

Children's Hospital



Overview

Location Cape Town, South Africa.

Duration From 2 weeks.

Dates All year round from 6th January to 20th December.

Requirements

- Minimum age: 18.
- You must have an Upper Intermediate level of English.
- Special skills: You should have sensitivity and empathy towards the children.

Your impact 

The impact of your volunteer work depends on the nature of the project. In addition, it may also depend on whether the project offers a full volunteering experience or a combination of volunteering and tourism. For details, please see the description of the project and what's included in the project fees.

Documents required Enrolment form, curriculum vitae, letter of motivation, passport copy, proof of medical insurance, police clearance certificate.

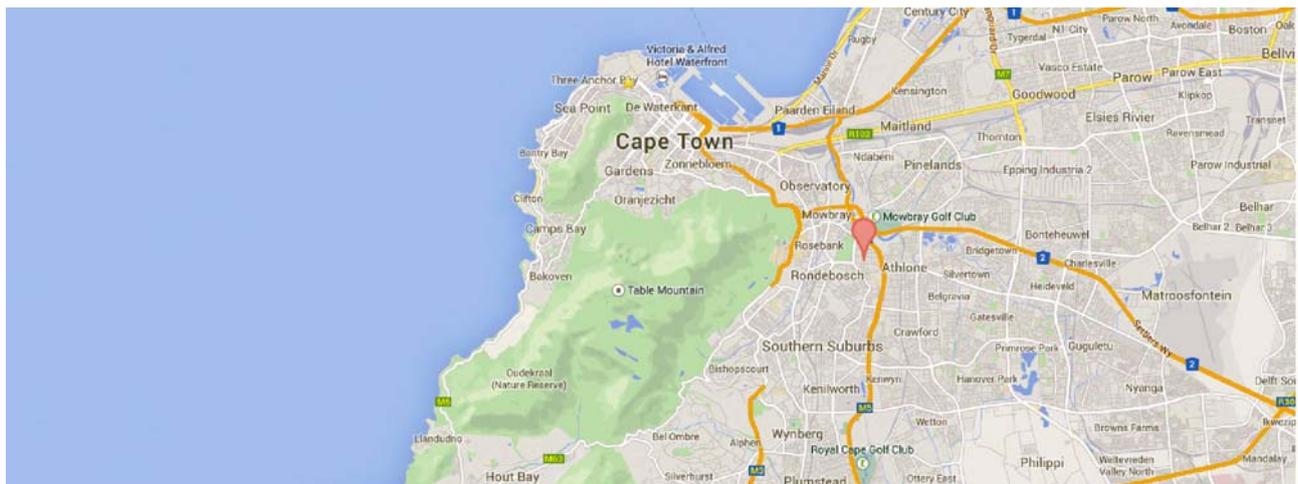
Day of arrival Thursday.

Day of departure Saturday.

Highlights

- The difference you will make in these kid's lives and daily recovery will be thanked in so much love, hugs and smiles.
- Through playing with and reading to the young patients, you comfort them and make them forget about their reality, even for just a moment. For them, your friendship and company is worth more than anything.
- Volunteering changes lives - for both you and the children.
- You will become a kid's hero. Their faces will light up when they see you, their little hands ready to take yours and go play.
- Experience amazing tours and adventures in and around Cape Town.
- Get personal support from the volunteer coordinator.
- Make new friends from all over the world.

Project information



This hospital is the only dedicated specialist pediatric hospital serving the children of Southern Africa. The hospital is a national asset and handles the worst cases of disease and chronic illness in children under 12 years of age.

Focus areas include renal and liver transplants, specialized burn care, neurosurgery, cancer treatment, intensive care, HIV/Aids research, TB, re-hydration and co-ordination, and management in the care of chronic disorders.

The Friends of the Hospital Association is a non-profit organisation based at the Children's Hospital. They've been in existence since 1978, operating as The Family Resource Centre. Their purpose is to accelerate and maintain the recovery of patients attending the Children's Hospital by providing resources, education and support to patients, caregivers and immediate families. As FRIENDS, they believe that physical and emotional healing work simultaneously.



Throughout our lives we all need friends – and even more so when one of our children is sick and in hospital. This project is committed to helping make the hospital experience less traumatic for patients and their families by providing emotional support as well as practical assistance.

This association depends solely on the support of the community. With your help they are able to provide a more comfortable stay for the children and their families at the hospital – because happiness is going home!

Programme details

This is a “Play Volunteer Programme”:

Play in the wards is a time and space where patients can express the healthy part of themselves. It aims to bring about a sense of wellbeing, an escape from the “illness”. It creates a warm and happy environment where kids can be kids and not patients. It is during this time that patients can express their playfulness. It is also within this playful relationship that the child’s emotional and social development is encouraged. You will come to realize that you form part of a multi-disciplinary team, which facilitates the healing process of the little children. It is important to remember that you will not be involved in any medical procedures as per South African health professional laws. Your main responsibility will be to have and create fun.

