



Mansoor Ahmed

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Asset Based Valuations Adviser of the Year

ABOUT MANSOOR AHMED

Mansoor Ahmed is a Director at Colliers International MENA for Development Solutions, Healthcare, Education and PPP. He has over seventeen years of experience in consulting and applied economic research at Colliers International, Ernst & Young, Andersen Consulting Worldwide, and Manazel Real Estate PJSC in the areas of Business / Strategic / Operational Planning and Transformation, Economic, Market and Financial Feasibility Studies, Asset and Business Valuations, Due Diligence, Private Equity and Operators Search & Selection. He is an Economist with double Master, Masters in Applied Economics and Master in Science.

FIRM PROFILE

Colliers International is a Global Commercial Real Estate Leader with more than 15,000 skilled professionals operating in 68 countries. What sets us apart is not what we do, but how we do it. Our enterprising culture encourages Colliers people to think differently, share great ideas and create effective solutions that help clients accelerate their success. Colliers International is the advisor of choice for many of the world's most innovative and successful companies.

What makes Colliers Education and Healthcare Advisory & Valuation Services unique? How are you different when compared to your peers?

Colliers specialist services team combines two components of the Healthcare & Education landscape; the physical asset (Property Company - "Prop Co") and the business (Operational company - "Op Co") of education. With a team of professionals that are solely dedicated to education and healthcare our team brings experience, understanding and through this the convergence of investors and operator's requirements. We achieve these through forward-thinking solutions to the challenging healthcare and education-related decisions, where success is measured in high-quality service delivered in a cost-effective way.

Our services encompass; strategic advice on new concepts, expansion strategies, market and financial feasibility studies, operational performance benchmarking, business plan creation, development and operational cash flows, sourcing of debt, equity, operators and investors, and property and business valuations, PropCo / OpCo models and negotiation, management agreements leasing and sales to property & asset management.

Tell us a bit about your career path. What have been some of your biggest accomplishments to date?

I started my career during the final years of my Master degree in Applied Economics. I was teaching economics to undergraduate and postgraduate students, before joining Andersen Consulting as a management consultant in Pakistan. In 2001 I moved to Ernst & Young, Abu Dhabi working in Transaction Advisory for over 8 years, focusing on feasibility studies, M&A, debt and equity advice, valuation and fund raising, before joining one of the leading real estate developer leading their strategy division.

The biggest break in my career came in 2010, when I was asked to set-up Healthcare, Education and PPP at Colliers International across the MENA region. A part of Colliers MENA strategy was to diversify into new sectors and provide both real estate and business advisory. Since then, there has been no turning back. With the support of the management, we are now ranked as one of the leading advisors in the healthcare, education and infrastructure sectors, not only in the MENA region, but also in Asia.

Why healthcare and education assets have become so popular in the recent past?

Although, both healthcare and education are social infrastructure sectors, they are now seen as legitimate asset classes in their own right, and with this recognition, the demand from institutional and private sectors continues to grow. From the global economic crisis through to more recent regional economic pressures, both the traditional real estate and local bourses offered limited scope to the investor and regional funds. Healthcare and education projects supported by strong demand demographics rapidly attracted funds and private investors looking towards new avenues of investment. In the last few years the healthcare and education sectors have seen tremendous growth and have been one of the few sectors that have not actually been adversely affected by the downturn. This perceived immunity to economic cycles has made some view these sectors as being 'recession-proof'.

What is unusual is that healthcare and education projects are considered as traditional 'defensive (inflationary) plays' in many institutional global markets, offering low but firm yields. In the MENA region, the benefit is that these sectors retain their safe haven status, while providing returns that would usually fall in the opportunistic category. Prior to 2009, the region was best known for the number of real estate master plans with off-plan residential sales that were in motion. Following the abrupt cessation of sales as a direct impact of the financial crisis, this left many real estate developers struggling to attract those purchasers still in the market, and the even-more limited availability of development finance.

The healthcare and education sectors, for which finance options are available, brought many developers in the region and two immediate benefits: people want to live where there are schools and hospitals, and the emergence of sale and leaseback options to institutional investors as a means to access difficult-to-find cash.

What is the current state of the healthcare and education sectors in the UAE, in terms of M&A? What do you think the next 12-24 months hold for the sectors?

After Mediclinic's acquisition of Al Noor Hospital in Feb 2016 for £1.4 billion (\$2.2 billion) and NMC Hospital acquisition of Al Zahra Hospital for £444 million (\$560 million) in December 2016, in the next 12-24 months we don't expect another major merger in the region. However, the main operators are looking for acquisition of second-tier healthcare businesses that have growth potential.

In the education sector, I believe that most of the investment will be in real estate assets through sales and leaseback mode.

