

# Middle East HEALTH

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March-April 2014

[www.MiddleEastHealthMag.com](http://www.MiddleEastHealthMag.com)

## Retooling healthcare in the Arab world

Arab Spring complicates  
changing demands

### Anaesthetic safety concerns

Large study shows increased risk  
of mortality with Etomidate use

### Breast cancer

Study shows Magnetic Resonance Imaging  
Using Ultrasound better for diagnosis

### On the frontline

MERS-Coronavirus kills  
Saudi, UAE health workers

#### In the News

- Medical university, teaching hospital for Dubai Silicon Oasis
- Saudi Aramco, Johns Hopkins Medicine in joint venture
- Mafraq Hospital publishes region's first *Atlas of Hematology*
- Measles deaths reach record lows
- New Global Atlas calls for improved palliative care













# Prognosis

## Open for business

Speaking to medical device manufacturers and healthcare industry service suppliers from around the world at the Arab Health expo in January it was interesting to hear their perspective on doing business in the region. Generally it looks like 2014 is going to be a good year for business, particularly for those involved in the Saudi market. In a massive infrastructure development programme, the Saudi government is continuing to build many new hospitals across the vast desert kingdom, including a number of extensive medical cities. In the private sector there are a number of large, multi-billion dollar, multifaceted infrastructure projects being developed, some of which have healthcare as an anchor project within the development. This points to a massive growth in demand for all kinds of healthcare devices, healthcare IT solutions and hospital management partnerships in the kingdom. It is clear this is the market to be focussed on in this region.

Iraq, too, has massive potential and some companies are bravely venturing into this market, although insecurity continues to plague swathes of the country. Irbil in the north is the exception and appears to have found stability. With huge oil wealth, the government has the funds and is trying to rebuild its healthcare infrastructure. Nonetheless, it remains a place where 'fortune will favour the brave'.

In this issue we publish an interesting article which looks at research from the American University of Beirut on the effect the Arab Spring has had on shifting demands in the regional healthcare sector. It notes that health services in the Arab world are being forced to retool in the face of changing healthcare needs and chronic diseases linked to rising prosperity and ageing populations, even as the region grapples with political turmoil and uncertainty.

And in other news affecting the region, we run a report on the Jeddah Declaration in which Islamic scholars state that Islamic communities must provide safe access for health workers who are vaccinating children against polio. This is an important issue as in several parts of the Arab world, communities, out of fear and ignorance, have blocked, assaulted and even killed health workers who were trying to provide vaccinations for polio. Hopefully this Declaration will go some way to improving the situation.

As always there is more news, new product reviews and interviews in this issue.

Callan Emery

Editor

[editor@MiddleEastHealthMag.com](mailto:editor@MiddleEastHealthMag.com)



### **Publisher**

Michael Hurst  
[michael@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:michael@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Editor**

Callan Emery  
[editor@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:editor@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Editorial and Production**

Trident Media - Middle East  
[www.tridentmedia-me.com](http://www.tridentmedia-me.com)

### **Editorial Consultants**

Dr Gamal Hammad, Dr Peter Moore, Harry Brewer

### **Middle East Editorial Office**

PO Box 825, Dubai, UAE  
Telephone: (+9714) 334 6609  
[editor@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:editor@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Marketing Manager**

Foehn Sarkar  
Telephone: (+9714) 391 4775 || Fax: (+9714) 391 4888  
[marketing@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:marketing@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Subscription & Admin Manager**

Savita Kapoor  
Telephone: (+9714) 391 4775 || Fax: (+9714) 391 4888  
[savita@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:savita@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Advertising Sales**

PO Box 72280, Dubai, UAE  
[marketing@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:marketing@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Americas, France**

Jay Franco,  
3 Erinlea Crescent, Scarborough,  
Ontario M1H 2S8, Canada  
Tel: 1-416-439-5100 || Fax: 1-416-439-0770  
[jfranco@middleeasthealthmag.com](mailto:jfranco@middleeasthealthmag.com)

### **Japan**

Mr Katsuhiko Ishii  
Ace Media Service Inc  
12-6, 4-chome, Adachi-ku, Tokyo 121-0824, Japan  
Tel: +81-3-5691-3335 || Fax: +81-3-5691-3336  
Email: [amskatsu@dream.com](mailto:amskatsu@dream.com)

### **China**

Miss Li Ying  
Medic Time Development Ltd,  
Flat 1907, Tower A, Haisong Building, Tairan 9th Road,  
Futian District, Shenzhen, China 518048  
Tel: +86-755-239 812 21 || Fax: +86-755-239 812 33  
Email: [medic8@medicetime.com](mailto:medic8@medicetime.com)

### **Taiwan**

Larry Wang  
Olympia Global Co Ltd  
7F, No.35, Sec 3, Shenyang Rd, Taichung  
Taiwan 40651 || P O Box: 46-283 Taichung Taiwan 40799  
Tel: +886- (4)-22429845 || Fax: +886- (4)-23587689  
Email: [media.news@msa.hinet.net](mailto:media.news@msa.hinet.net)

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