



CHOC Childhood Cancer Foundation is the only organisation that provides comprehensive country-wide support for children with cancer and other life-threatening blood disorders, and their families. The organisation was established in 1979 by parents of children diagnosed with cancer. These parents recognised the emotional, financial and other hardships faced by parents and other family members, as well as children undergoing outpatient treatment.

Without CHOC's support, many children – particularly from low-income families living far from treatment centres, would not be able to access, or adhere to, the necessary but arduous treatment cycle, which can last over three years.

#### **CHOC Programmes and Services:**

These are core ongoing services offered nationwide.

CHOC Childhood Cancer Foundation aims to provide the best possible support for children with cancer and life-threatening blood disorders and their families.

Our holistic approach includes emotional support in the hospital wards, from diagnosis onwards, and practical support ranging from accommodation, transport, care bags and basic nutritional support.

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CHOC's core programmes include:

1. Emotional Support

CHOC employs two social workers and two social auxiliary workers and offers professional psychosocial support at the paediatric oncology treatment centres. CHOC also provides support through the establishment of support groups for children, parents and survivors. Ward volunteers provide interactive play for the children and CHOC provides refreshments for children and parents attending the out-patients clinic for treatment and follow-up visits. Bereavement support is provided to those families who children have passed away.

2. Accommodation

CHOC Houses provide accommodation close to treatment centres for out of town patients and parents/caregivers. At the CHOC House, the children and their mothers find comfort in knowing that they will receive the best care and support during this trying time in their lives. It is a home away from home. Comfortable rooms, lounges and play areas as well as three nutritionally balanced meals are provided per day. CHOC also provides daily transport to and from the hospitals for those children attending the out-patient clinics.

3. Transport

Bus/taxi fare is given to patients, parents / caregivers through the recommendations of a CHOC or Hospital Social Worker to ensure no child is precluded from accessing and adhering to treatment.

4. Practical Support

CHOC offers basic necessities such as care bags which include toiletries and fund activities for the children. Food parcels are also provided to families who are in need of them. CHOC also assists families with funeral funds where needed. All of this support helps to relieve the financial burden placed on the family by a cancer diagnosis.

5. Awareness and Training

CHOC trains health professionals, traditional healers and communities on the early warning signs of childhood cancer. This is done to promote early diagnosis, access to specialised treatment centres and continuation of treatment which reduces the mortality and morbidity of children with cancer.

**Additional Programmes offered by CHOC**

These are additional services offered when needed and as resources allow.

1. Ward Comforts

CHOC assists with the maintenance and decoration of wards into cheerful, child friendly environments and in some cases assists in the refurbishment of paediatric oncology wards.

2. Recreational Activities

Through dedicated funding, CHOC works with other organisations to send children and their siblings on camps and excursions. Christmas Parties are held annually for the children and their families. These fun activities and outings help the child and their family to have a break from the arduous treatment process and have some fun in a relaxed environment.

We are raising funds to help put a smile on children living with cancer. The funds will be used for different initiatives for children from the Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital, the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital and the Donald Gordon Medical Centre.

Previous projects funded include:

1. The maintenance of the fish tank at the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital
2. The provision of televisions for children staying in the ward
3. TV games, board games, puzzles, colouring in books and crayons
4. Christmas parties for over 500 children