

Netcare awarded for outstanding contributions to energy saving

Netcare has been recognised with two top awards from the South African Energy Efficiency Confederation (SAEEC) for its contribution to environmental sustainability.



Source: [Fixabay](#)

The private healthcare group and its national environmental sustainability manager have subsequently been nominated by the SAEEC for the 2022 regional and international Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) Awards.

The 2021 SAEEC award for Commercial Corporate Company of the Year was awarded to the Netcare Group in recognition of its outstanding contribution to the energy industry. André Nortjé, national environmental sustainability manager at Netcare, received the SAEEC's Young Professional of the Year award.

Netcare won the same corporate award in 2018 and went on to win the international 2019 AEE sub-Saharan Africa Region Corporate Energy Management award, becoming the first healthcare group in Africa to be recognised in these highly prestigious global awards, regarded as 'the Oscars' of the energy industry.

The SAEEC is the Southern African affiliate of the AEE, and the awards aim to promote best practice, innovation and leadership in the energy-efficiency industry. The SAEEC puts forward these South African environmental sustainability solutions to the global industry to help develop energy-efficient engineering internationally.

The urgency of investing in sustainability

"Ongoing innovation in energy efficiency can help to prevent or limit the deleterious effects of climate change in South Africa and across the globe, but only if the corporate sector recognises the urgency and the value of investing in sustainability, and if they were to act now," says Dr Richard Friedland, chief executive officer of Netcare.

Nortjé concurs: “When I started my engineering career, energy efficiency as a business strategy was not well understood by corporates or investors. It is encouraging to see how such initiatives are rapidly gaining momentum and recognition as viable and sustainable business opportunities.”

Since 2013, Netcare has placed considerable emphasis on improving energy efficiency at its facilities throughout South Africa and has implemented more than 194 environmental sustainability projects.

“As of the end of the 2021 financial year, our Group was able to achieve a 28% energy intensity reduction per hospital bed, surpassing its original target of 22 to 25% set for 2023. We have eliminated more than R820m in energy, water and waste costs since 2013,” says Nortjé.



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“Netcare currently has the second biggest installed base of Solar PV of all private/commercial companies in South Africa. Last year alone, our environmental sustainability projects added additional yearly electricity savings of more than R21m, while also reducing Netcare’s reliance on fossil fuels and the national power grid.

The Group’s environmental sustainability programme has demonstrated an impressive return on investment to date, illustrating the commercial opportunities in environmentally conscious engineering,” explains Nortjé.

United Nations Race to Zero 2050

Netcare’s ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability is evident. Last year, Netcare was the first private healthcare organisation in Africa to pledge support to the UN’s Race to Zero 2050 initiative.

Netcare has also achieved the distinction of being the only healthcare institution in the world to have won gold medals – the highest accolade – in all four categories in both the prestigious 2020 and 2021 Health Care Climate Challenge Awards, organised by Global Green and Healthy Hospitals (GGHH). The global awards for Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Energy), Renewable Energy, Climate Resilience, and Climate Leadership solidified the Group’s standing as a worldwide leader in the global community of environmentally conscious healthcare institutions.

Dr Friedland commended the Netcare environmental sustainability team and the staff at Netcare facilities responsible for implementing and running the various projects for their dedication and passion for finding sustainable solutions. “The award to Netcare serves as encouragement that corporates can make a difference, and will hopefully help to generate broader awareness of the highly viable solutions developed right here in South Africa.

“André and his team, together with Theuns Langenhoven, general manager of Netcare’s property division, have been instrumental in continually driving the process and reinforcing the critical importance of environmental sustainability throughout the different project streams,” he says.

Netcare has set ambitious 2030 environmental sustainability targets to achieve zero scope two emissions, as well as zero

waste to landfill by 2030. “We are already seeing the devastation and tragedy climate change can wreak in our country and around the world. Global warming is no longer a buzzword, it is an emergency requiring urgent action and international knowledge sharing,” Dr Friedland concluded.

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