

10 Years On:

A Unified Voice and Vision for Ethical Standards in MedTech Innovation Across The Region

Article provided by Mecomed

Mecomed, the trade association for medical devices, imaging and diagnostics for the Middle East and Africa region, was established over 10 years ago with a clear purpose: to unify the region's MedTech industry – their vision and efforts, to create a compliant and regulated marketplace. This purpose was set to accomplish a much larger vision – of making sure patients have timely access to the safest and most innovative healthcare technologies.

With this forming the heart of their endeavors, Mecomed set out to shape the industry by rallying healthcare stakeholders to foster good citizenship by ensuring ethical business behaviour, encourage value-based healthcare and work proactively with governments to improve the quality of people's health.

Headed by Chairman, Rami Rajab and comprising a core team, Mecomed hosted a networking breakfast during Arab Health to showcase some of the key achievements and aspirations of the association.

The ever-growing body of around 40 multinational companies, which covers Middle East and Africa, has been working tirelessly to forge reliable partnerships with governments, healthcare organisations and other key stakeholders to bring the highest international standards and technology to the regional healthcare landscape.

What can perhaps be considered a crowning glory is the implementation of the new Code of Ethical Business Practice for the region at the start of 2018. Developed in line with the principles used by Global



Medical Technology Alliance, the code has brought about major changes by increasing transparency and regulating all aspects of the industry's interaction with Healthcare Professionals (HCPs) and Healthcare Organizations (HCOs), including company-organized events, arrangements with consultants, research, and financial support to medical education. It has banned the direct sponsorship of HCPs by any MedTech member company at healthcare events and conferences and has encouraged them to support medical education without advertising themselves or influencing HCPs.

The Conference Vetting System (CVS), implemented by Mecomed in collaboration with Ethical MedTech, assesses all third-party medical events to ensure compliance with set guidelines, that have been created to guarantee uniformity,

transparency and increased quality of content. The system has also trained close to 2,000 professionals across multiple countries in the region, to raise awareness, educate them and encourage them to adhere to these principles. The positive reaction of both authorities and PCOs, and the increasing number of conferences being vetted by the system are a testament to the recognition of its effectiveness in ultimately protecting the patient.

Moreover, Mecomed works closely with authorities to drive regulatory harmonization and offer support with reviewing and implementing new regulations and guidelines. The team assesses these guidelines to help draft the right scope, ensure they meet the international standards and reflect the latest global regulatory developments, and introduce new technologies and innovations

in the market, swiftly and safely. They also help in providing relevant experts as speakers and trainers for events, conferences or trainings, to ensure quality education of attendees and participants.

"We are one voice with one aim: to ensure the best patient outcomes in a safe and ethical way. It is our duty as the region's trade association to make sure that all MedTech companies and their affiliates work towards earning patients' trust, by adhering to the highest and most ethical standards of healthcare practice. It is our responsibility to work closely with government authorities to help provide the guidelines, processes and support to our members, to deliver the very best in healthcare – be it through education, innovation or sound regulation," said Rami Rajab, Chairman of Mecomed.