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Sun City West, Ariz. © Al Payne.
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A FULL SLATE

As the medical office industry has grown up, so has its yearly calendar of conferences and seminars

By John Mugford

There was a time not too long ago, perhaps in the late 1990s, when it would have been almost pointless to have a national real estate conference focused solely on medical office buildings (MOBs).

“No one would have shown up because for all intents and purposes the medical office industry didn’t exist,” says Philip J. “P.J.” Camp, a principal with New York-based Shattuck Hammond Partners LLC. Mr. Camp has been advising and assisting health systems with the sale, or monetization, of their medical office buildings since the 1990s.

However, by the year 2002 there was enough of an MOB industry to host a conference – or at least a panel discussion – focused solely on healthcare real estate. In fact, that year, BOMA International held its first Medical Office Buildings and Healthcare Facilities Seminar in San Francisco. According to some pioneers in the industry who attended that discussion, about 30 people gathered for the event, which is still considered to be the first conference to focus solely on medical office.

How things have changed.

Since then, the industry has grown by leaps and bounds. It has attracted many major institutional investors, and these days there are numerous real estate companies, developers, investment banking firms, investment funds, syndications, and real estate investment trusts (REITS) focused almost entirely on the medical office sector.

Hand in hand with this growth has been a significant growth in the number of conferences and seminars focused solely on healthcare real estate. Take a look at the calendar of events we’ve published on the facing page. Ten years ago, healthcare real estate professionals – the few who focused only on the industry – would have been quite surprised to see such a full slate of healthcare real estate seminars and conferences.

Sure, not all of the conferences listed are devoted solely to medical office, but many have at least one or more panel discussions or seminars concerning the topic.

The growth of BOMA’s annual MOB conference has mirrored the growth in the industry. Since that first panel discussion in San Francisco, BOMA’s healthcare conference, which now takes place over two days, typically attracts more than 400 participants and includes at least 15 separate panel discussions.

In the last couple of years, several other organizations have joined in with their own conferences. Some of the newcomers include the InterFace Conference Group, which is part of Atlanta-based France Publications Inc. InterFace is planning two MOB conferences in 2010. Also, New York-based GreenPearl is holding a one-day MOB conference in New York City in March. There are certainly other events, as shown in the calendar.

As far as Mr. Camp and other industry professionals are concerned, the seminars and conferences provide value because the session topics reflect what’s taking place in the industry at any given time. For example, at conferences in 2009 there were plenty of panel discussions and informational sessions regarding the economy and how to access capital. Recently, several conferences included presentations and discussions concerning what healthcare reform could mean for hospitals and healthcare real estate firms.

“The conferences are a good chance for people in the industry to get together, network, discuss what’s topical, share war stories, and learn from other professionals what’s taking place,” says Mr. Camp. “And health system and hospital executives tell me they enjoy themselves when they attend, as they learn plenty about the industry and get to network as well.”

Gordon Soderlund, an EVP with Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.-based Dasco Cos., says 2010 will be an interesting year for healthcare real estate and for topics at BOMA’s healthcare real estate conference. Mr. Soderlund is co-chair of BOMA’s MOB conference.

“With healthcare reform pending, the credit markets loosening and transactions beginning again,” he says, “we expect that the conference will generate some great dialogue about all of these issues.” □

CALENDAR OF 2010 HEALTHCARE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION
March 14-17	2010 International Conference and Exhibition on Health Facility Planning, Design and Construction (PDC)	ASHE / AIA (American Institute of Architects) (American Society for Healthcare Engineering)	San Diego
March 17-20	2010 Annual Conference	AMGA (American Medical Group Assoc.)	New Orleans
March 22-25	2010 Congress on Healthcare Leadership	ACHE (American College of Healthcare Executives)	Chicago
March 25	InterFace Medical Office West	InterFace / France	Los Angeles
March 30	The Office Summit & Medical Office Symposium	GreenPearl.com	New York
April 13-14	Hospitals and Health Systems: Improving Profitability and Business and Legal Issues	Becker's Hospital Review	Chicago
April 14-16	2010 Spring Council Forum	ULI (Urban Land Institute)	Boston
May 5-7	Medical Office Buildings & Healthcare Facilities Conference	BOMA (Building Owners & Managers Assoc.)	Chicago
June 10-12	2010 National Convention and Design Expo	AIA (American Institute of Architects)	Miami
June 20-23	2010 ANI: The Healthcare Finance Conference	HFMA (Healthcare Financial Management Assoc.)	Nashville
July 22-24	18th Annual Leadership Summit	Health Forum / AHA (American Hospital Assoc.)	San Diego
July 27-29	North American Commercial Real Estate Congress and The Office Building Show	BOMA (Building Owners & Managers Assoc.)	Long Beach
Aug. 2-5	47th Annual Conference and Technical Exhibition	ASHE (American Society for Healthcare Engineering)	Anaheim
Sept. 12-15	2010 Annual Educational Conference & Exhibits	SHSMD (Society for Healthcare Strategy & Market Development)	Chicago
Sept. 30-Oct. 2	23rd Annual Symposium on Healthcare Design	JD Events	Chicago
Oct. 12-15	2010 Fall Meeting and Urban Land Expo (might create a medical Policy and Practice Priority Area)	ULI (Urban Land Institute)	Washington DC
Oct. 24-27	2010 Annual Conference	MGMA (Medical Group Management Assoc.)	New Orleans
Oct. 26-29	2010 Annual Conference (sometimes offers sessions on medical office)	NAIOP (National Assoc. of Industrial & Office Properties)	Orlando



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