

# Alberton's new hospital taking shape

The new Netcare Alberton Hospital, which is currently under construction on the grounds of the former Newmarket racecourse, south of Johannesburg, is taking shape.



Source: Supplied

Construction of the state-of-the-art facility is at an advanced stage and the hospital is expected to open its doors to patients in April next year.

Earthworks to prepare the site for construction of the eagerly awaited facility began in April 2019, and approximately 117 000m<sup>3</sup> of soil was removed from the site over some seven months. More than six million bricks have been laid to date, and the new building will include at least 183 tons of steel and 38 600m<sup>2</sup> of flooring by the time it is completed.

“Netcare Alberton Hospital will ultimately comprise 60 349m<sup>2</sup> gross building area. The building will be four storeys high in some areas, and three storeys in others, providing ample space to house the disciplines and services currently offered at Netcare Union and Netcare Clinton hospitals much more comfortably,” says Jacques du Plessis, managing director of Netcare’s hospital division.

## Trusted support team

The hospital is being developed in conjunction with local businessman, Riaan Jonker, and Nedbank through a joint venture, namely the Rejem-Linton (Nedbank) – Netcare Property Holdings Joint Venture. The main contractor appointed for the construction is Trencon Construction, supported by a multitude of local, national and international sub-contractors and suppliers.

Design and management of the project is undertaken by a multi-disciplinary professional team consisting of Profica Project Managers, A3 Architects, O’Mahony Peel Rowney Quantity Surveyors, Green Consulting Structural Engineers, WSP Civil Engineers, Spoormaker & Partners Mechanical Engineers, BFBA Johannesburg Lifts, Electrical and Electronic Engineers, IX Engineers Wet Services Consultants, Chimera Fire Protection Consultants, Insite Landscaping Architects, Saftek Health & Safety Consultant, EMKE Consultancy Health Care Consultants, and Sivist Environmental Consultants.

## Substantial local investment

Du Plessis explains that a key focus of the project implementation was to ensure substantial investment in local labour and businesses. To this end, and at the peak of construction, the project offered employment to more than 800 local people, more than 90 local companies were utilised, and in excess of R200m has been spent on local businesses and suppliers.

“The Alberton community has been steadily growing, and so too has the demand for quality private healthcare services by communities in the area. Given the number of highly specialised medical treatments provided at Netcare Union and Netcare Clinton hospitals, patients from as far afield as Mpumalanga and other neighbouring provinces, as well as from neighbouring countries, are also regularly referred to the hospitals for treatment.

## **Hospital facility merger**

“For over a decade, we have been planning towards relocating Netcare Union and Netcare Clinton hospitals to a single, ultra-modern healthcare facility that will integrate the range of services currently available at the two existing hospitals.

“The decision to merge the two hospitals into one flagship facility and relocate it to a better positioned site was taken after extensive studies to explore possible solutions for the fact that the existing hospitals lacked the necessary space and capacity to cater for the growing demand and the need for necessary upgrades. Expanding and upgrading the current facilities was not a viable option,” he added.

The 427-bed hospital in the Newmarket development precinct is conveniently located for residents of the greater Alberton area and is also easily accessible to patients from further afield.

## **Customised design and layout**



“Numerous technologically advanced and environmentally sustainable features form an integral part of the new facility’s design. Valuable input has been obtained from dozens of building professionals, as well as the specialist physicians practising at the existing two hospitals, to ensure that all of the daily operations within the facility will be optimally streamlined,” Du Plessis notes.

“Considerable planning has also gone into incorporating patient comfort and convenience in the design. The layout of the new facility will ensure minimal disruption to patients when they require tests, scans or procedures, as these services will be easily accessible from the wards.”

The modern maternity unit with a dedicated caesarean theatre, neonatal and paediatric intensive care units (ICUs), which are currently based at Netcare Clinton Hospital, will be housed in a secure, spacious and self-contained area on the third floor.

Netcare Union Hospital’s specialised cardiac unit including cardiac theatre, ICU and catheterisation laboratory, dedicated hybrid, vascular and laminar flow theatres and sleep laboratory will also have their own purpose-designed and digitally enabled facilities within Netcare Alberton Hospital.

The radiology unit will be expanded to serve more patients promptly. The facility will be easily accessible from the hospital wards for additional patient convenience.

## **Level 1 trauma centre**

“Communities in the region will be reassured to know that the emergency department based at Netcare Union Hospital, which houses one of only three private Level I accredited trauma centres in the country, will be expanded in the new hospital and continue to provide life-saving care to patients from across the region,” Du Plessis says.

“The new hospital design provides for ease of access for emergency vehicles and emergency helicopters, enabling emergency and inter-hospital air-ambulance transfers from a larger geographical area. The Netcare 911 base to be established on the premises will work seamlessly with the emergency department to provide pre-hospital emergency care at the scene of accidents or medical emergencies and en-route to the emergency department.”

New specialist physicians and those currently practising at Netcare Union and Netcare Clinton hospitals will be accommodated in comfortable consulting rooms towards the front of the hospital, adjacent to the wards and intensive care units. Ancillary healthcare services will be based close to the consulting rooms for the added convenience of doctors and patients alike.

“We are very grateful to residents for their patience during this construction phase. To help minimise disruption as far as possible to surrounding traffic on Ring Road East and Voortrekker Road, construction materials destined for the site are being transported using a gravel construction road,” Du Plessis says.

Du Plessis thanked the community for their continued support of the two existing hospitals that will be amalgamated in the new facility.