

Engen continues Driver Wellness campaign in Harrismith

After the launch of the Engen Driver Wellness campaign in the Eastern Cape in October 2011, Engen - in partnership with Trucking Wellness, the Department of Roads and Transport and the Department of Health - continued the wellness drive when they visited the Engen Highway Junction in Harrismith, Free State earlier this month.



The Driver Wellness initiative is aimed at raising awareness around health issues that have a direct impact on road safety by helping drivers to manage their wellness better. In 2011 more than 400 drivers were screened at four Engen Truck Stop sites.

The Wellness Days run from Engen truck stops and some retail sites, targeting long distance truck drivers, who are sometimes on the road for up to two weeks at a time. In mobile clinics qualified nurses and counsellors screen drivers and the public for blood pressure, diabetes, tuberculosis, BMI (Base Mass Index) and HIV/AIDS. They provide counselling and a referral service where required.

Creating awareness

"At Engen, we believe it is pertinent to be part of these efforts to create awareness about the well-being of drivers in general and truck drivers in particular as the engine of the economy. We are pleased to continue playing a role in informing, educating and raising awareness of the impact of these chronic diseases on road safety and also encouraging those that are healthy to maintain their healthy lifestyle and take adequate precautions moving forward," says Khanyisa Balfour, group corporate social investment manager at Engen.

Last Wednesday evening the (between 6pm-11pm) was no different, at the Engen Highway Junction in Harrismith as truck drivers voluntarily underwent screening tests for diabetes, hypertension and HIV and AIDS. This Truck stop is one of many stops around the country where the drivers rest overnight, after spending long hours on the road during the day. "It is reassuring to note that of the 119 drivers that were screened more than 50% voluntarily tested for HIV" added Balfour.



Truck drivers being tested.

Kudos from Keke

Present at this Driver's Wellness Day and to officially set the campaign in motion in the Free State was Keke Ntsala, the director for special programs in the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.



Nurses and counsellors screen drivers for a range of conditions.

"I applaud Engen, Highway Group and CEP (Corridor Empowerment Project) for taking up the fight against HIV/AIDS and other health pandemics including the equally vital issue of good nutrition to the level that is the nerve centre of our economy - the transport industry and our mainly truck drivers," says Ntsala.