



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL DUBAI CENTER – FACILITY DESIGN TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION IN A UNIQUE HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

Robert L. Thurer MD, H. Thomas Aretz MD, M. Lesley Wilkins MA, MS, Sana Younis MPH, Abdel Hakim Bishawi, N. Lynn Eckhert, MD, MPH, DrPH, Elizabeth Armstrong MAT, PhD, Harvey Makadon MD, Judith D. Mitchell AIA. Harvard Medical School Dubai Center Institute for Postgraduate Education and Research and Harvard Medical International. Contact information: robert_thurer@hms.harvard.edu

The Harvard Medical School Dubai Center (HMSDC) Institute for Postgraduate Education and Research was established to foster the professional development of physicians, nurses, research scientists, and allied health professionals in the Gulf Region. Launched in 2004 through a joint effort by Harvard Medical International (HMI) and Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC), HMSDC is part of the Government of Dubai's mission to develop DHCC into a center of excellence for health care delivery, medical education, and research. HMSDC will provide innovative curricula for postgraduate medical education, continuing medical education and continuous professional development and training programs for a wide variety of health professionals at DHCC and throughout the Gulf Region. To facilitate these programs, HMSDC is currently constructing a distinctive facility that will include a medical library, simulation center and unique teaching spaces – all designed to coordinate with the environment and curriculum.

The master plan for DHCC reflects a commitment to education by placing HMSDC at the heart of the 82 acre campus. An “education concourse” links the resources of HMSDC with a consumer library, the educational components of the teaching hospital and the conference facilities of a medical hotel to create a venue uniquely tailored to accommodate local, regional and international educational events. The architecture of HMSDC fosters informal learning at every opportunity. Lifeless corridors have been abandoned. Grand stairs invite spontaneous exchanges and exterior spaces are considered part of the learning environment, deliberately shaped to encourage interaction among students and faculty.

Teaching teamwork will be a special challenge since practitioners come from widely divergent backgrounds and training. The simulation center provides an environment to practice team skills in a variety of settings from mock crash sites and ambulances to OR's, inpatient wards and ICU's. Art also plays a central role in the learning environments of HMSDC. Throughout the facility challenging pieces appear in unexpected places designed to provoke discussion and promote awareness of current issues in medicine and well-being.

Current photos, plans and conceptual drawings will be accompanied by dynamic renderings to provide a preview of the HMSDC building scheduled to open in early 2009.