

COHSASA introduces four-year accreditation award

Issued by [COHSASA](#)

18 Sep 2013

The Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA) has introduced a new four-year award to give appropriate recognition to healthcare facilities in its quality improvement and accreditation programme that show consistently high standards over a period of time.

COHSASA and the standards it has developed have achieved global recognition and the Council is one of only 22 healthcare accrediting bodies in the world to be recognised by the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua).

ISQua's International Accreditation Programme (IAP) is the leading international healthcare external evaluation programme of its kind. It "accredits the accreditors" through three unique programmes: accreditation of health care standards; accreditation of external evaluation organisations and accreditation of surveyor training programmes.

In the past 18 years of operation, the Council has worked to improve the quality of service in over 600 facilities in both the public and private sectors in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Rwanda, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ghana and Kenya.

The Council runs programmes in a range of facilities including hospitals, clinics, hospices, emergency medical services, environmental health offices and sub-acute establishments.

Up to now facilities that meet standards required by the COHSASA programme have been awarded two-year and three-year accreditation awards. A facility that earns accreditation for the first time receives a two-year accreditation and this can be extended to three years if a validation visit conducted by COHSASA 15 to 18 months after accreditation shows that standards are being maintained and that the facility's quality improvement programme is not only being sustained but also improved.

Now the COHSASA Board has approved a modification to the COHSASA accreditation process to reward facilities that have maintained excellent standards and accreditation over a number of years.

Facilities in the COHSASA programme that have achieved an initial two-year accreditation and two successive three-year accreditation awards, with no outstanding areas of non-compliance, will be awarded accreditation for four years. This award, retrospective from 1 March 2013, has been conferred on three Mediclinic hospitals in South Africa which meet the new criteria for a four-year accreditation (until 28 February 2017).

They are:

- Mediclinic Highveld
- Mediclinic Potchefstroom
- Mediclinic Worcester

The condition of the award is that facilities will be required to undergo a mandatory interim survey after two years. In addition, any facility receiving the new award will be subject to review if there is any substantiated complaint or allegation that the facility is not maintaining the accreditation standards.

Professor Stuart Whittaker, CEO of COHSASA, says, "I am pleased about this new process since it will appropriately recognise facilities that have maintained high standards of quality and safety over long periods of time."

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COHSASA



The Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA), a not-for-profit organisation in Cape Town, South Africa, assists a wide range of healthcare facilities to meet and maintain quality standards.

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