

Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital Emergency Centre Upgrade and Expansion

Completion Report April 2022



Introduction to the Emergency Centre

After 3 years of planning, fundraising R122 million, and building, the Emergency Centre (EC) at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital (RCWMCH) finally opened its doors in March 2022. Staff were thrilled to move into the expanded and upgraded centre which contains various new state-of-the-art equipment. As the only paediatric EC in Southern Africa, it operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The EC sees the full range of children who require resuscitation; this includes little ones who have been in motor vehicle accidents, suffered severe burns, heart failure and other critically ill or injured children. Prior to the upgrade, limited spacing and under-resourced equipment, made it challenging to provide children with the dignified, accessible, and quality care that they deserve.

Project Overview

The project which commenced in April 2019 was delivered in two phases and practical completion took place in October 2020 (Phase 1) and March 2022 (Phase 2). Designed in partnership with the clinical team, improvements to create a child- and user-friendly environment are critical to maintain the high standard of care needed to minimise hospitalisation and ensure that children return home to their families. This upgrade has improved the personalised care and flow of patients and healthcare professionals through the busy frontline of the hospital.

Key Changes in The Emergency Centre Include the following:

- Specialised units of care within the Emergency Centre
- Burns treatment room
- Two isolation cubicles
- Decontamination and isolation room with separate entrance from the outside
- Calm room
- Child protection room
- Family counselling room
- Lift from Emergency Centre directly to Operating Theatres and ICU
- Separate triage rooms
- More comfortable waiting areas for families
- Medical and trauma resuscitation areas closer to each other
- Improved staff and teaching facilities
- Separate entrances for pedestrians and ambulances



[Click to watch EC opening video](#)

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We are extremely grateful to our partner, the Children's Hospital Trust, and to all our donors for helping to make a difference in the lives of all the young patients who need emergency medical and trauma care at our facility. We know this was no small ask, but we also know it will help save lives while improving the quality of service and ultimately the patient experience of children, and their families, in our Emergency Centre.

- Dr Anita Parbhoo, CEO: Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital



Thank You for Your Support.



Every little one counts



Prof McCulloch



Carla Brown



Dr Rowan Dunkely

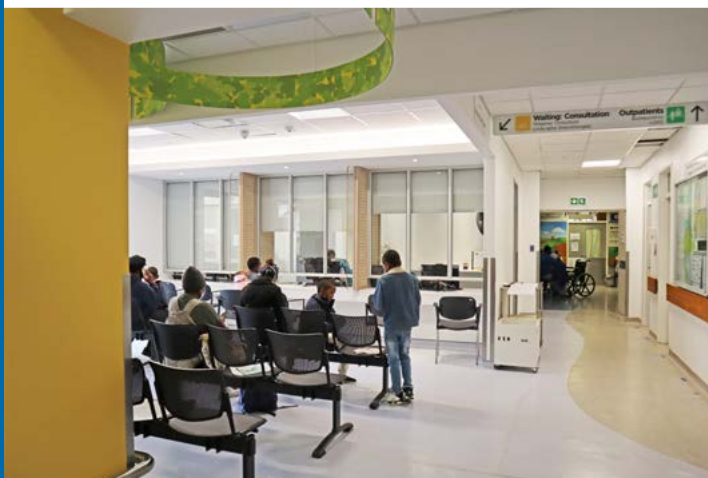


Dr Heloise Buys

Click on the images to watch the healthcare team speak about EC prior to the upgrade



Every little one counts



Quick and Easy Access to Decontamination, Resuscitation, Burns Treatment Rooms and Waiting Areas

 **Every little one counts**

Emergency Centre **AFTER** the Upgrade



Medical Resuscitation and Trauma Areas

Child Protection



Every little one counts

C-MAC Intubation Laryngoscope

Securing a patient's airway is the most important initial step when resuscitating a desperately ill or injured patient. The C-MAC laryngoscope is a device that allows the clinician to see on a screen the exact direction and position in which to place the airway tube through which the patient will be ventilated. Previously, these tubes would be placed under direct vision without the aid of a camera and screen. While this is fine in many patients, it is very difficult in patients with swollen airways due to infection or burns, or patients with facial injuries where the anatomy is distorted. The use of this small device with a camera has transformed difficult intubation procedures and in so doing, will assist in the lifesaving initial step of resuscitation.



