

“It’s helped me get a broader view and access other perspectives”

Almero Oosthuizen

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Identifying AI opportunities for South Africa’s public health system with the help of the AI Campus community

For Almero, it’s the Government AI Campus’s community of practice that has been most useful.

To him, AI isn’t a magic solution, but a powerful tool. That’s especially true in public health systems where resources are tight and clinicians want to spend more face-to-face time with patients and less time on administrative tasks.

With two decades of experience as an emergency medicine physician, Almero now leads clinical innovation and strategy for the Western Cape Department of Health in South Africa. His work is guided by a simple principle: create environments where people can do their best work — not despite the system, but because of it. That’s where AI comes in.

“AI and automation have a major role to play, particularly... in developing economies like ours [South Africa] where we don’t have the luxury of having entire floors of administrative support personnel.”

While South Africa is still in the early stages of public sector AI adoption, Almero is using it himself to analyse data and structure reports more quickly. He’s also focusing on local experimentation: trialling using AI to automate documentation and reduce admin burdens for teams.

So much work in government is context-specific. For this reason, the AI in Government Community has been valuable. It’s connected him to others facing similar challenges and helped him identify best practice.

“The AI bundle [Government AI Campus] offered by Apolitical has helped me... get a broader view and access other perspectives, voices and people that have helped shape how I interact with my space.”

The theme of people is an important one for Almero. For him, the future of AI in government isn’t just about technology, it’s about people and connecting with others.