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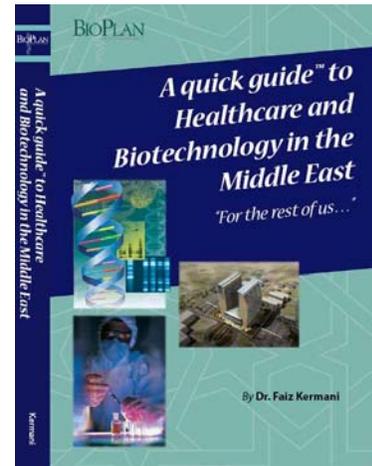
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New Book Reveals the Middle East's Exceptional Pharma Potential

May 5, 2009 (Rockville, MD) – Until recently, the Middle East has accounted for a fraction of global pharmaceutical sales; BioPlan's newly released *A Quick Guide™ to Healthcare and Biotechnology in the Middle East* shows that dramatic change is underway.

“Traditionally, the Middle East has been low on the agenda of the pharmaceutical industry, due to the strong growth in the US, European and Japanese markets,” comments Dr Faiz Kermani, the book's author. “But the slowdown and cost containment pressures in these markets have persuaded the pharmaceutical industry to move further afield. The total Middle East regional value is around US\$10.6 billion, and growing rapidly, so multinational pharmaceutical companies can no longer ignore the region's huge potential.”



The future Middle Eastern pharmaceutical market will depend on the purchasing power of people in individual countries and the governments' efforts to reform healthcare. Due to varying socio-economic conditions and political developments across the Middle East, it is entirely conceivable for companies to find opportunities for products in almost every therapeutic area.

“The disease profile across the region varies, with countries possessing high quality health care systems having seen a decline in infectious diseases but a dramatic rise in non-communicable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes,” adds Dr Kermani. “Increasingly sedentary lifestyles leading to obesity are contributing to this trend and new medical therapies will be needed to deal with these conditions.”

The high demand for premium products has led to multinational companies' dominance in the Middle East. In the past such companies have worked through regional agents, but many are now making their presence felt through high profile moves into the region.

“Despite the wealth of opportunities, pharmaceutical companies still need to be aware of the region's dynamics,” cautions Dr Kermani. “This is still very much an emerging market and you have to do your homework. For example, there is a strong demand for branded products in the Middle East, but the local regulatory bodies often have very different requirements, and companies must be familiar with them to have any chance of success.

“A quick guide™ to Healthcare and Biotechnology in the Middle East” is available from BioPlan Associates, Inc., Rockville, MD 20850. Tel: 301-921-5979 (<http://www.bioplanassociates.com>)

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