Adel AlMarshad – General Supervisor of Health & Biotechnology Sectors, Royal Commission for Riyadh City



Riyadh is home to several specialized hospitals and advanced medical centers, positioning it as a potential hub for medical tourism in the region

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Dr Adel AlMarshad, MD MPH serves as General Supervisor for the Health and Biotechnology Sectors at the Royal Commission for Riyadh City (RCRC) as well as Executive Director of Riyadh Megaprojects in Health, Biotechnology, and Medical Tourism. Dr. El Marshad discusses the RCRC's pivotal role in transforming Riyadh into a global hub for healthcare, biotechnology, and life sciences; Riyadh's focus on integrating cutting-edge technologies like CRISPR and AI; expanding medical education; and fostering international partnerships.

What is the Royal Commission for Riyadh City, and how is it driving Riyadh's transformation?

The Royal Commission for Riyadh City (RCRC) is leading the long-term development of Riyadh, overseeing a range of strategic initiatives that contribute to the city's transformation. Its role encompasses urban planning, economic diversification, and infrastructure expansion, ensuring that Riyadh evolves into a globally competitive metropolis. Health, biotechnology, and medical tourism are among the key sectors receiving focused attention, with the aim of integrating innovation and investment to enhance the city's healthcare landscape. Through partnerships, policy development, and investment facilitation, RCRC is working to position Riyadh as a leading center for medical and

scientific advancements in the region.

How does Riyadh contribute to the Kingdom’s broader healthcare and biotechnology transformation within the national strategy?

Riyadh plays a central role in Saudi Arabia’s efforts to strengthen its healthcare and biotechnology sectors. As the capital, it is home to a growing network of medical institutions, research centers, and specialized facilities that align with the broader national strategy to improve healthcare services and drive scientific innovation. The Kingdom’s vision for the sector includes fostering biotech research, digital health solutions, and advanced medical treatments that enhance patient care and contribute to the country’s long-term economic sustainability. Riyadh’s expanding infrastructure and its focus on developing world-class healthcare facilities provide opportunities for both local and international engagement in the sector.

What is your personal role within the Royal Commission for Riyadh City, especially in healthcare and biotechnology?

As General Supervisor of Health and Biotechnology Sectors and Executive Director of Megaprojects in Health, Biotechnology, and Medical Tourism, my role is to oversee and guide the strategic development of these sectors within Riyadh’s broader transformation. I work closely with government bodies, private sector partners, and international institutions to shape policies, attract investments, and ensure that major projects align with Saudi Arabia’s long-term vision. My focus includes expanding research capabilities, strengthening healthcare infrastructure, and advancing biotechnology-driven initiatives that contribute to the overall growth of the sector. Additionally, I support the integration of medical tourism as a key driver for economic and healthcare development, working to enhance Riyadh’s attractiveness as a destination for specialized medical services.

What are the key healthcare priorities for Riyadh, and which areas like access, quality, or cost are you emphasizing?

Healthcare priorities in Riyadh focus on expanding access to specialized services, improving the quality of care, and ensuring long-term sustainability. There is an increasing emphasis on

integrating digital health solutions, AI-driven diagnostics, and advanced treatment options to enhance patient outcomes and improve operational efficiency. Sustainability is also a key consideration, with efforts aimed at optimizing healthcare costs while maintaining high standards of care. As the city continues to expand its healthcare infrastructure, there are ongoing initiatives to strengthen public-private partnerships, enhance research collaborations, and attract top-tier talent to support the sector's growth.

Are you integrating cutting-edge technologies like CRISPR and AI into Riyadh's healthcare ecosystem, and if so, how?

Emerging technologies such as AI, CRISPR, and precision medicine are areas of growing interest within Riyadh's healthcare ecosystem. AI applications are being explored for diagnostics, predictive analytics, and operational efficiencies in medical institutions. Similarly, advancements in genomics and gene-editing research are being discussed within scientific and regulatory frameworks to assess their potential role in enhancing healthcare solutions. As these technologies continue to evolve, there is an increasing focus on developing the necessary infrastructure and regulatory policies to ensure their effective and responsible implementation in the healthcare sector.

What opportunities are there for investors, CEOs, and industry leaders to partner with Riyadh in healthcare and biotechnology?

Riyadh presents significant opportunities for investors, healthcare executives, and biotech leaders looking to engage in medical research, pharmaceutical development, digital health, and hospital infrastructure projects. With the government prioritizing these sectors as part of its national strategy, there is strong support for public-private partnerships, clinical trial initiatives, and advanced manufacturing investments in biotechnology and healthcare. Investors will find opportunities in areas such as medical tourism, hospital management, AI-driven healthcare solutions, and biotech R&D, with Riyadh providing a strong foundation for growth in these fields.

What can you tell us about the state of medical tourism in Saudi Arabia and its growth potential?

Medical tourism is emerging as an area of focus within Saudi Arabia’s healthcare expansion plans. Riyadh is home to several specialized hospitals and advanced medical centers, positioning it as a potential hub for medical tourism in the region. There are ongoing efforts to streamline medical tourism regulations, enhance service offerings, and promote specialized treatments that cater to international patients. With its investment in healthcare infrastructure and its strategic location, Riyadh is working to create an environment that supports the growth of medical tourism as a key sector within the broader economy.

How is Riyadh developing its educational capacity in healthcare and life sciences, as you mentioned earlier?

The development of educational and research capacity in healthcare, biotechnology, and life sciences is a priority for Riyadh’s long-term strategy. Universities and research institutions are working on expanding their medical programs, research funding, and industry collaborations to support the next generation of professionals in these fields. Efforts are also being made to enhance training programs, clinical research initiatives, and partnerships with global institutions, ensuring that Riyadh continues to develop a skilled workforce capable of driving innovation in the sector.

What should our international audience anticipate from Riyadh in the coming years?

Riyadh is in a phase of rapid transformation, with ambitious plans to enhance its position as a leading city for healthcare, biotechnology, and medical research. The coming years will see continued investments in these areas, with an emphasis on innovation, research collaborations, and sustainable growth. There will be increasing opportunities for international partnerships across hospital infrastructure, clinical trials, digital health, and biotech development, as the city works toward becoming a regional center for scientific and medical advancements. For those looking to engage with Riyadh’s evolving landscape, there will be numerous possibilities to collaborate and contribute to its future growth.

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