
Award of the Down Syndrome Research Prize

1. The Down Syndrome Research Prize was established in 1999. Following the recommendations of the Down Syndrome Prize Committee which met at the Sixty-fourth Session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, the Regional Committee decided to award the prize for 2017 to Dr Salma M. Humaid Al Harrasi (Oman). The prize will be presented to the laureate during the Sixty-fifth session of the Regional Committee in 2018.
2. Dr Salma M. Humaid Al Harrasi is being honoured for her significant contribution to cytogenetics and molecular genetics in Oman, as well as for her 20 years of experience in clinical care of patients with Down syndrome. Dr Al Harrasi graduated from Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, in 1995, and received her MSc from the University of Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in 2003. She was awarded a PhD from the Free University of Berlin and the Institute of Medical Genetics and Human Genetics of the Charité, Berlin, Germany, in 2010.
3. Dr Al Harrasi has been Head of laboratories for the National Genetic Centre at the Royal Hospital, Muscat, since 2015. She was involved in establishing the National Genetic Centre from 2006 to 2013, and also for establishing the national cytogenetic and molecular laboratories. Dr Al Harrasi introduced chromosomal microarray analysis for prenatal diagnosis, including for Down syndrome, and was the first to establish whole-genome microarray-based comparative genomic hybridization at the Centre. She has been a member of the Oman Down Syndrome Association since 2006, and introduced the Down syndrome registry at the National Genetic Centre.
4. Dr Al Harrasi has done extensive research in the field of Down syndrome, and authored *Down syndrome in Oman: etiology, prevalence and potential risk factors: a cytogenetic, molecular genetic and epidemiological study*. She is the co-author of several other publications related to Down syndrome or cytogenetics.