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## *Basra neighborhood very pleased with newly opened Primary Healthcare Clinic*

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Physicians Assistant Ghanim gives an immunization to a toddler at the newly opened primary healthcare center in Basra's al-Risala neighborhood. One of the goals of the staff is to help reduce Iraq's high infant mortality rate. (USACE photo by A. Al Bah-

**BASRA, Iraq**—Thousands of residents in the al-Risala neighborhood in Basra no longer have to walk or drive up to 20 kilometers to get medical care for their families.

The Iraqi Ministry of Health opened a new primary healthcare center there in July.

Dr. Alia Al-Hassan, the clinic administrator said, "We're providing healthcare to about 300 patients daily, newborns to the

elderly. This community, which has been neglected for a long time, is thrilled to have this new, modern medical facility." She pointed out they currently have a staff of 40 personnel. "We hope to increase that number in the near future to offer additional medical services."

Physician Assistant Hussein Na'ma said the new healthcare center features state-of-the-art equipment and for some patients "it's the first time their families have



A newly-opened primary healthcare center in Basra's al-Risala neighborhood is seeing an average of 300 patients daily. Residents there say the new local facility means they no longer have to walk or drive up to 20 kilometers to seek medical care. (USACE photo by A. Al Bahrani)

had access to preventive medical services, as well as certain high tech services ."

James Hodges, Gulf Region Division construction representative, said, "It's great to see their smiles of appreciation. They are very happy to finally have local access to comprehensive medical care."

Gulf Region Division, which has built six other healthcare centers in Basra Province, has three additional ones under construction. "These projects are seen as a very positive thing, especially since they affect the lives of the people so directly," Hodges said.

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