

UAE WANTS MORE MEDICAL TOURISTS



The United Arab Emirates aim to become an important medical tourism hub. The industry is, however, very competitive. Numerous developing nations are competing to lure patients to their hospitals. The number one is India. Nevertheless, the UAE officials believe their country will be ready to receive patients with their families.

People would travel here to undergo plastic surgeries, knee replacements or cardiovascular treatment. The officials boast the UAE has highly qualified staff as well as hospitals certified by international agencies. The government has even created a special department for the development of the medical tourism. They are well aware of the benefits that the investments in the medical tourism industry can bring. Undoubtedly, the industry is not only highly competitive it is also highly lucrative. Some experts claim the global medical tourism is worth more than \$50 billion annually.

However, in the past there were several cases of malpractice that damaged the UAE medical sector image. Illegal clinics and uncertified doctors were providing services to the thrifty patients. Some surgeries even took place in hotel rooms or other non-sterile locations. Most of these surgeries were cosmetic or plastic. The results of such procedures were terrible. After a 27-year-old Emirati woman died because of liposuction the government decided to take action. So far, approximately 10 clinics were closed and steps are taken against the non certified doctors. The health Ministry has introduced various spot checks and the health inspectors may now issue warnings, fines, revoke license or shut down facilities.

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