



Internet-enabled smart lockers for chronically ill patients | Photo source Neo Hutiri/Pelebox

SMART LOCKER SPEEDS UP MEDICATION COLLECTION FOR CHRONICALLY ILL PATIENTS

 HEALTHCARE & WELLBEING

Pelebox eliminates pharmacy queuing for chronically ill patients when collecting their medication

A South African engineer has developed a digital platform that manages internet-enabled smart lockers for chronically ill patients to collect their medication. It eliminates pharmacy queuing by providing patients with a one-time PIN, which opens a locker that contains their medicine.

Neo Hutiri was inspired to create the **Pelebox** after he was diagnosed with TB in 2014 and dealt with long collection queues when picking up his medicine. He says that by using the locker, medication can be collected in under one minute.

Using the locker helps patients by giving them “the opportunity to not take too much time away from work, to focus on their business, to effectively live a more productive life without having lost time due to managing a disease,” **Hutiri told the BBC.**

Hutiri was recently recognised for his invention by **winning the 2019 Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation** from the Royal Academy of Engineering. There are currently six of the smart lockers operating in South Africa.

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Takeaway:

There are over 7 million people living with HIV/AIDS in South Africa, [according to unaids.org](#), and its HIV/AIDS treatment programme is the largest in the world. This results in a large number of patients with repeat prescriptions and, along with staff shortages, cause the long pharmacy queues. Pelebox remedies this, and also provides privacy. "If you collect your ARV medication for HIV from a locker, you don't have to deal with the fear that somebody's watching me," Hutiri said. Springwise has been tracking developments in improving HIV/AIDS testing and treatment, including a fast and accurate [HIV test via a USB stick](#), and a data analysis project that [collects global research for an HIV vaccine](#) so scientists can quickly test ideas, make unforeseen connections, and avoid duplicating efforts.