

OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR BIGGEST ASSET

Our people ESG goal: Building an inclusive, safe and prosperous workplace


Strategic focus areas

Diversity and inclusion

Dis-Chem's sustainability policy guides it to:

- ✦ Comply with applicable labour and human rights regulatory requirements and standards
- ✦ Respect human rights and diversity of our people
- ✦ Improve diversity and inclusion
- ✦ Recognise the right of our employees to freedom of association
- ✦ Abolish all forms of child labour, forced and compulsory labour, human trafficking and abuse
- ✦ Eliminate all forms of discrimination in the workplace


The Group piloted a bespoke management development programme with attendance by cross-functional teams focusing on emotional intelligence, self-awareness and managing, motivating and leading capabilities. Two further modules are being developed to focus on diversity, inclusivity and conflict management. The programme will be systematically rolled out into other retail regions over the next 12 months.

 Read more about our Values Ambassadors and code of ethics, which promotes equal opportunities, in the material sustainability matters chapter on page 15.

Employee retention

Dis-Chem's sustainability policy guides it to implement just remuneration practices as a way to reward and retain employees. For the past two years, an overarching performance and talent management framework has been in development, which will be implemented in the next year.

The Paterson grading system has also been implemented in the past two years and 682 unique jobs have now been profiled for the Group.

 Read more about talent attraction and retention in the material sustainability matters chapter from page 12.


Investing in the training and development of our employees

The Group's sustainability policy guides it to invest in the development of its people. In the past year, dedicated learning steering committees with management representation have been established, to dive deeper into learning needs and to co-create learning solutions, with the express intention of creating robust management pipelines and driving strategic objectives.

 Read more about training initiatives in the material sustainability matters chapter from page 12 and in the rest of this chapter.

Employee health and safety

Dis-Chem's operations include environments that can result in injury or exposure to disease. As such, employees' health and safety is deeply embedded in training, policies, procedures and reporting. Any incident is recorded and investigated.

 Read more about safeguarding our employees in the material sustainability matters chapter from page 12.



"We evolved from a small human resource team focusing on payroll and industrial relations to becoming a business partner for our divisions, managing a network where our employees can find consistent support and information." – Caryn Eliasov-Barker, Dis-Chem Human Resources Director

Dis-Chem's strategic focus areas align its contribution to the following SDGs:



The transformative impact of education

Dis-Chem knows that education and training can give an employee's career momentum or change direction towards a new passion. To make these opportunities available to its people, Dis-Chem acquired 5 000 LinkedIn Learning licences.

With LinkedIn Learning, employees can learn any time of the day from a laptop, desktop or mobile phone. The digital LinkedIn library offers over 6 000 courses. The system enables

employees to keep track of courses completed, and awards certificates when a course is completed. Employees can refine and develop their professional skills and explore other areas of interest to grow their careers.

Dis-Chem invests significantly in professional development and succession plans. Read more about talent attraction and retention in the material matter on page 27.

CASE STUDY

TRAINED FOR BEST-IN-CLASS DIABETES CARE

Diabetes is the second most deadly disease in South Africa, while we also have one of the highest rates on the continent. As our nurses deal with this disease daily, upskilling them with diabetes training is critical to improving diabetes care and outcomes in South Africa.

Dis-Chem invited all 450 nurses in our clinic network to complete the accredited International Diabetes Federation

Certified Course for Diabetes Educators. This means they have the knowledge and tools to help educate people with diabetes, promote healthy lifestyles and recommend effective self-management for optimal diabetes control.

Diabetic patients now have access to improved and affordable diabetes care at Dis-Chem clinics. This also helps reduce the burden of diabetes in public health facilities and hospitals.



Two employee journeys at Dis-Chem

Busisiwe Dlamini and Tebogo Tladinyane both started working at Dis-Chem as store cashiers in March 2004. 20 years later, they both still work for Dis-Chem, albeit in very different roles, showing how the Group’s commitment to developing its employees can create long-term career paths and success.

BUSISIWE DLAMINI IS A DIS-CHEM STORE ASSISTANT MANAGER. THIS IS HER STORY.

When my journey started, I was a casual cashier at Dis-Chem. I was (and still am) willing and ready for new challenges and to further develop myself within the retail space. I have occupied the following positions at Dis-Chem: cashier, frontline supervisor, cash-up administrator, trainee admin manager, store admin manager and trainee assistant manager.

The overall Dis-Chem journey has been truly remarkable and continues to be so, thanks to my supportive colleagues and managers. As an individual who works at one of the leading retail pharmacies in South Africa, I ensure to always deliver exceptional customer service. My focus has been to uphold our values and the values that I resonate with are professionalism, as it remains the foundation of my career. I live by the Do The Right Thing value through maintaining integrity, honesty, loyalty, teamwork and accountability.

My secret to success is that there will always be challenges. Always remaining determined to provide exceptional service is of importance, regardless of the circumstances. I love Dis-Chem as it has contributed to the individual that I am today – and I thank God for the opportunity.

TEBOGO TLADINYANE IS A HEAD OFFICE MEDICAL AID SUPERVISOR. THIS IS HER STORY.

My Dis-Chem journey started as a cashier at a Dis-Chem store. I have occupied the following positions at Dis-Chem: merchandiser, OTC consultant and dispensary merchandiser. In 2008, I moved to head office to occupy the position of a medical aid administrator and later became a medical aid department assistant. In 2017, I was promoted to my current position.

What keeps me committed to Dis-Chem is the fact that the brand recognises employees and the development in improving my professional growth. Over the years, I have been given the opportunity to effectively manage various personalities and this further inspires me to consistently embody our core values. The value that I resonate with is customer service, which I take seriously, as it is one of the most important aspects of my role.

One of my greatest professional achievements is being a trainer within the medical aid department. The responsibility was massive as it was about ensuring that all new team members understood our systems, and the standard procedures effectively. I am extremely proud of the employees that I have trained as many of them get promoted and it brings me joy and a sense of accomplishment.

Supervising a team and interacting with various medical aid stakeholders comes with its challenges, which I am grateful for as it has greatly contributed to my professional growth.



HOW WE APPROACH DISABILITY AT DIS-CHEM

We strive to create a working environment characterised by fair representation of people with disabilities at all occupational levels, as far as practically possible and in line with our employment equity plan. We want to ensure that employees and prospective employees with disabilities are treated equally to those who do not have disabilities.

We define people with disabilities as citizens who have a long-term recurring or progressive physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which is substantially limiting in terms of employment or their working environment.

A new Dis-Chem disability policy was approved in 2023 to provide guidelines on effective disability management in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

The policy sets out arrangements for the recruitment, management, testing and retention of employees with disabilities. It further requires that information related to an employee's disability is kept confidential and separate from other personnel records.

Of permanent employees, 1.14% are deemed disabled.



Read more about our learnerships for people with disabilities in the chapter on our community from page 75.

Future focus areas

- ✦ Dis-Chem is in the process of automating all employee contracts and cloud solutions for its human resource information systems
- ✦ A new project related to Better Health Starts Here will be launched this year to make this real and embed the initiative in the hearts and minds of employees. This will be linked to employee benefits

THE DIS-CHEM NURSING PRACTITIONERS PLEDGE OF SERVICE

I solemnly pledge myself to the service of humanity and will endeavour to practise my profession with conscience and with dignity.

I will maintain, by all the means in my power, the honour and noble tradition of my profession. The total health of my patients will be my first consideration. I will hold in confidence all personal matters coming to my knowledge. I will not permit consideration of religion, nationality, race or social standing to intervene between my duty and my patients.

I will maintain the utmost respect for human life.

I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honour.

