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Private Public Partnership Healthcare Initiative in South Africa

The public private partnership (PPP) that fulfills the medical devices requirement at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital (IALCH) in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, serves as an industry benchmark for how PPPs can work effectively.

The IALCH is an 846-bed tertiary referral hospital PPP project. The IALCH is the central referral hospital in the region, with leading-edge technology as well as unique services available exclusively at the facility and it provides comprehensive medical services across all disciplines.

The IALCH Healthcare PPP kicked off with implementation and commissioning that started in February 2002, with financial close earlier in that month. Negotiations and contract finalisation took place between the preferred bidder consortium and the KwaZulu Natal Department of Health.

June 2012 marked the 10-year milestone in the IALCH 15-year of PPP project in healthcare solutions.

Consulens, a specialist company in medical equipment management, was selected as the principle subcontractor for the implementation and commissioning of medical devices. The exercise involved many areas of project management in order to plan, order, receive, install and commission all medical equipment and devices to provide the medical services.

A key process was the management of training for medical staff on the devices. The commissioning and implementation of the complete facilities medical devices were completed in less than two years, with the first patient being admitted during phase one after six months. The remainder of the phases for implementation after the first patient in July 2002 was completed in a patient-live hospital



Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital (IALCH), with 846 beds, has been equipped with leading-edge medical technology



IALCH in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

environment.

During and following the phased process of implementation, the comprehensive project operations took place simultaneously.

Consulens continues with their project requirements and responsibility for the maintenance of all medical services throughout the 15-year period in order to ensure the facility remains at a high technological service level. The refresh and replacement programme for the project requires complete cooperation of all parties involved (clinical, medical, technical and support services in both private and public partners' areas of responsibility). Careful planning and implementation are required to ensure minimum interruption to patient services and zero compromise on their safety.

The IALCH project is a model in the terms of the efficient and successful process required to manage a PPP effectively in the field of medical devices and associated services.

The overall IALCH turnkey project success is a testimony and proof that PPPs of this magnitude and length in duration are successful when both the private and public sectors pool their expertise and resources to provide a solution mutually beneficial to all.

The South African Department of Health will be implementing future projects to other medical facilities to upgrade and improve medical services delivery. The valuable lessons learned from the successful IALCH project will play a key role in the way forward on these projects.

This article was written by Stuart J. Gray, PMI-RMP, PMP, general manager at Consulens Medical Healthcare Solutions and a PMI member from South Africa.

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Community Update



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