



Building Sheikh Khalifa

Specialist Hospital

By Jonathan N. Stark and Nadia Tobia, Perkins Eastman International

► INTRO

Despite the allure of celebrities, vast wealth, and a penchant for designing the unimaginable, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is much like any other country in the world and equally susceptible to the growing impacts of a global recession. What makes the UAE unique, and in fact much of the Middle East for that matter, is how they are using this economic predicament as a means to create tremendous opportunity and a more progressive 21st century by infusing incredible amounts of capital into its system of healthcare, the development of renewable, clean energy, and research and development. Even amid all abstract monoliths defining so much of the area's character, there exist basic needs, essential to maintaining a quality of life that everyone expects and deserves in one of the wealthiest and fastest developing regions of the world.

In Abu Dhabi, the Executive Committee for Developing Rural Areas/Ministry of Public Work has been aggressively pushing an agenda that expands the network of healthcare facilities throughout the area providing quality healthcare services to its citizens on par with the world's leading healthcare providers. Perkins Eastman, a world-renowned

architecture and design firm, has played an active role in the committee's ambitious efforts. As one of the largest healthcare firms in the United States, the firm has developed a reputation for quality architectural services that are further enhanced by a tremendous wealth of expertise and support located throughout the firm's network of 13 international and domestic offices. Recently, the firm was selected to design one of their newest, state-of-the-art facilities in one of the seven emirates of the UAE: the Sheikh Khalifa Specialist Hospital in Ras Al Khaimah.

► DESIGN

With one of the largest healthcare practices in the eastern United States and Canada, Perkins Eastman maintains a comprehensive understanding of healthcare design; monitoring emerging trends, and establishing new paradigms and models of care that enrich the human experience throughout the world.

"Each of the facilities we design must provide tremendous flexibility to remain fully functional and accommodate the advances of medical technology and a growing population," explains Nadia Tobia, principal of Perkins Eastman's Toronto-based office. She adds, "We pride

IN SHORT

■ Perkins Eastman were recently selected to design a new state of the art hospital in Ras Al Khaimah.

■ The total building area of the new hospital is 63,000 sq feet.

■ The overall building configuration is designed to support the separation of staff and services from public and patient areas.

■ Sheikh Khalifa Specialist Hospital is expected to be completed by 2011.

ourselves on utilizing progressive planning, architecture, and interior design services to create state-of-the-art healthcare facilities that respond to the technological, operational, and functional demands of the 21st century."

The design of the new Sheikh Khalifa Specialist Hospital is a combination of contemporary and sustainable design incorporating materials such as stone, glass, and metal to create a distinct form that responds to the unique topography of the red undulating desert surrounding the project site. Forming a meaningful relationship with the site was a large source of inspiration for the 248-bed, 63,000 ft² six-story facility, but most importantly, the facility needed to reflect the highest degree of tertiary care standards and the most advanced medical technology, and healthcare planning solutions available. The structure incorporates major specialty program elements including oncology, cardiology, and the area's primary trauma center.

"Medical facilities and hospitals require an exceptional amount of creative thinking and progressive design to address current and future needs, but future-proofing was only part of the design strategy we developed," adds Tobia. As the architectural and engineering industry more appropriately aligns itself with the sustainable design movement

'The new Sheikh Khalifa Specialist Hospital will create a new standard for innovative, patient-centered care, in the UAE



that is gaining traction throughout the world, more and more projects are beginning to take design cues from what is already around them, creating a facility that is at once a benefit to the end-user as well as the planet. More and more, natural scientists are discovering how the human connection to nature or, biophilia, contributes to overall healing and well being by restoring natural balance and positively influencing a person's psychological, physical, and social balance.

Many of the main public spaces - including the patient recovery rooms - are deliberately positioned to provide exposure to the natural surroundings forging a deeper connection to nature that directly contributes to, and even accelerates a patient's recovery. Careful integration of a hospitality inspired interior

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The Hospital Design and Upgrade conference is taking place during Hospital Build Middle East from 14-16th June 2009. The conference is designed to meet all disciplines involved in the healthcare construction and design process that are grappling with the challenges of taking new facilities from launch to operation. To register to attend, visit www.hospitalbuild.com