

Nelson Mandela Bay awards R1 million to Discovery Health

Discovery Health has recently been awarded R1 million by the Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) Metro as a result of the investment that the company has made in the metro by opening its Health Service Centre in the Coega Industrial Development Zone in November 2011.

The initiative from the NMB Metro is relatively new and the award to Discovery is the first one of its kind. The incentive is aimed at attracting and encouraging new investments and expansion into the region. The reasons are clear and are that of job creation and economic growth. Additionally, new investments will help grow the municipality's revenue. The minimum qualifying criteria for this incentive is a new investment of R10 million or more and 50 new jobs in the region.

The opening of the service centre has created sustained employment opportunities and development within the NMB Metro with employment figures that have grown from a staff complement of 60 when it opened to 336 currently. This figure is expected to grow to 400 at the end of 2012.

Steady rise in employment

"We are ecstatic to have seen the steady rise in employment within the Coega Industrial Development Zone, mainly as a result of continued investment by the private sector, such as Discovery and the continued support from local government. The potential for massive, sustainable job creation in the region is unlimited as we have the necessary infrastructure in place, we just need more investors," said Ayanda Vilakazi, head of marketing and communication at Coega.

The service centre is responsible for servicing the Discovery Health membership base and key stakeholders, across a virtual call centre and operations platform functioning nationally. Services include call centres, general administration, correspondence and escalation query management, billing and credit control, concierge/high touch services as well as relationship management teams for both health care providers and corporate clients. It is believed that the facilities offered by the Coega Development Corporation are truly world class and at a competitive price that benefits all the stakeholders in the region.

"At Discovery, we see great value in private/public partnerships that give way to sustained economic and social imperative that are of national and global concern. Our commitment is to uphold and promote our core purpose through providing products that meet the needs of our members, job creation and corporate social investments in the region. To that end we have invested in excess of R5 million on training and development at Coega in the last 18 months," said Dr Ayanda Ntsalul executive director of Discovery Holdings.

Poverty, unemployment and inequalities

"Nelson Mandela Bay Metro is not immune to the challenges that are facing our country today, those being the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequalities. It has become fundamental that Nelson Mandela Bay Metro forges strong strategic partnerships, particularly with the private sector, in order to deal with these challenges. The partnership with Discovery is a shining example and testimony to now more than 300 young people employed in this region. In simple terms, Discovery has put food on the tables of more than 300 people in this region. This region and province has a high dependency ratio of 1:7, which means that one person who gets a job will directly or indirectly help support seven people. And this means poverty eradication to communities," commented Councillor Zanoxolo Wayile, Mayor of the NMB Municipality.

Discovery will reinvest the R1 million rebate into its operations in the Eastern Cape to contribute further to the core purpose of making people healthier and protecting and enhancing their lives on an economic and social level. It is Discovery's aim to make a difference in the communities that it operates in and this is why it will continue to give funding and support the community.

The region is of huge strategic and social importance to Discovery and it will continue to invest in the Eastern Cape and its people.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>