

Cerner and the UAE

Partners to bring technological advances in health care for Vision 2021

Cerner's Middle East and Africa operations are based out of Dubai, where the corporation works to empower clinicians and people with the health care IT of tomorrow, today. It is a global leader in health IT, challenging the boundaries, and pushing past the norms, in order to revolutionise the way the industry works



Vice President and Managing Director, **Bachir Awad**, and General Manager for UAE and Kuwait, **Michael Schelper**, spoke about how they are optimistic about the future of health care and how technology is revolutionising health care services. According to Schelper, Cerner Middle East started in 1992, with their first client being King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Saudi Arabia. "We established our Middle East headquarters in Dubai because we experienced a lot of growth in the region. It was only fitting to make Dubai and UAE our central hub and channel the expertise, particularly in the Middle East," he says. "Thankfully, due to the growth we experienced in the region, we were able to work together with our clients in order to develop the best products."

CERNER'S SYSTEMS ARE USED at more than 27,000 facilities worldwide, with the company having more than 26,000 employees globally. Cerner's health technologies connect people, information and systems around the world; serving the clinical, financial, and operational needs of health care organizations of every size. Like any organisation, Cerner also has competition, however, that isn't a concern

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for Schelper. "The competitive landscape is dominated by three players in the region, however, what sets us apart though is that we have over 25 years of experience in the region, and have developed a lot of the specificities together with our clients for the region," he adds.

CERNER MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA has a multitiered pool of personnel, who have all been locally sourced. "All of our focus in the last seven years has been to build local talent, and Cerner takes pride in that," says Awad.

Both Awad and Schelper are enthusiastic about how technology is transforming the health care experience for the individuals in the United Arab Emirates. "The UAE is leading the way when it comes to digitising the health care industry space keeping the consumer at the centre of the system. The way we receive services is going to change. Just look at the UAE's Vision 2021, which includes improving health care for a smarter city," he says. "The National Unified Medical Record (NUMR) that is being implemented in Dubai will expand this central database function so that it can operate on a nationwide basis. This will make it easier for information to be shared not just within a single institution, but also with all institutions across the UAE."

Cerner is partnering with its clients in the UAE to facilitate their goal of achieving better quality health care as part of the nation's Vision 2021 plan. Both Awad and Schelper talked about the UAE and Dubai, having the capability to leapfrog many developed and developing countries in the health care space, thanks in part to a commitment to using technology to better the lives of its people.

Schelper talked about the advancements in technology, especially the important role of artificial intelligence, now and in the future. According to Schelper, AI will play a great role in changing and redefining the health care industry, and the UAE has already embraced its benefits when it comes to implementation in medical practices. AI is becoming increasingly sophisticated in diagnosing and prescribing treatments for diseases, allowing doctors to focus less on data collection and more on preventive care, as well as the coaching and guiding of their patients.

"Not only do such technologies free up time for practitioners, but they also promote knowledge sharing and more standardized recommendations and feedback, especially for routine ailments like the common cold. Essentially, it takes human error out of the treatment equation," Schelper concludes.

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