

Smart lockers expand countrywide as patients demand quick medicine collection

Nearly 434,000 chronic medicine prescriptions have been loaded and nearly 336,000 prescriptions collected from 64 Collect & Go smart locker sites in Gauteng, the Free State and Mpumalanga since Right ePharmacy first launched its innovative medicine collection solution in 2020.



Source: Supplied.

Right ePharmacy is owned by the health NGO, Right to Care, which developed it as a for-profit company for IP tech innovation.

A further 22 Collect & Go smart locker sites are being introduced in Limpopo and the Western Cape bringing the number of Collect & Go pick-up sites across South Africa to almost 90.

If patients have a chronic condition and they are stable on their medication, they can sign up for Collect & Go at their closest health facility. Once registered, they choose a smart locker site that is most convenient. They will receive an SMS with a one-time PIN on their mobile phone as soon as the medicine is in the locker. At the locker they simply insert the PIN number to open the locker, and they can collect their medicine parcel.

They will be given two months' supply of medication and only need to return to their healthcare facility for a follow-up visit every six months. A healthcare worker will then assess them and if satisfied with their health, their prescription for Collect &

Go will be renewed.

Fanie Hendriksz, managing director of Right ePharmacy says: “Covid-19 intensified the need for alternative medicine collection points for chronic patients. People wanted to avoid facilities without stopping their treatment, and many turned to Collect & Go to collect their chronic medicines from a conveniently located smart-locker site without going into a clinic or hospital.

By using Collect & Go, close contact with other people is avoided, which is critical for patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma and HIV who want to avoid Covid-19.

“Collect & Go is becoming the first choice for medicine pick-up for patients because of its ease, speed and easy access,” he says. “In addition to South Africa, the citizens of Lesotho, Eswatini and Botswana now have access to Collect & Go with another two sub-Saharan African countries about to be added.”

Hendriksz explains that: “We are starting to move beyond chronic medicine to introduce medicines ranging from contraceptives, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP) to medical devices and testing kits. We are making it easy for people to get what they need to manage their health quickly and easily without waiting in long queues.”

Collect & Go sites are located near public health facilities and in busy areas near shopping centres and on transport routes where people live and work. “Convenience is the driving force of Collect & Go,” adds Hendriksz.



Uber Eats now offers medicine deliveries in SA

15 Oct 2020



Thula Mkhize, who lives a full life with his chronic condition by taking his medicine as prescribed, is the brand ambassador for Collect & Go. He is travelling through Gauteng, the Free State and Mpumalanga with the Collect & Go team, spreading the word about Collect & Go.

Says Mkhize: “When people find out about Collect & Go they realise how easy it is, they wonder why they took so long to sign up. Collect & Go is the solution to long queues and busy facilities and frees up time for patients to live better lives.”

Tshepiso Moloi is a Collect & Go site agent in Soweto. “Collect & Go is helping to end the stigma in our community about chronic illnesses. Patients don’t need to wake up early and stand in a long queue at a clinic for hours just to get their medicine. They can also send someone to collect for them. Collect & Go also decongests busy health facilities,” he says.

“Adherence to medicine is critical, not only for the health of every patient, but for the health system. Chronic patients who don’t take their medicines end up in health facilities in need of care. Quick and easy medicine collection is a cornerstone of good health,” says Hendriksz.

In Gauteng, the Free State and Mpumalanga, Collect & Go is being implemented in partnership with health NGO Right to Care. In Limpopo and the Western Cape, Right ePharmacy has partnered with health NGO, Anova, to roll out smart locker sites in these provinces. Collect & Go is supported by USAID and the Global Fund to fight Aids, tuberculosis and malaria.