Corporation, Doha, Qatar**

Speaker Faculty



Ms. Reem Ibrahim Bux
Certified Genetic Counselor, Clinical Lead of Adult Genetic Counseling, Adult and Pediatric Genetic Department, **Hamad Medical Corporation**; Clinical Training Coordinator, Genetic Counseling Program, **Qatar University, Qatar**



Ms. Sara Jemmieh
Genetic Counselor, **Hamad Medical Corporation, Qatar**



Dr. Sarah Alenezi
Pediatric Neurologist with Special Interest in Epilepsy and EEG, Head of Pediatric Neurology Unit, **Adan Hospital, Kuwait**



Prof. Tawfeq Ben Omran
Senior Consultant and Division Chief, Genetic and Genomic Medicine, **Sidra Medicine and Hamad Medical Corporation, Qatar**; Professor, **Weill Cornell Medical College, Qatar & New York-USA**; Visiting Scientist, **Boston Children's Hospital, USA**



Dr. Vivek Mundada
Consultant Pediatric Neurologist, **Medcare Women and Children Hospital, Dubai, UAE**



Dr. Wadha A. Al-Muftah
Senior Director, Genome Program, **Qatar Precision Health Institute, Qatar**



Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi
Consultant Pediatrician, Inborn Error of Metabolism and Clinical Genetics, Pediatrics Department, **Salmaniya Medical Hospital**; Assistant Professor, Pediatrics Department, **Arabian Gulf University, Bahrain**



Prof. Zuhair Al Hassnan
Professor of Genetics, College of Medicine, **Alfaisal University**; Chairman, The National Committee for Genetic Diseases, **Saudi Health Council**; Consultant, Dept. of Medical Genomics, & Dept. of Translational Genomics, Center for Genomic Medicine, **King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Center, Riyadh, KSA**

CONFERENCE DAY ONE

THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2026

08:00 Registration & Networking
09:00 - 09:10 Opening Remarks by the Conference President & Vice President
Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran
Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi

SESSION I: EARLY DIAGNOSIS, GENOMICS AND RARE DISEASE BURDEN

MODERATORS: Dr. Maryam Al Shehhi, Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi

09:10 - 09:40	The Role of Early Diagnosis and Prevention in Reducing the Burden of Rare Disease	Dr. Ahmed Abou Tayoun
09:40 - 10:00	Genomic and Clinical Profiling of Mitochondrial Disorders in Saudi Arabia: Emerging Lessons and Future Directions	Prof. Fuad Al Mutairi
10:00 - 10:20	State of Rare Diseases in 2025	Dr. Mohammed Almuqbil
10:20 - 10:40	Networking Coffee Break	

SESSION II: PRECISION MEDICINE IN GENETICS AND RARE DISEASES

MODERATORS: Dr. Ahmad Abou Tayoun, Dr. Fuad Al Mutairi

10:40 - 11:10	SCD Gene Therapy in Bahrain from Dream to Reality	Dr. Noora Butti
11:10 - 11:30	Creating the Digital Genome Patient	Dr. Ahmed Alfares
11:30 - 11:50	Glycogen Storage Diseases : Bahrain Experience	Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi
11:50 - 12:10	Precision Paediatric Neurology: When Metabolism Meets Genetics	Dr. Asma Altawari

CONFERENCE DAY ONE

THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2026

SESSION III: UPDATE ON REPRODUCTIVE GENETICS WORKSHOP

MODERATOR: Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran

12:10 - 13:10 Genetic Counselling and Expanded Preconception /Preimplantation Genetic Testing in Consanguineous Population

Ms. Reem Ibrahim Bux
Ms. Sara Jemmieh

13:10 - 14:10 **Networking Lunch Break**

SESSION IV: GENE DISCOVERY TO EARLY SCREENING

MODERATOR: Dr. Noora Butti

14:10 - 14:30 One Gene, Two Brains

14:30 - 14:50 From Gene Discovery to Prenatal and PGD Solutions in Rare Diseases

14:50 - 15:10 A Decade of Newborn Screening in Kuwait: Lessons Learned and Future Directions

15:10 - 15:30 Rett's Syndrome

Dr. Husain Malalla
Dr. Malak Al Ghamdi
Dr. Hind Alsharhan
Dr. Majid Aziz

SESSION V: CANCER GENETICS AND PRECISION ONCOLOGY

MODERATORS: Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran, Dr. Vivek Mundada

15:30 - 15:50 From History to First Answers: Decoding Inherited Risk for Personalized Diagnosis, Therapy, and Prevention in Hereditary Solid Cancers

15:50 - 16:10 Beyond One-Size-Fits-All: Precision Medicine in Cancer Care

16:10 - 16:30 Precision Haematology: Choosing Genomics Wisely Across the Care Pathway from Diagnosis to Transplant

16:30 - 16:50 More Than a Label: The Patient's Experience and Impact

Dr. Reem Al-Sulaiman
Dr. Abeer Al Sayegh
Dr. Amna Gameil
Ms. Hajer Al Mulla

End of Conference Day One

CONFERENCE DAY TWO

FRIDAY, 15 MAY 2026

- 08:30 Registration & Welcome coffee
08:45-08:50 Opening Remarks by the Conference President
Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran

