

Kulula flies kids in need to children's hospital in Mother City

Kulula.com has partnered with the Children's Hospital Trust to fly little ones in desperate need of medical treatment from across South Africa to the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Cape Town.

Eve Liebetrau, Executive Manager of Human Resources for kulula.com (operated by Comair Limited) says: "At kulula we fly whoever, whenever, whyever. What really makes all the difference is when we can fly a little person in need. Our main aim with this partnership is to reach as many children in need of medical care as possible by doing what we do best - flying! This includes providing flights for children and their parents who cannot afford flights to the Red Cross Children's Hospital, as well as flying the hospital's specialist doctors to hospitals outside of Cape Town."



Esihle waits for her flight.

Kulula recently welcomed on board, Esihle, who is only three years old and was diagnosed with Leukaemia. Amanda Mei from East London became very worried when her three year old daughter, Esihle, started vomiting excessively, suffered from diarrhoea and developed sores around her mouth. Esihle was diagnosed with Leukaemia on 23 February 2014 and was then referred from East London to the Red Cross Children's Hospital, to receive the chemotherapy she required.



Esihle and her teddy bear.

Little Esihle and her mother, Amanda, were inseparable for four months. Amanda travelled with her daughter and slept on a kangaroo chair next to her little girl's bed instead of at the on-site Parents Accommodation, as she couldn't bear to be apart from her daughter.



Esihle with her mother Amanda Mei.

Doctors were happy with Esihle's progress so she was discharged on 10 July 2014 and kulula was proud to fly her and her mom home.



Esihle waves goodbye to the nurses.

Kulula's contribution to the Children's Hospital Trust is valued at R1-million, which consists of air tickets to the value of R500,000 for patients, parents and doctors of the Red Cross Children's Hospital and a monetary donation of R500,000 to go towards the expansion of the Parents Accommodation facility on the premises of the hospital. The Parents Accommodation provides parents or caregivers with a comfortable place to stay so that they are close to their children who are receiving medical care in the hospital.

Louise Driver, CEO of the Children's Hospital Trust says, "We are immensely grateful to kulula for coming 'on board' with their generous donation and addressing a very real need. The hospital has around 270 inpatients at any given time, so the current Parents Accommodation is far too small to accommodate all those parents needing on-site accommodation to be close to their sick or injured children. After the upgrade the facility will be able to accommodate 120 parents, which is double its current capacity."

To be moved by little Esihle's story, watch this two-minute video clip:

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