

Network Healthcare Holdings (Netcare)

Press release

Netcare staff and management getting 'down and dirty' with Habitat for Humanity

Wednesday, 4 October 2006 – Employees and executive management of private healthcare company Netcare recently built five houses in Katlehong, a township on Gauteng's East Rand. They started building on Monday 2 October, and finished on Friday 6 October.

"This project is the start of a long-term relationship that Netcare and Habitat for Humanity has entered into," says Dr Victor Litlhakanyane, Executive Director of Netcare. "We started off in Gauteng but will be expanding the project to other parts of South Africa."

Litlhakanyane was one of about 500 Netcare employees who volunteered for the project. He helped lay the first bricks for the houses on Monday. Most members of the company's executive team, including the CEO Dr Richard Friedland, are getting their hands dirty by helping to physically build the five houses. "We are all leading by example, and it has led my back to complain about it today!" laughs Litlhakanyane.

According to Litlhakanyane, Netcare's decision to partner with Habitat for Humanity was a great fit for the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy to move towards long-term, intensive, volunteer-type projects. "The slogan for Netcare's CSR is 'Netcare making a difference'. We do not want this slogan to remain just that – a slogan. We are, therefore, moving towards a more hands on approach which includes involving our staff."

Netcare staff and management getting 'down and dirty'.../more

The Non-Government Organisation Habitat for Humanity facilitates the help bring dignity back to the people by providing them with housing," says Litlhakanyane. "Those who receive houses have to complete a programme which teaches them the values of home ownership. They also become involved in building houses for other people in their community. In addition, as people who do not have adequate housing are vulnerable to diseases, Habitat for Humanity's initiative helps those who receive houses to live healthier lives."

The Netcare volunteers consist of 100 employees from Netcare's Operations Centre, 100 employees from Netcare 911 and a further 100 employees from Medicross and Primecure. The Netcare hospitals based in the East Rand, namely Clinton, Union and Mulbarton hospitals, added an additional 200 volunteers. " We were humbled by the overwhelming support we received from the staff. We are very proud of the staff for this gesture," said Kenneth Mazibuko, Netcare's Manager for Corporate Social Development.

In addition to supplying the volunteers to build the houses, Netcare also supplied finance for the building material of the five houses. "It is the first small step in what I hope and pray will be the start of a significant contribution by the Netcare family. When we have helped fund and build 1 000 homes and clinics, I believe we will begin to build the South Africa we can all be proud of," said Friedland.

Litlhakanyane concludes: "There were far more volunteers than we could accommodate. We will, however, soon give others an opportunity to get their 'hands dirty' with helping us build more houses and contribute to 'Netcare making a difference'."

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Released on behalf of Network Healthcare Holdings (Netcare)

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