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## Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office: Turkish Physio Firm Headed to the Emirates

**Dubai - Apr 10, 2014:** PineBridge Investments, a New York asset manager, has acquired half of the Turkish physical therapy and rehabilitation firm Romatem, and plans to open branches in the UAE.

“The plan is to expand the chain across Turkey and bring it to the Gulf countries,” Talal Al Zain, the chief executive of PineBridge, told Reuters.

PineBridge described the expansion as “at an early stage”.

“There is a clear opportunity to expand the Romatem business [in the UAE] to meet the growing demand for specialised services,” said Wael Aburida, the chief investment officer at PineBridge Middle East. “The UAE is looking to become a key hub for medical tourism in the region.”

The company will be evaluating several locations in the country, alongside sites in Saudi Arabia.

Romatem, which currently has four branches in Turkey, provides a range of physiotherapeutic treatments, including vacuum therapy for lymphedema, and robotic rehabilitation treatment for upper extremity disorders.

“There is a current unmet demand for rehabilitation and physiotherapy services in the UAE,” Mr Aburida said. “Romatem would be well positioned to offer these specialised healthcare services to meet the needs across the country and for medical tourists coming to Dubai.”

This follows the expansion of the Abu Dhabi investment firm Waha Capital to expand into the healthcare business, with its purchase of the medical operator Anglo-Arabian Healthcare last year, alongside a bullish prognosis for the industry.

The introduction of mandatory health insurance in Dubai and a push towards medical tourism in the emirate are likely to create new business opportunities in the city, which recently announced that it is looking to attract 500,000 medical tourists a year by 2020.

“The decision by the emirate of Dubai to require universal healthcare will be beneficial,” Mr Aburida said.

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### **About Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office:**

The Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office in Dubai is the official representative of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism. One of the main aims of the Tourism Office is to bridge the gap between cultures and foster relationships with the travel industry by organising promotional activities throughout the GCC. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism participates in travel exhibitions and conferences to position the country as a leading tourist destination. With its breath-taking views, unique historical and archaeological sites, steadily improving hotel and



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touristic infrastructure and a tradition of hospitality and competitive prices, it's no wonder Turkey is among the most sought-after travel destinations in the world.

The primary functions of The Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office in Dubai are:

- Supervises all promotional activities relating to Turkey in the GCC
- Liaise with travel agencies
- Organises roadshows to further promote Turkey as a destination for leisure, shopping, health, sports and invest in the MICE (meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions) Middle East market.

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