SESSION VI: PLENARY

MODERATORS: Dr. Maryam Busehail, Dr. Osama Aldirbashi

- 08:50 - 09:20 Emerging Next Generation Gene and RNA Therapeutics
09:20 - 09:50 Training in Molecular Genetics and Genomics: Where Do We Stand
09:50 - 10:10 Accelerated and Conditional Approval: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
10:10 - 10:40 SMA Gene Therapy and Kuwait Clinical Experience
10:40 - 11:00 Metabolic & Endocrine Function of the Adipose Tissue: Lipodystrophy as a Pathological Example
11:00 - 11:20 Homozygous Familial Hypercholesterolemia (HoFH) in Pediatrics
11:20 - 11:40 Beyond the Visceral: Exploring CNS Involvement in Gaucher Disease

Prof. Moeen AlSayed
Prof. Zuhair Al Hassan
Dr. Khalid Al Thihli
Dr. Sarah Alenezi

Dr. Asma Deeb

Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran
Dr. Nadia Alhashmi

SESSION VII: ADVANCES IN METABOLIC & CDG DISORDERS

MODERATOR: Dr. Husain Malalla

- 11:40 - 12:10 Metals and Inborn Errors of Metabolism: What We Need to Know
12:10 - 12:30 CDG Syndromes: Advances on Diagnosis and Management
12:30 - 13:45 Friday Prayer and Networking Lunch Break

Dr. Osama Aldirbashi
Prof. Brahim Tabarki Melaiki

CONFERENCE DAY TWO

FRIDAY, 15 MAY 2026

SESSION VIII: PREVENTIVE GENETICS & PRECISION PAEDIATRICS

MODERATORS: Dr. Huda Sadek, Dr. Amna Al Futaisi

- 13:45 - 14:05 Before 'I Do': Shaping Healthier Generations Through Premarital Genetic Screening in the UAE
- 14:05 - 15:05 Bridging PKU Science and Therapy: Disease Overview and Sepiapterin Evidence
- 15:05 - 15:35 Intrathecal Gene Therapy in SMA: Recent Advances and Clinical Perspectives

Dr. Amal Al Tenaiji

Prof. Fatma Aljasmí

Dr. Amal Al Tenaiji

Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran

Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran

Prof. Haitham Elbashir

SESSION IX: ADVANCES NEUROGENETICS & NEUROMETABOLIC

MODERATORS: Dr. Mohammed Almannai

- 15:35 - 15:55 HPP in Clinical Practice: Bahrain Case Studies and What We Learned
- 15:55 - 16:15 The Story of GM2 Gangliosidosis in Kuwait: A Quarter-Century Road to Prevention
- 16:15 - 16:35 Metabolic Stroke in Children: Recognition and Management
- 16:35 - 16:55 A Decade of Novel Gene Discovery in Disabled Children Using Next Generation Sequencing

Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi

Dr. Dana Marafi

Dr. Amna Al Futaisi

Prof. Majid Alfadhel

End of Conference Day Two

CONFERENCE DAY THREE

SATURDAY, 16 MAY 2026

08:15 Registration & Networking

SESSION X: ETHICS AND RARE DISEASE LANDSCAPE

MODERATORS: Dr. Mehtab Iqbal, Prof. Tawfeg Ben Omran

- 08:30 - 08:50 Scaling the Responsible Return of Clinically Actionable Genetic Findings to Research Participants
- 08:50 - 09:20 Islamic Perspectives on the Ethical Management of Incidental Findings
- 09:20 - 09:40 The Future of Rare Disease Care: AI Applications in Metabolic and Genetic Disorders
- 09:40 - 10:00 L-Citrulline Treatment of Nitric Oxide Deficiency in MELAS: A Phase I Dose-Finding and Safety Study
- 10:00 - 10:20 When the Symptoms Don't Add Up: Recognizing Alpha-Mannosidosis Earlier

Dr. Wadha A. Al-Muftah

Prof. Mohammed Ghaly

Prof. Fatma Jasmi

Dr. Mohammed Almannai

Dr. Amal Al Tenajji

10:20 - 10:40 Networking Coffee Break

SESSION XI: ADVANCES IN GENETIC AND MITOCHONDRIAL DISORDERS

MODERATOR: Dr. Nikil Sudarsan

- 10:40 - 11:00 Adan Experience with DEE and Genetic Testing
- 11:00 - 11:20 Mitochondrial DNA Depletion Syndromes
- 11:20 - 11:40 Malformations of Cortical Development: Genotype-Phenotype Correlation

Dr. Sarah Alenezi

Dr. Ayman El Hattab

Dr. Khalid Al-Dasuqi

SESSION XII: PRECISION HEALTH: FROM GENE DISCOVERY TO NATIONAL SCREENING

MODERATORS: Dr. Arif Khan, Dr. Zahra Alsahlawi

- 11:40 - 12:00 Cardio Genetic Service
- 12:00 - 12:20 Bahrain Genome center - Unlocking the Future of Newborn Health
- 12:20 - 13:30 Abstract Presentation & Awarding Ceremony**

Dr. Nadia Alhashmi

Dr. Maryam Busehail

End of Conference Followed by Lunch