

MAJOR WELLNESS RETAILER COMMITTED TO EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Supplied Content

Tapping into what works best in South Africa

Thursday 4 November 2021, South Africa's leading wellness retailer, Wellness Warehouse, has partnered with National HealthCare Group to ensure all employees have access to quality healthcare with a recently introduced healthcare funding product that is making considerable strides amongst employer groups.

Launched during lockdown, at the height of the first COVID-19 wave, to deliver primary healthcare services for uncovered employees in need of a healthcare lifeline, MediClub Connect™, has since gained a considerable foothold in the South African corporate healthcare space.

According to Patrick Lubbe, chief executive officer of the National HealthCare Group, MediClub Connect™ is the newest primary healthcare service, offering a practical and efficient primary healthcare solution that is ideal for the times we live in. Lubbe explains that the product has been designed to tap into what works in the South African environment specifically, and therein lies much of its success.

"We may well be living in the time of COVID, but we are also living in an era where our lives have been substantially improved and enriched by advances in technology. For example, being able to consult your doctor online makes it easy to obtain assistance quickly and conveniently. But high data costs and lack of access still prevents many South Africans from tapping into sophisticated digital services.

A practical solution

"In our country we have to use what is practical and available to maximum effect and this includes mobile phones and popular apps such as WhatsApp. Given how little data it uses, WhatsApp has become the instant messenger of choice, with almost two thirds of South Africans making use of the service. This has provided infinite opportunities, particularly within the low-cost healthcare setting."

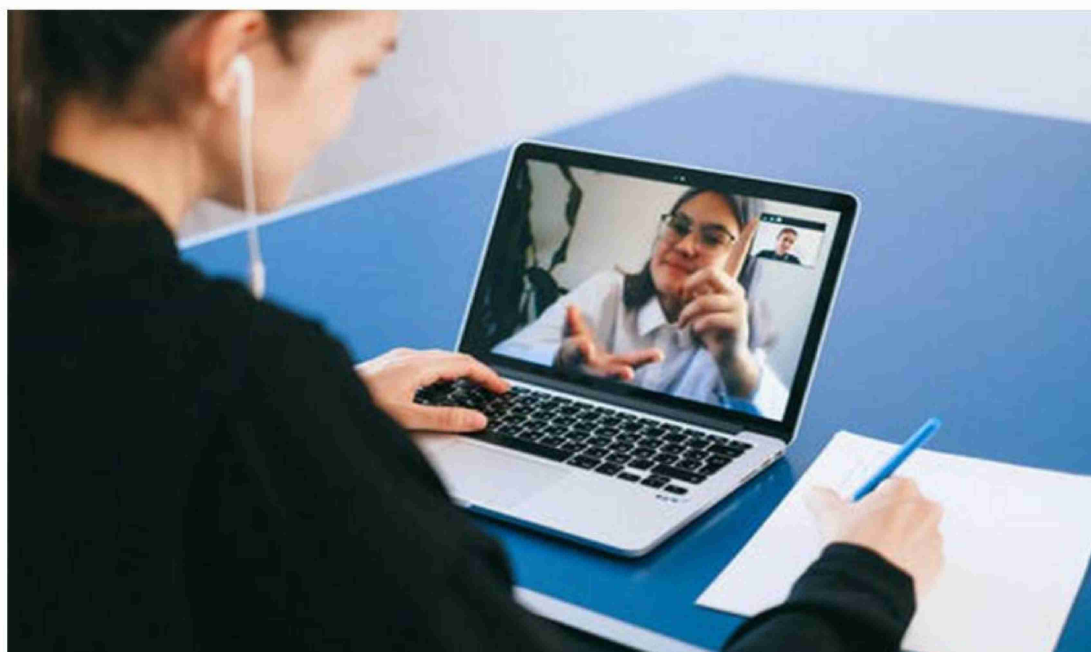
Lubbe says the popularity of MediClub Connect™ is being driven by the fact that it is making private healthcare consultations accessible to an enormous previously underserved market that currently rely on government healthcare services.



"The past 18-months were tough, though fruitful in learnings for many South African companies. As the socio-economic challenges dawned on many businesses, the demand for safe, quality primary healthcare services have increased," he notes.

Adding to this Dr Reinder Nauta, chairman of the National HealthCare Group said that improved healthcare access will be driven by business leaders who understand the importance of offering employees efficient health cover during these challenging times.

