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PARTNERS' PROJECTS ABROAD

Here, there, everywhere



Bermuda

Date started: 2006/2015

Project Description: Partners launched Bermuda's first Cancer Genetics Risk Assessment Program in collaboration with the Health Insurance Association of Bermuda, the Bermuda Hospitals Board, and the Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre to identify, educate and support women and men at high risk for breast cancer. The relationship was expanded in September 2015 to develop a radiotherapy program, including design of a facility, the creation of clinical radiation oncology policies, procedures and safety protocols and the development of a training and education program.



Malta

Date started: November 2015

Project Description: Partners will join with Vitals Global Healthcare Limited and the Government of Malta in the clinical construction and renovation of St. Luke's Hospital. Partners will also help develop clinical quality and patient safety measures for St. Luke's, Karin Grech Rehabilitation Hospital and Gozo General Hospital, and will provide clinical oversight to a new teaching hospital being opened by Barts School of Medicine and Dentistry.



Saudi Arabia

Date started: 2007

Project Description: Partners began a partnership with Alfaisal University to co-develop a new medical school geared specifically to Saudi Arabia, which included development of a new curriculum. Work on improving medical education within the kingdom continues today.



Lebanon

Date Started: 2005

Project Description: Partners formed a partnership with Lebanese American University (LAU), a private and independent education and research institution in Lebanon. The objective was to evaluate the feasibility of opening a medical school and acquiring an existing hospital. LAU graduated its first class of 23 students from its state-of-the-art medical school in 2013.



Ivory Coast

Date started: October 2015

Project Description: Partners will be building a teaching hospital, and will collaborate with the Université Felix Houphouët-Boigny Abidjan.

Qatar

Date started: 2010

Project Description: Partners entered into a three-year agreement with Hamad Medical Corp. (HMC), Qatar's leading health care system to increase patient safety, reduce medical error, improve efficiency and ensure consistent quality care. Partners HealthCare International extended work with HMC with projects in rehabilitation and post acute care services (March 2009), and later in organizational development (February 2010), quality and patient safety (September 2010) and women's health (October 2012).

Beijing

Date started: 2013

Project Description: Partners signed a five-year agreement with Saint Lucia Consulting, a health and wellness company based in Beijing, to provide patients in China with access to Partners hospitals. Its clients also have access to Partners Cancer Evaluation Service, and eligible patients receive care in Boston.

Shanghai

Date started: 2011/2014/2015

Project Description: Partners kicked off the five-year development of a new greenfield tertiary care hospital in Shanghai in collaboration with a private Chinese investment firm. The hospital plan calls for creating three initial Centers of Excellence - women's health services, cardiovascular medicine and oncology. The relationship was expanded in 2014 with Massachusetts General Hospital to develop a center of excellence in breast cancer at Jiahui International Hospital, and in 2015 with Brigham and Women's Hospital to further a women's health center of excellence at the hospital.

India

Date Started: 2004

Project Description: For over a decade, Partners has implemented initiatives to help transform Wockhardt Hospitals, Ltd. - a leading health care network in India - to improve in four areas - nursing, quality, clinical service enhancement, and facility design. Current initiatives include helping launch a new hospital and enhancing service lines in emergency and cardiovascular medicine.



Doha, Qatar

Date started: 2014

Project Description: Partners collaborated with a team of specialists from the Sumner Redstone Burns Center at Massachusetts General Hospital to help facilitate the relocation of a new Burns Unit at Hamad Medical Corp. in Doha, Qatar, one of several initiatives between the two groups.

Health care WITHOUT BORDERS

THE EXPERTISE THAT LIVES WITHIN BOSTON'S WORLD-RENOWNED HOSPITALS IS BEING EXPORTED TO WHERE DEMAND IS STRONGEST: **OVERSEAS.**

BY JESSICA BARTLETT | jbartlett@bizjournals.com

Dr. Gilbert Mudge, president and CEO of Partners HealthCare International, sat in a brightly lit room last October at the Université Felix Houphouët-Boigny Abidjan in Africa's Ivory Coast and put pen to paper, signing an agreement with the university to develop a new academic medical center.

The partnership was one of several similar deals that Partners committed to last year, from the redesign of health systems in Malta to the construction of hospitals and clinical programs in China.

Collectively, the deals offer insight into an emerging, and many say profitable, frontier for growth at a time when all U.S. health care providers are under mounting pressure to stay solvent. The challenges at home have stemmed from a fast-changing regulatory climate designed to keep health costs in check, a trend that often runs counter to efforts by hospitals and physician groups seeking new revenue that can then be reinvested in talent and cutting-edge technologies.

But the trend in international expansion also is being driven by demand, namely from developing nations eager to integrate the practices and infrastructure of Western medicine to their

local economies.

Partners is not alone when it comes to exporting U.S. health care overseas. In Massachusetts, Lahey Health and Beth Israel Deacon-

ess Medical Center have confirmed that they too are exploring opportunities with foreign partners. Nationally, a slew of prominent providers are following suit, including Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Maryland; New York-Presbyterian Hospital; and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pennsylvania, among others.

