

# A Sturdy Framework for Clinical Excellence

**In the highly competitive world of private hospital care, it is vital to build a model of clinical excellence based on sound investment and infrastructure.**

Medi-Clinic Southern Africa has developed a model that requires a talented workforce, superior technological and electronic systems, a set of clear quality objectives that are rigorously pursued and a multidisciplinary team approach. Within this framework certain principles are adhered to at hospital level, such as self-management and empowerment, a non-punitive approach to reporting and evaluating adverse events, measurable improvement targets and involvement of the entire clinical team.

A progressive clinical governance development plan forms the basis of clinical

management at hospital level to minimise risk to patients and control the quality of care.

This plan has clear objectives and responsibilities which include the following: professional qualifications, standards and performance; facility accreditation and certification; clinical risk management; functional programmes; clinical standards; health technology assessment; patient satisfaction; education and training; and clinical information systems.

## **Training and development**

Medi-Clinic Southern Africa spends about 4% of its payroll on training and skills development for staff at all levels. As nursing staff forms the frontline of patient care, emphasis is placed on formal nursing education, in particular. As a result,

their operational training and development needs are addressed by the six Medi-Clinic learning centres and two satellite campuses around SA.

There are currently 2438 student nurses undergoing training at these facilities, while 2551 completed their studies from 2007 to 2009. The training department has also been working tirelessly to draft new curricula to meet the requirements of the new Nursing Act, 2005 (Act 33 of 2005) when it comes into effect in the next few years.

Meeting global benchmarks through internationally recognised bodies plays a vital role in monitoring and evaluating patient safety and quality of care. Medi-Clinic Southern Africa is the only large private hospital group in the region that measures

itself against world healthcare standards with ongoing accreditation by the Council of Healthcare Services Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA).

At present, 22 of the group's hospitals are accredited, one has pre-accreditation status and a further 13 are in the process of being accredited. The process used to assess facilities is not applicable to the smaller hospitals, so they work in close association with their larger counterparts to ensure compliance.

## **Sustainable environmental systems**

In addition, Medi-Clinic Southern Africa has developed a comprehensive process for implementing sustainable environmental management systems at all 53 of its hospitals by the end of 2012. To date, 28 have received ISO 14001:2004 compliance certification by external auditor NQA Global Assurance, with another 10 due for certification by the end of 2011, including the new Cape Gate Medi-Clinic.

Infection, skin lesions and falls, as well as the administration of medicines, are threats to patient well-being that every hospital faces, and Medi-Clinic Southern Africa has surveillance programmes in place to manage these clinical risks.

Clinical indicators perform an important task in reducing risks such as mortality, lengthy stays and readmission, and they are essential in clinical performance management and delivering quality care. For example, the APACHE III system uses specific parameters including age and gender to predict mortality in adult ICUs.

There are also specialised databases used in specific fields of medicine to determine clinical outcomes. Medi-Clinic Southern Africa was the first private hospital group on the continent to participate in the Vermont Oxford Network, which is an initiative aimed at measuring and improving the quality of care in neonatal intensive care units in cases of low birth weight and other newborn complications.

## **Improving the clinical outcomes**

The group has also formulated its own database based on the American Society for Thoracic Surgery's model aimed at measuring and improving the clinical outcomes of cardiothoracic surgery, using indicators such as age, gender and risk factors such as obesity, hypertension, smoking and family history.

In terms of functional programmes, Medi-Clinic Southern Africa was among the first to implement triage systems in its emergency centres and it also has a unique electronic patient record-keeping monitoring system that is effective in indicating major disease outbreaks.

Medi-Clinic Southern Africa strongly believes in the freedom of association of all doctors as well the autonomy of their practice, and by delivering high levels of clinical service in terms of systems, facilities and processes, the group continually works towards making its facilities the address of choice for medical practitioners and patients.

These are the hands of  
knowledge and experience,  
hands South Africa can trust  
with its future.

Over the past 26 years South Africans have come to rely on Medi-Clinic's dedicated staff and advanced facilities for exceptional care. Our country's health system is evolving, and we're proud to play an instrumental role in its reshaping. Through sharing our expert knowledge and collective skill, we can promise that quality care will not be compromised and the future health of South Africa will be well looked after.