Fluid Warmer

Patients presenting to an emergency centre, whether sick or injured, often require a lot of intravenous fluids or blood. Administration of large amounts of cold fluid would result in cooling of the patient which alters the way the body responds to the illness or injury, changes the way blood clots and how organs function. For this reason, it is vital to give warmed fluid to patients. The fluid warmer will ensure that appropriate temperature fluids can be administered to sick and injured patients.



Burns Shower Trolley with Disinfectant Panel

Burn wounds can very easily become infected, leading to deepening of the burn wound, poor healing or loss of skin grafts that have been placed, as well as sepsis that may become very severe. It has been shown through a study in the Red Cross burn unit that burns wound sepsis was decreased by about 70% by simply washing the whole patient at the time of admission. The Shower trolley with the disinfectant panel is designed to wash the patient and their wounds with appropriate temperature water from head to toe while allowing the wastewater to flow away, and all of this is done at a comfortable height for the clinicians involved. The addition of this unit to the EC will allow doctors to wash all patients with burn wounds, even those who will be discharged to the outpatient clinic for follow up. This was not possible in the old unit.



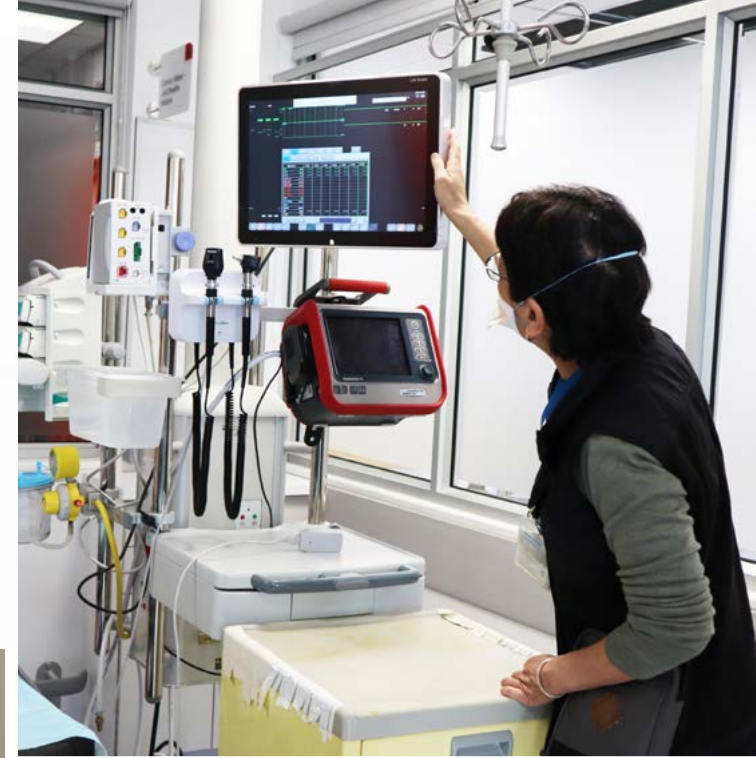
Every little one counts

Life Guard Patient Trolley with Monitor Shelf at foot End and Life Guard Patient Trolley with Padded Safety Sides for Children

Children's bodies are fragile. Being rushed into the EC often means a rapid transfer onto a resuscitation bed - the thick and comfortable mattress is easy to sanitise between patients and fit for purpose. It is important to have an adjustable height bed that allows easy and comfortable access to both the patient and staff. There is safety built into every trolley with safety rails on either side to prevent falls. The adjustable head-end of the trolley allows the breathless asthmatic to sit up and lean forward and hold onto the side rails to splint and get their best breaths in and out; it also allows a child with a head injury to get the best blood supply by special positioning. The trolley can rapidly tilt either end to prevent the vomiting child from choking. The trolley is on wheels and can easily be used to transfer a child swiftly for a CT scan or even to ICU - without the need to move a critically ill child onto another transfer trolley, it has a drip stand for medication pumps and fluids. It has a hatch for an oxygen cylinder so that children do not suffer hypoxia during transfer - the side rails also allow us to secure a portable ventilator to continue ventilation even whilst on route to the ICU. Finally, we note that the trolley is durable and easy to manoeuvre and of excellent quality and we can safely expect years of good service.