Your role

Monday – Friday, from 09:00 – 13:00 and 14:00 – 16:00.

You take turns visiting the wards and clinics. You may choose to be in the ‘healthier’ wards if you are not strong enough to handle the really sick areas. You visit the hospital wards, all dressed up in a fun apron and with brightly colored toy trolleys filled with fun goodies, giving love and comfort to sick children who are often scared and missing their families.

You interact with patients through appropriate play, reading, and other interactive activities.

You will be expected to help wherever necessary, including doing administration tasks, helping in the storeroom and assisting the Friends’ Fundraising Shop.

It is important to note that this description serves as an example only. The daily tasks and challenges depend on the volunteer and the work that needs to be done. The final job description can therefore vary substantially from the above.

Arrival

You will need to arrive on a Thursday at Cape Town International Airport. Our driver will meet you at the airport and take you to your accommodation.

After an orientation meeting at the language school in Newlands on Friday, your first day of volunteering will be on Monday.

Accommodation

You will live at the Volunteer House. It is a private house in an upmarket residential area and consists of rooms with 2 single beds and 2 bunk beds. There are 4 bathrooms to share, a communal kitchen, a dining room, a lounge with TV and DVD and a beautiful garden with a swimming pool. A commercial laundry service is close by. Bedding is provided. Towels are not provided.



Meals

Self-catering. The main shopping areas as well as restaurants, pubs, etc. are within walking distance of Volunteer House. The Children's Hospital has its own tuck shop and a canteen; furthermore, it is close to a shopping centre with a Woolworths.

Free time

Together with other volunteers and language students from Good Hope Studies you can take part in the entertainment programme of the Social Club. There are organised events, outings and tours most evenings and at the weekends. To find out about the current programme, go to www.goodhopevolunteers.com.

How to get to the project

There is a daily transfer by bus from the Volunteer House to the project and back.

What to bring

There are no special requirements in this regard but we recommend bringing items of a personal nature, any medication, warm clothes in winter, sun screen in summer (despite the heat it can still get rather cold in the evenings so make sure you still bring a couple of jumpers), rain jacket, adaptors, spending money. All these items and anything else can be bought at local supermarkets in South Africa.

While there is no specific uniform, volunteers are asked to wear sensible clothing, e.g. long shorts and closed shoes. Hot pants, string bikinis and flip-flops are not suitable for work.

Medical insurance

It is required that you take out medical insurance before travelling to South Africa. For stays exceeding 90 days, it is compulsory to take out a South African medical insurance. We recommend NetworX from Compcare, which is specifically designed for people who visit South Africa for 3 to 12 months. You will receive an information leaflet and an application form together with your confirmation of booking.

Health

No vaccinations are required except for travellers going to the north-eastern areas of South Africa, where anti-malaria precautions are recommended. Clients should consult their doctor for recommendations.

A yellow fever certificate is compulsory for those persons who have travelled from, or intend travelling through, countries in the yellow fever belt:

Africa: Angola, Burundi, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire.

South America: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Panama, Peru, Surinam, Venezuela, Argentina and Paraguay.



Bring medication just in case you suffer from any travel-related illnesses, e.g. stomach upsets, since your body needs to adjust to the change in food and water during your first few days in South Africa.

It is important to keep in mind at all times that HIV and Aids are widespread diseases in South Africa.

Safety

There is no need to be worried about catching a sickness; the hospital will not put you in contact with any kids that are contagious.

HIV and AIDS are a major public health concern. You should be aware that you are working with children that could be infected.

What's included / not included

Included:

- Project placement
- Airport transfer on arrival
- Accommodation (Volunteer House: shared room, shared bathroom, self-catering)
- Daily bus transfer to and from the project
- Full-day excursion on the first Saturday
- A donation towards the project
- Good Hope Volunteers welcome pack
- Weekly site visits by our coordinator
- An orientation at the beginning of your volunteering
- Participation in the activities of the Social Club (extra charges may apply)
- Electronic certificate (printed copy on request)
- Local support including a 24-hour emergency number
- WiFi

Not included:

- Food
- Local transport
- Any items of a personal nature

When combining with a language course

When you participate in a language course before you start at this project or when you participate in a language course in the morning and volunteer in the afternoon, the day of arrival is Sunday and the free full-day excursion on the first Saturday is not applicable.



Visa

You can volunteer in South Africa on a visitor's visa for up to 90 days.

Nationals from certain countries (e.g. Brazil, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, France, Netherlands, Spain) will receive their visa when entering South Africa. Other nationals need to apply for a visitor's visa at a South African Embassy in their home country before travelling.

If you come to South Africa on a visitor's visa, you can extend once by another 90 days.

If you plan to come for more than 90 days, you need to apply for a visa at a South African Embassy in your home country.

For the latest information contact the South African Embassy or Good Hope Volunteers.