"Every academic medical center is under significant financial constraint. The ability to build out one's capability by expanding one's horizons on a global basis makes perfect sense," Mudge said.

PROJECTS ABROAD

Partners has been looking abroad for partnerships for nearly two decades, although the reasons driving that expansion have evolved.

The provider's initial efforts were intended to bring more referrals back to Boston.

However, the program's first, major strategic shift occurred in 2008 when Harvard Medical School International was integrated into Partners, bringing in expertise to consult on projects overseas. Partners Harvard Medical International operated until 2012, when the group ended its affiliation with Harvard and became Partners HealthCare International. PHI has since expanded, both geographically and in total offerings.

The financial incentives to double-down on international expansions are compelling for local care providers. Mudge said revenue from Partners HealthCare International ranges from \$10 million to \$20 million in a given year. Partners' total revenue in 2015 was \$7.3 billion. Projects typically offer a 10-to-25 percent profit margin.

In Malta, the opening of a medical school, a new teaching hospital and the renovation of a third hospital has the potential to generate at least \$600,000 in revenue for Partners. Work in the country may also open opportunities into other European countries.

Work in the Ivory Coast will be more modest, Mudge has said. Partners will help build a \$200 million hospital, funding for which will come from a mix of government accounts and private fundraising. Though less profitable, the work will enable Partners to set new standards for the operation of academic medical hospitals in the region.

"It creates a perfect opportunity," said Steven Thompson, senior vice president and chief business development officer for Brigham and Women's Hospital. "Something that's valued, something we have as an asset, how do we monetize that, and in furtherance of the mission?"

Partners projects also are based in India, Qatar, and Shanghai, China. It also is likely to begin projects in two more Chinese cities – Chongqing and Nanjing – to design new hospitals and refine business plans.

Mudge said Partners' presence in foreign countries can vary in scale, depending on the scope of services. For example, Partners used a total of 183 people to build a hospital in Jiahui International Hospital in Shanghai.

Supporting international efforts is a staff of 30 people at 100 Cambridge St. in Boston, along with independent representatives in Beijing, Dubai and Bermuda.

Most projects take years to materialize. Brigham and Women's Hospital, a subset of Partners, in partnership with Dana-Farber Cancer Institute is collaborating with Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre to design and develop a radiotherapy program on the island. Discussions to bring such a program to Bermuda have been ongoing for three to four years, and have stemmed from a longer-term relationship Partners has had bringing physicians to the island. Radiation programs will be built from scratch on the island, with three to four people at Partners in some sort of oversight role. The project is expected to generate less than \$1 million in revenue for Partners.

Island officials say work with Partners makes sense. "We're not interested in just hiring a sin-



W. MARC BERNSAU

Linda A. Moulton, CEO of the Executive & International Health program, Lahey Hospital & Medical Center

gle consultant to oversee a function. It's us being able to tap into that broad range of expertise," said Tara E. Soares, director for the Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre.

Lahey Health officials said the care provider has been engaged with various international projects for 25 years, but in September created a new position – CEO of its Executive & International Health program – and appointed Linda Moulton to the role.

Moulton said her goal is to look at international partnerships more strategically, and approach international growth as a business more than an ancillary medical service. Today, Lahey has partnerships with groups in Bermuda, Canada and Jordan, where it has been advising a Women's Health Center that opened in December.

Moulton said Lahey isn't paid as a consultant through the Jordan program, but is paid for referrals and second-opinion consultations. Other Lahey projects in the early stages of development include partners in the Caribbean and Latin America. "Everyone is looking at how to diversify revenue streams. Our driver is the extension of the Lahey brand ... to raise the visibility and reputation of Lahey," Moulton said.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center also is making a foray abroad with a new agreement involving its Harvard Medical Faculty Physicians unit and the World Health Organization. The deal initially will involve building software to connect expectant mothers with health providers in remote areas of Chile and Argentina.

"Some of these emerging nations, like Bra-



W. MARC BERNSAU

Steven J. Thompson, senior vice president and chief business development officer at Brigham and Women's Hospital

zil, Chile and Colombia, their governments are spending millions modernizing their health care infrastructure," said Dr. Yuri Quintana, director of Global Health Informatics at BIDMC, who is spearheading the WHO initiative. "There are funds available at these countries. There is an opportunity for advising these countries, beyond the grants."

WHERE OPPORTUNITY LIES

According to Thompson, as more countries gain wealth, and as the Internet opens understanding of modern medicine, more countries are seeking total overhauls of their health systems.

"Despite the black eye U.S. health care gets from a financing standpoint, ironically, the way health care is delivered is the envy of people all over the world," said Thompson, who worked at Johns Hopkins developing international partnerships before joining the Brigham last year. He said the biggest opportunities are in the Middle East, Asia and South America.

Mudge said Partners anticipates opportunities to replicate its ongoing project in Malta – where Partners is redesigning the country's health care through hospital renovation and development – in other European countries. While certain regions want help developing more general health care, there is also a broadening need to bring geriatric services and rehabilitation services abroad, Mudge said.

Added BIDMC's Quintana: "I think this will be an opportunity not only for BIDMC, but as these markets grow, it's one of the major areas of growth for the private sector as well."