"We have been working with employers



Publication: Your Wellness Matters

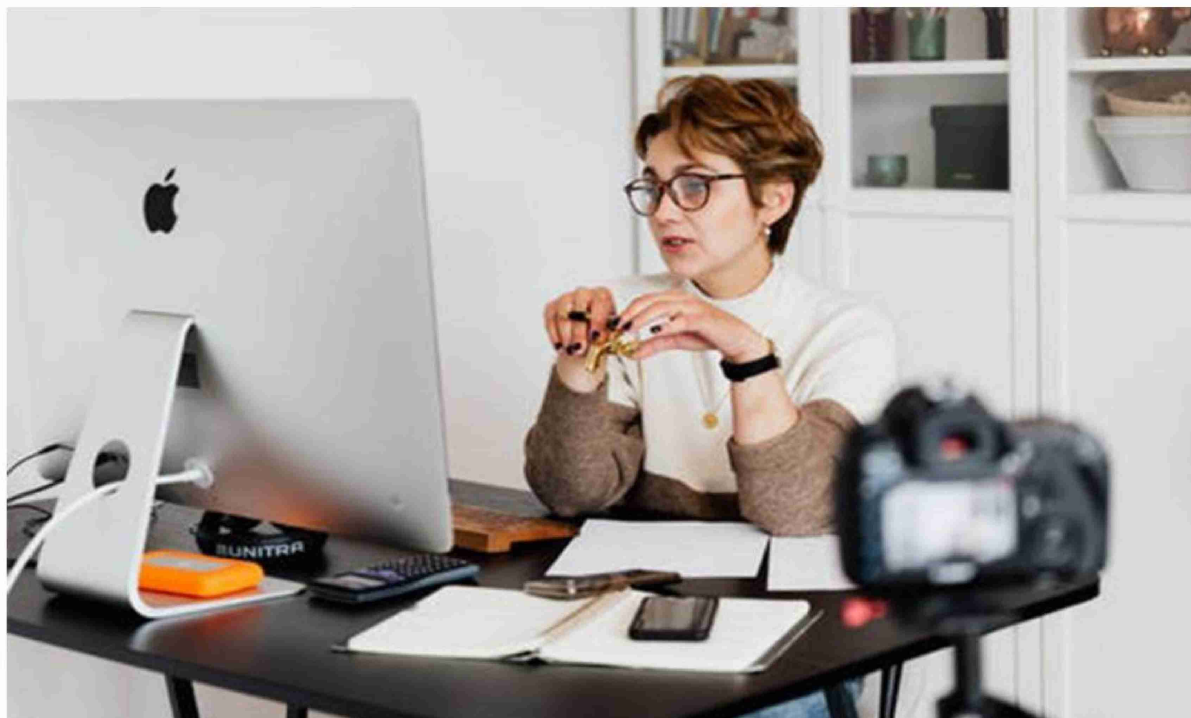
Page: 12

Title: MAJOR WELLNESS RETAILER COMMITTED TO EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Publish Date: 01 November 2021

AVE: 57181.3

Author: Unspecified



across a broad spectrum of industries to ensure their staff have access to quality healthcare and peace of mind during what is without doubt a stressful time. There is a real commitment to making a difference. Business leaders are wanting to provide their staff members with affordable healthcare solutions that will allow them access to professional medical advice when they need it. With MediClub Connect™ they are getting quality primary care, at an unbeatable price. The benefits are manifold for employees and employers who have experienced first-hand the difference healthcare access can make in reducing absenteeism and strengthening their bottom line. It is also building morale, solidarity, loyalty and ultimately good labour relations, which is so important in our country," says Dr Nauta.

Wellness Warehouse prioritising employee health

The latest South African company to step up to the plate by providing its employees with fully funded membership of MediClub Connect™ is Wellness Warehouse, an important player in the wellness space. The employees of South Africa's largest wellness retailer, which has 43 retail stores, including an

online facility, recently joined MediClub Connect™.

Simon Alston, chief executive of Wellness Warehouse says that as the go-to health retailer in the country the company is passionate about creating a community of South Africans who love to live life well. "We believe that health is the truest form of wealth, and we are here to help create a better South Africa – one healthy choice at a time. This journey, we believe, starts with our employees and it therefore makes perfect sense for us to ensure that they have easy access to healthcare services when they need it.

"The health and wellbeing of our colleagues are of paramount importance within our company. Given that we spend up to 40+ hours a week in the workplace, a proactive approach to health and wellness in the work environment is of vital importance. By not focusing on the wellbeing of our employees they could become unhealthy, unmotivated, and unhappy all of which in turn can result in poor staff morale and a high staff turnover," notes Alston.

Reducing costs and improving access

Commenting on MediClub Connect™, Dr Nauta says this practical, and user-friendly application of technology represents the latest in a series of ground-breaking primary healthcare solutions introduced by the National HealthCare Group in recent years to bring the benefits of private medical services to the low-cost segment of the healthcare market.

He adds that the uptake of the tech-savvy, yet simple solution was almost instantaneous as it was fulfilling a considerable need for more accessible healthcare, while empowering individuals to monitor their health closely. In addition, the virtual medical consultation service has gone on to reduce the cost of primary healthcare cover beyond all expectations for corporate clients and their employees.

"National HealthCare has established itself as the healthcare service provider of choice in the lower cost and emerging markets. Good geographic positioning, thanks to a significantly expanded doctor network, and a hands-on business philosophy has allowed the Group to develop an intimate understanding of the needs of the low-cost market," concludes Dr Nauta.