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Beautiful smile program: An attempt to address early childhood caries in Qatar

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Dental caries is a significant problem in Qatar. In a recent study we found that 89% of 4-5 years old Qatari children in governmental kindergartens had dental caries most of them had severe form of the disease. This high level of disease prevalence burden necessitates substantial preventive and measures from health authorities especially the Primary Health Care Corporation. The Beautiful Smile Program is a new comprehensive oral health program covering prevention, intervention and health promotion for children aged 1- 5 years old. This program envisions that all children in Qatar are enabled to have good oral health and have access to high quality oral health care. This program aims to create interdisciplinary collaboration between different health professionals in order to improve oral health of children especially during early childhood. The Program seeks to provide appropriate and timely dental treatment to children, in addition to preventing dental problems through education, early detection and appropriate actions by health practitioners at different levels. The program also targets pregnant women in antenatal services through provision of oral health promotion education as part of their routine health care. Services of this program will be provided through well-trained dentists and dental hygienist in collaboration with other health professionals who work in various sections in primary health care centres in Qatar.

Biography

Dr Asmaa Alkhtib holds a Clinical Doctoral degree in Paediatric Dentistry and a PhD in Population Health both from Melbourne University, Australia. Currently Dr Asmaa is the manager of Oral Health in Primary Health Corporation in Qatar. One of her major roles is to implement the Beautiful Smiles Program, a comprehensive oral health program covering prevention, intervention and health promotion for children aged 0-5 years and pregnant women. This program is the first of its kind in Qatar. Her research interests include public oral health especially on children, translational research, and capacity building of dental workforce.

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