

UAE MEDICAL TOURISM TO GROW BY 15%



According to Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ADCCI), medical tourism is expected to grow 15 percent a year and generate about 1.91 billion U.S. dollars by 2010.

The UAE also wants to attract 1 percent of all medical tourists across the world. They assume that there are some 600 million medical tourists world-wide, therefore the plan is to bring 6 million of them to the UAE.

Riyad Khalil Matar, the General Manager of the ADCCI's information centre said, "We're developing the health care sector, building new communities, hotels and resorts to make the country a favorite destination for medical tourism."

Steps are being taken by the government to boost the medical tourism industry and the ADCCI recommends establishing new hi-tech hospitals, hotels and resorts chains with international and specialist management, building more institutions and medicine factories, and organizing more conferences and medical workshops and training courses.

It is also considering visas for medical tourists and encouraging investments in the medical tourism sector for both local and international investors.

Brazilian Plastic Surgeon, Dr. Luiz Toledo, who is now living in Dubai, claims that "Dubai has the potential to develop into an international centre for plastic surgery". "The trend of patients coming from the West for treatment in Dubai is recent. We are receiving patients, and appointment bookings for August are already done."

There have been huge sums of money invested into medical facilities. Another important facility, Dubai Healthcare City, is scheduled to be opened by 2010. This facility should include a new branch of the Harvard Medical School.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is situated in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula on the Persian Gulf and comprises seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Ajmān, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm al-Quwain. The country's population is around 4.5 million and its capital is Abu Dhabi.

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