

Appointment of new CEO to Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa

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Ms Jacqui Stewart has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer of the Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA) from today (1 April 2016) having held the position as Interim CEO since the retirement of founder and former CEO, Professor Stuart Whittaker, last year.



COHSASA is a 21-year-old non-profit company based in Cape Town which has worked with over 600 hospitals, clinics and other health facilities throughout Africa to help them reach acceptable standards and thereby improve the safety and quality of care offered to patients. The Council is accredited by the International Society of Quality in Health Care (ISQua) as a competent auditor of healthcare facilities and is the only such accredited agency based in Africa. It has worked extensively in South Africa in both public and private sectors to improve the quality of healthcare and reduce adverse incidents.

Announcing the appointment of Ms Stewart, the Chair of the COHSASA Board, Erwin Schwella, Professor of Public Leadership at Stellenbosch University, said, "I am sure that under her capable leadership and her commitment to COHSASA's well-being, the Council will grow from strength to strength."

Ms Stewart's track record, experience, knowledge and her proven ability had resulted in a unanimous decision by the Board to offer her the position.

She joined COHSASA as the Chief Operations Manager in 2005 from the National Health Service (NHS) University in England where she was the Interim Director of the Leadership, Management and Improvement School.

Prior to that she was the Director of Career Development and Succession Planning at the NHS Modernisation Agency, Leadership Centre. She has worked across a number of areas in the English NHS, including as director primary care development in East Kent Health Authority. Ms Stewart completed her general nurse training in Cape Town and is currently completing a Master's degree in Professional Studies in Health at Middlesex University.

As the new leader of COHSASA, Ms Stewart says she is committed to developing COHSASA into one of the organisations at the forefront of improving healthcare quality and patient safety not only in South Africa but beyond its borders.

"I want to expand our footprint across the continent and build on the great legacy left by Professor Whittaker. It is time for all citizens in Africa to have the benefits of safe, quality care and I am dedicated to ensure that COHSASA helps make this happen."

For more information, contact Marilyn Keegan on 021 531 4225 or 083 703 7789 or email marilyn@cohsasa.co.za.

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