

# FirstNet Technology Services Case Study

DIS-CHEM PHARMACIES LIMITED.

---

**Dis-Chem**  
PHARMACIES

[www.firstnet.co.za](http://www.firstnet.co.za)

Phone (24/7): 086 198 9896

Email: [support@firstnet.co.za](mailto:support@firstnet.co.za)

 **FirstNet**  
Technology Services

# Dis-Chem

## PHARMACIES

### **DIS-CHEM PHARMACIES LIMITED.**

Dis-Chem, founded in 1978 is one of the largest retail pharmacy chains in South Africa with over 200 stores across South Africa and into Africa. With such a large footprint of stores Dis-Chem's challenge is ensuring each store can communicate back to Dis-Chem's core cloud infrastructure to function daily. Dis-Chem was previously using MPLS technology to deliver connectivity to all their stores.

Connectivity pricing for a low-speed link is very costly when using traditional MPLS. We needed to reduce the connectivity costs and optimise performance and availability as well as improve the network security of Dis-Chem's online systems.

### **LISTEN FIRST TO UNDERSTAND**

FirstNet first spent time with Dis-Chem assessing their networks and listened to their unique challenges, gaining comprehensive insight into current operations and pinpointing areas of opportunity.

We analysed the feasibility at each Dis-Chem store for different carrier networks as well as the ability of our solutions to answer their future growth and operational requirements. We strategized and formulated a rollout plan and assigned timelines to all factors and prerequisites to ensure that every level of the project was mapped out for efficiency. FirstNet migrated current systems to cost-effective Broadband and VPN connectivity with Corporate LTE APN failover and full Firewall Management store per store.

The logo for Dis-Chem Pharmacies, featuring the text "Dis-Chem" in white and "PHARMACIES" in yellow on a green rectangular background. A vertical blue bar is positioned to the left of the logo.

# Dis-Chem PHARMACIES

## **SUPPORT:**

To date, Dis-Chem has over 220 stores in our care with year-round 24/7 connectivity and firewall support and management, ensuring all systems are consistently operational and secure.

## **SAVING MONEY:**

The implementation of a high-speed broadband approach using a combination of Fibre Broadband as well as LTE at each site with uptime Service Level Agreement allowed Dis-Chem to receive the best solution at the most cost effective price point. This multi-site broadband solution combined with SD-WAN provided higher connectivity links including failover links at a much more competitive rate than Dis-Chem were previously paying.

## **ADDING VALUE:**

The integration of industry-leading technology through considered strategy enables Dis-Chem to provide a stable connection for the internal store systems and free in-store WiFi for customers, adding benefits to each new store that is opened and connected through FirstNet.

Centralised Firewall Management using a "Single Pane of Glass" approach allows Dis-Chem to maintain their fleet of firewalls easily and efficiently. We deliver services end to end from landing the best connectivity infrastructure at each site to weekly update meetings with management teams as well as daily feedback.

"FirstNet are always willing to assist and always go the extra mile. I would highly recommend them as a Service Provider. They understand that we are a dynamic business, with tight timelines, but always pull together to help us get things done!"

Lee Engelbrecht  
Head of Infrastructure & Security  
Dis-Chem Pharmacies (Pty) Ltd