

Tshwane clinic receives diabetes mobile clinic

The Bongi Ngema-Zuma Foundation, an NGO working to create awareness about diabetes, has handed over a fully-equipped Changing Diabetes Bus to the Winterveldt Mercy Clinic north of Tshwane. The event was held to mark World Diabetes Day, which is held annually on 14 November to promote understanding of this chronic condition. The multi-million rand mobile facility was donated to the foundation by Novo Nordisk, and the foundation has, in turn, donated it to Mercy Clinic in order to cement the relationship between the two organisations.



"Mercy Clinic serves a community in which there is a high rate of unemployment and many socio-economic challenges," said foundation founder, First Lady Bongi Ngema-Zuma, speaking at the event. "It provides healthcare services to 200 patients a day and has several outreach programmes, but is experiencing serious capacity problems. It is our hope that this state-of-the-art facility will help the clinic to address some of these challenges as they relate to diabetes."

Approximately 370 million people worldwide are living with diabetes, and that an estimated 6.5 million - approximately 14% of the adult population - are to be found in South Africa. Only about half of these have been diagnosed, and of those, only half are receiving any form of treatment.

"People living with diabetes can expect to live long, healthy and active lives," said Madam Ngema-Zuma, "but diagnosis, treatment and long-term management are essential if this is to happen."

According to Dr Timmy Kedijang, General Manager of Novo Nordisk South Africa, the number of people living with diabetes is expected to double by 2030, both at home and around the world. This growing epidemic is linked to rapid urbanisation, increasingly inactive lifestyles, unhealthy eating habits and rising levels of obesity, all of which increase the risk of developing diabetes.

So serious is the situation, in fact, that the number of South Africans living with the condition is expected to outstrip the number of people living with HIV/Aids in 20 years' time.

"Our concern is that many people who may be living with diabetes are unable to identify the symptoms, or are unable to access free testing," said Madam Ngema-Zuma. "It is therefore our hope that the Changing Diabetes® Bus will reach many

of those who usually have only limited access to healthcare facilities, and will provide them both with both primary testing and vital education about the condition."

For further information on the Bongzi Ngema-Zuma Foundation, visit www.bnzfoundation.org.za. For further information on diabetes and treatment options for people living with the condition, visit www.novonordisk.com.

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