



ADCOCK INGRAM CRITICAL CARE AND NETCARE

Ground-breaking recycling project turns used medical consumables into much-needed school shoes for disadvantaged children.

In a pioneering and collaborative move for the healthcare industry, a recycling project between Adcock Ingram Critical Care, Netcare, Executive Mayor, Councillor Herman Mashaba, and the City of Johannesburg, is helping hospitals deal with their safe healthcare waste in a way that creates functional new products, including school shoes for disadvantaged children.

The innovative project, in which used, non-hazardous intravenous infusion (IV) drip bags and tubing made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) are recycled into soles for school shoes, saw roughly 1 000 school shoes handed over to learners of the Masakhane-Tswelopele Primary School in Zandspruit by Mayor Mashaba.

This forms part of an Adcock Ingram Critical Care and Netcare partnership with the City of Johannesburg to initiate collaboration on the impact of the environment on human health, with the aim of creating more

sustainable solutions for the benefit of the city and its citizens.

"This fantastic initiative is aligned with the A Re Sebetseng mayoral project, a clean-up campaign encouraging all citizens to take pride in their environment, community, and city," said Mashaba. "I am a strong believer in public and private partnership. We, as government, have no chance of doing it on our own so it's incredibly exciting to be part of this project that is built on a joint effort between a pharmaceutical company, a private healthcare provider group and local government, to benefit impoverished children. This is the way of the future."

The donation of school shoes was of personal significance to Mashaba, who did not have shoes for school as a child. "When you have shoes, you have pride" stated Mashaba; a quality he believes is lacking in the poorest communities due to the conditions in which people are forced to live. "We are

promoting a culture of reducing, re-using and recycling waste to ensure Joburg becomes one of the cleanest cities in Africa" added Mashaba.

Colin Sheen, MD of Adcock Ingram Critical Care, highlighted the ground-breaking aspect of the initiative. "It's an honour for us to be working with the Mayor, the City of Johannesburg and Netcare on this extremely important project. This is an example of what can be achieved when the private and public sectors work together for the benefit of our environment and the upliftment of communities in need."

"Netcare is delighted to be a part of this worthy initiative, which not only speaks to our commitment to reducing our environmental footprint but also to our spirit of investing in the communities where we operate. By participating in this project we are embracing a more sustainable approach to healthcare which,

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into the production chain while using as much recycled material as possible.

Locally, the hospital PVC recycling project was initiated with the assistance of the Southern African Vinyls Association (SAVA), which is implementing a recycling programme whereby non-hazardous material and PVC is recovered for recycling. This is helping transform the plastics industry, encouraging local PVC manufacturers to adopt sustainable practices and the removal of hazardous materials in the manufacturing process.

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at the same time, is benefitting local school children" said Richard Friedland, CEO of Netcare Ltd.

"This project is just the beginning of a partnership in which the three parties have come together to all play a part in reducing waste, pollution and landfill sites, ultimately benefitting all citizens, who can look forward to a cleaner, greener, and better city. We look forward to the meaningful difference this recycling initiative will make in the lives of individuals and communities as we expand it in the coming years," added Friedland.

The project started with a long-term commitment to building a sustainable business that has the lowest possible impact on the environment. Adcock Ingram Critical Care, market leader in IV bags (drips) in the private and public healthcare sector in SA, recognised an opportunity to extend the life of drip bag cut-offs and used drips bags which had contained non-hazardous solutions and were traditionally disposed of to landfill sites as waste.

Joining forces with Netcare, a project was initially piloted at Netcare Pretoria East and Netcare Unitas hospitals, where the

traditional cycle of disposal of these bags was relooked. Based on the positive outcome of the project in the pilot hospitals, it was extended to three more hospitals – Netcare Milpark, Netcare Pinehaven and Netcare Krugersdorp – in 2017.

Conveniently located blue coloured bins were set up specifically for the purpose of segregating uncontaminated used PVC drip bags, nurses were trained, and the PVC waste material was collected by recyclers who then sold it to a company that uses this highest grade and quality PVC plastic to make soles for shoes.

"It's about designing functional products out of our used products, minimising their negative impact on the environment, and producing new products that benefit our communities," added Sheen. "This is part of the future of plastics recycling and we are making it happen in our city."

Globally, PVC recycling programmes are changing the way hospitals think about reducing both their costs and their impact on the environment. Countries like Australia are taking a tougher approach on plastics in the belief that this could create jobs in recycling, engineering and research, forming part of a strategy that aims to plug plastic waste back

The donation of a pair of school shoes to every child at Masakhane-Tswelopele Primary School in Zandspruit, chosen as a beneficiary because it is a quintile 1 school serving the poorest of the poor, is an example of the positive impact a successful hospital PVC recycling project, and strong partnership between industry and government, can have on individuals and a community.

"We are especially grateful to our Mayor, Councillor Herman Mashaba, the City of Johannesburg, and Ms Anna Lebethe, Principal of Masakhane-Tswelopele Primary School, for giving us the opportunity to do something positive and meaningful for some of our most vulnerable young residents," said Sheen. "We aim to encourage more hospitals to recycle PVC, given the benefits that come with it, including generating more employment from recycling drives."

"A pair of shoes is a practical gift which protects children's feet from rough ground, dirt and cold, making the experience of learning and playing at school far more pleasant. We need more collaboration and recycling projects aimed at cleaning up our city and using repurposed plastics to provide much-needed, cost-effective products for disadvantaged communities," concluded Sheen and Friedland.