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 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Eleven Primary Healthcare Centers Near Completion in Basrah

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BASRAH, Iraq - Eleven Primary Healthcare Centers (PHC), designed and built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region South district, to provide essential medical care to the Iraqi people, are scheduled for completion by July 2007 in the Basrah province of southern Iraq.

"The new PHCs will offer much more than a standard health clinic for the Iraq people because they will improve the preventative care and medical services in Iraq," said Thomas Edison, chief of engineering and construction with the GRS district.

"The health centers include a pharmacy, a dental area, and an x-ray facility. Some have maternity facilities and a modern fire alarm system," he said. "They are of high quality and have an attractive design using creative architectural details."

"We [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers] believe that the PHCs will make health care much more accessible for the people of Iraq and readily accessible quality health care will improve the health of all the Iraqi people," Edison said.

Engineer Stanley Dowdy, Basrah Area Office, GRS, explained that GRS officials estimated each PHC is expected to serve between 100,000 to 250,000 patients each year.



The Al Qurna Primary Health Care Center, one of the eleven PHCs designed and built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Al Basrah province in southern Iraq. (Photo by A. Al Bahrani)

"I've got two PHCs in the area that are nearly finished - one in Az Zubair and one in Al-Qurna," Dowdy said. "Both PHCs will be finished within the next two months."

"We also have separate contracts for equipment and medical supplies to furnish those centers," Dowdy said.

The cost for each healthcare center costs approximately \$500,000 to \$600,000, according to a GRS project engineer Jermias De Dios.

According to him, training is required for all personnel who will occupy these clinics. "We are working with the Iraqi Ministry of Health about providing or dedi-

cating staff to operate these systems so that these clinics will remain operational.

“Once completed, the clinics will relieve the overburdened outpatient care currently provided by older hospitals and reduce infant mortality by at least 25 percent nationwide. Also they can make a big difference towards substantially improving the overall health of the Iraqi population,” De Dios said.

An Iraqi engineer with the Basrah Area Office said that the construction of these facilities makes an important initial step for community healthcare. “All eleven PHCs will save Iraqi lives, provide family healthcare services at the neighborhood level and employ more for healthcare professionals,” he said.

“People throughout Basrah province will find it much easier to access quality health care at local PHCs,” he added

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