

South African CEO named international Pharma CEO of the Year

Lynne du Toit, CEO of Eurolab, a South African oncology company, has been named the CPhI Excellence in Pharma: CEO of the Year Award for her clear vision on what the future of cancer treatment in South Africa (SA) should look like.



Source: supplied. Lynne du Toit, CEO of Eurolab

Selected out of the seven shortlisted CEOs of pharmaceutical companies from across the globe, judges on the Congress of Pharmaceutical Ingredients (CPhI) Worldwide award panel selected her for her bold, forward-looking leadership, dynamism and contribution to the wider industry.

Speaking at the awards ceremony in Milan, Italy, last week, du Toit, dedicated her award to her hard-working team at Eurolab in South Africa.

“This award is for scientists and developers who advance cancer treatment to improve outcomes for cancer patients, to cancer patients in SA and across the world, to oncologists and healthcare workers who care for these patients and to all women CEOs who have had to balance family and work commitments to get ahead,” she says.

Having started her career began in nursing and midwifery, du Toit entered the corporate world in the 1980s as a ‘rep’.

“Back then, pharma reps were mostly women and the management teams primarily men. Women have had to apply

themselves smartly and carefully juggle family and professional demands to hold their own and show their grit alongside their male executives,” she says.

Lowering the cost of cancer medicine

Lowering the costs of cancer medicine, making treatment more accessible and more affordable, and bringing solutions previously only available abroad into SA have underpinned her vision.

“The financial burden of cancer remains one of the biggest challenges for families who are experiencing this disease, and Eurolab is proud that today, patients are required to pay less than half of what they had to pay for oncology medicine in 2010,” says du Toit.

Founded in 2011 as a generic oncology medicine company to make cancer treatment more affordable for South Africans, together with Gabe Simaan, chairperson of the Eurolab group, du Toit built Eurolab from the ground up into an oncology company that today, through its five divisions, offers an integrated, whole-of cancer-solution to oncologists and their patients.

Today it has a medicine portfolio of over 30 products, and with the introduction of each new drug over the past decade, more patients have received cancer treatment at a more affordable price.

“By 2018, Eurolab had driven the price patients were paying for chemotherapy down by over 50%, while the rest of the market experienced an average increase of over 30%,” says du Toit.

Du Toit says that the Eurolab journey is far from over. “We are working tirelessly on widening access to innovative treatments, solutions and collaborations to strengthen the oncology response in SA in the face of the growing incidence of cancer.”

The CPhI Pharma Awards have been committed to recognising excellence in pharma since 2003.

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