Interview: "Dentistry in the Middle East has evolved tremendously in recent years"

Dr. Khawla Humaid Belhoul is the Director of Dubai Dental Clinic (DDC), Dubai HealthCare City Medical, the healthcare vertical of Dubai Healthcare City Authority. She has been leading the clinic’s operations since July 2013. With a Master of Science in Healthcare Management and a Bachelor in Dentistry and Oral Surgery, Dr Belhoul brings an impeccable skillset and a wealth of knowledge to DDC. Her vast experience of more than 20 years in the medical field has been the main driver in her role of managing DDC.

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Thank you very much for the interview.

Dr. Khawla Humaid Belhoul
Director of Dubai Dental Clinic
Dubai Healthcare City Medical

"What is your opinion on dentistry as-a-whole in the region? Is there a need for improvement?"

Dentistry in the Middle East has evolved tremendously in recent years. The region is producing high quality general practitioners and specialists. State of the art equipment and procedures are also being well utilized. However, more emphasis on an evidence based approach in all undergraduate and postgraduate dental degrees is still needed. Also, there is a need for local institutions to conduct high quality publishable re-search in the different disciplines of dentistry.

"What sets the Dubai Dental Clinic apart from the many dental clinics in Dubai, particularly within Dubai HealthCare City?"

Today DDC prides itself on being a multi-specialty service provider and having highly qualified specialists and clinical staff. The clinic has advanced equipment for 3D imaging, CADCAM and Nitrous Oxide. Furthermore, our affiliation with a strong academic institution (MBRU) allows constant improvement in healthcare delivery based on an evidence-based best practice approach. We also have individualized care and continuous feedback to patients starting from their first interaction with the DDC.

"What role does the clinic play in the overall plans of Dubai Health Care City?"

DDC takes part in the overall plans of DHCC through different sectors. In the health sector, we provide quality patient centered dental healthcare services for the residents of Dubai and the region through developing a robust quality assurance mechanism to meet both national and international standards of quality care.

While, in the Health Education and Research sector we are supporting and facilitating specialized clinical training through our partnership with Hamdan Bin Mohammed College of Dental Medicine, the first college under Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine & Health Sciences (MBRU). DDC also supports MBRU’s dental research through providing quality clinical data as well as clinical facility support for MBRU students. The research is conducted in a safe and ethical environment leading to the development and improvement of dental services and technology in the UAE and the broader region.

"What is your take on the overall oral health in the UAE?"

According to many published studies, the prevalence of caries and oral disease in the UAE is higher than other parts of the world. This is partly due to the limited public knowledge and a general lack of awareness about oral health. Therefore, there is a profound need to raise awareness of oral health and how best we can protect our teeth. This can be done through targeted community outreach programs.

Another challenge we face in the UAE is the shortage of highly-qualified dental professionals. Therefore, it is important to focus on the education and training of dental professionals. Through its facility, DDC provides the support required to train the future dental specialists for the UAE and the wider region.

Looking at the fast-paced development within the dental industry, how do you see..."