

DKMS Africa secures R2m to support transplantation for 8 paediatric state patients

DKMS Africa (formerly known as The Sunflower Fund) has secured over R2m (€140,000) through its state patient support programme to facilitate access to transplantation for eight paediatric patients, covering the costs that are not covered by the public healthcare system. Patients will be identified by the participating transplant doctors and donor suitability will be ascertained by an independent clinician's panel.



Alana James, country executive director of DKMS Africa

Alana James, country executive director of DKMS Africa, says this initiative will make it possible for eight children in South Africa's public healthcare to receive life-saving blood stem cell transplants and will serve as a springboard for further ventures of its kind.

Earlier this year, DKMS Africa made an impassioned call to the government to support more blood disorder patients by paying for sibling typing. DKMS Africa is engaging policymakers on its recommendations.

Currently, for a state patient with no sibling match, the state will not cover any unrelated donor-related costs, including high-resolution HLA typing, but will cover the cost of the transplant itself. There is both capacity and skill available in the state transplant clinics, but few transplants take place.



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25 May 2021



Collaborations vital

Dr Candice Hendricks, a paediatric haematologist at the Institute for Cellular and Molecular Medicine, says the state programme will bring access to healthcare to patients with constrained financial resources. "Both the state and private sectors need to work closely together, and the expertise exists in both sectors, therefore collaborations are vitally important. An even more important component to successfully meeting this goal is to get as many donors as possible to donate stem cells."

James concluded that building a strong trust relationship with the government and the state transplant community is essential. Public-private partnerships are key in the success of initiatives such as this one, especially since DKMS hopes to turn this programme into an ongoing venture. After implementing the pilot project, we will assess the process and results, and based on the outcomes and available budget, we hope to continue and expand this programme."

Furthermore, she said, "DKMS Africa has a proven record of putting patients first, and this financial injection attests to that commitment.

"Building a strong trust relationship with the government and the state transplant community is key to us, and so is the

promotion of public-private partnerships and collaborations with organisations such as the South African Stem Cell Transplant Society (SASCeTS).”



New NPO Hope Guardians to connect young South Africans with free therapy

25 Jun 2021



How the public and corporates can support the cause

For July (Mandela Month), DKMS Africa is encouraging organisations and corporates to register to become donors. Over the past couple of months, DKMS Africa has welcomed the support of blood stem cell registration champions who have taken it upon themselves to recruit donors on the organisation's behalf.

"We are grateful for these warriors. In a few cases, the most successful donor drives came from corporations. We invite organisations and corporates to champion the cause by requesting bulk swab kits to register interested donors. DKMS Africa will facilitate training," says the organisation.

Swab kit requests can be made for any number of staff by getting in touch with one of the following people:

- Xolani Hlongwane for Cape Town and the Eastern Cape: xolani.hlongwane@dkms-africa.org
- Nockey Mkhize for KwaZulu Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga: nockey.mkhize@dkms-africa.org
- Kedibone Mogabe for Gauteng, North West and Northern Cape, Free State: kedibone.mogabe@dkms-africa.org

Alternatively, contact 0800121082 or click [here](#).

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