Trolley Beds



Monitors



Every little one counts

Finding Avethandwa

On their way to home to Vredenburg from Cape Town, 9-year-old Avethandwa and her relatives were caught in a tragic car accident as they passed through Darling.

“Days before leaving for Cape Town our initial driver cancelled on us, and my daughter then took to the road with her cousins. We heard news about an accident, but we didn’t think that it would be our family members. It was only the next day when they didn’t arrive at their destination, and we visited the police station in Darling that we heard the horrific news. My heart dropped and I was filled with fear and sadness,” tells Avethandwa’s dad, as he recounts the horror of the family’s loss and the frantic search for his child.

Avethandwa’s older cousin was at the wheel and succumbed to the fatal impact. Thrown instantly into unimaginable grief, the fear of losing his own child was magnified. Not knowing where the others were, Avethandwa’s dad called and followed up to find where their injured family members were taken for treatment.

He soon learned that Avethandwa and her other cousin were immediately rushed from the scene directly to Groote Schuur Hospital back in Cape Town. The little one, confused and in excruciating pain, suffered severe injuries – a broken leg along with head injuries that caused inflammation on her brain.

While still in pain, with no familiar faces nor the feeling of “I’m home”, the little one was rushed to the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital. No one could identify her at the time, as her dad was still searching for her. He dropped everything he was doing and was on the quest to find his precious little daughter, the apple of his eye. In his desperation to find his daughter, this father’s relentless search soon paid off.

Avethandwa, received specialist emergency care in the newly upgraded Emergency Centre and was surrounded by dedicated staff who ensured that she benefitted from the best care possible, and was soon out of danger, on a path of recovery. This little one has undergone two surgeries with the first surgery on her broken leg and the second one, a little more serious, relieving the pressure on her brain caused by the trauma and inflammation. This brave little girl endured the pain along with the frightening unfamiliarity of strange places and strange faces. And although the medical staff at the Children’s Hospital nourish and nurture both the physical and emotional wellbeing of their little patients, the intensive trauma that she experienced was greatly alleviated when she was reunited with her dad, who would stop at nothing to find his precious child.

Now, holding her father’s hand, Avethandwa calls out to her dad, “Daddy, my head, help my head.” He reaches out to his daughter and comforts her. He gently pats her on the shoulder, saying: “It will be okay.” And in an instant, she knows he’s right. She’s safe now, and it will be okay.

Avethandwa is steadily on her way to recovery, but will require extensive specialist care at the Red Cross Children’s Hospital which includes counselling and physiotherapy as she learns to walk independently again. She is currently with her Dad in the Trauma Unit while she fully recovers, and every day she knows more and more that it will be okay.



Conclusion

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There are no words that can describe the service that I received at Red Cross Children's Hospital, coming here was the best decision I could have made. Rushing my baby from the scene to the hospital was frightening but I am so grateful to every person who donated because I can only imagine how more frightening it would have been coming into a space that is cramped and full.

- Tershia Africa, mother of Noah (motor vehicle accident survivor)

This year, **the Trust celebrates 28 years of giving hope and healing** and is proud to have raised over **R1 billion** for child healthcare since its inception. The Trust's mission is to source funding for vulnerable, sick and injured children with a vision to provide high quality, accessible child healthcare through sustainable funding.

Your generosity makes it possible for little ones to have the very best healthcare and to awaken their dreams. This is the difference that you make in the lives of vulnerable children and their families.

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Generous donors have contributed over a R120 million to the upgrade and expansion of the Emergency Centre in three years; two of those three years was during a pandemic that affected us all in different ways. Few words can describe how grateful we are to all the donors who have walked this journey with us - we feel your presence when we walk through the new rooms in the Emergency Centre. Thank you for helping us make a real difference in the lives of children and their families who need a safe and comfortable space during a traumatic time in their lives. - Chantel Cooper, CEO: The Children's Hospital Trust

41 784 little ones were treated at the EC from January 2021 - end February 2022

84% Medical Emergencies

16% Trauma Emergencies

23% of patients are under the age of 1

57% of patients are between the ages of 1 and 6

20% of patients are 7 years old and older



Every little one counts

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