

A Short History of Universitas Hospital

The history of the Universitas Hospital in Bloemfontein is interwoven with the history of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of the Free State. The hospital was planned and erected in the belief that a Faculty of Medicine would follow. It was also linked with the well-known National Hospital in Bloemfontein.

On 12 July, 1945 the executive Committee of the Province decided to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to report on hospitalization and health matters in the Free State. It's been then reported that the required bed accommodation for National Hospital was not enough to handle the normal population tests of the city and district.

The question may well arise why more than two decades elapsed before a start was made with the erection of the Universitas Hospital. The answer lies in the peculiar circumstances in which the Province found itself at that time. The primary problem was a lack of capital funds.

Furthermore, two other events during this period further taxed the already limited financial resources – the discovery of gold and the establishment of SASOL. Welkom and Sasolburg was founded op 15 April 1947 and 27 August 1954 respectively and caused a repetition of the demand and considerable need for hospital beds.

Almost 24 years later the Government gave the necessary approval for the building of the Hospital. On 24 August 1970 Mr. G.F van L. Froneman as Free State Administrator officially turned the symbolic first soil to start building operations.

Almost eight years later, Universitas Hospital was put into service in February 1978. It is situated on the northwest side of Bloemfontein. Over the years the hospital, in conjunction with the Medical Faculty, established departments in almost all the Medical Specialties. Currently, some departments are situated at National Hospital. These departments include Oncology, Ophthalmology, and Orthopedics

In 2003, Universitas Private Hospital opened its doors. This is the first ever public-private healthcare partnership of its kind in South Africa and is managed by Netcare.

