

## **Tygerberg Hospital School**

Tygerberg Hospital School is a school located inside the Tygerberg Hospital.

### **Background**

While students are in the hospital, they lose out on a lot of teaching time. Some students have been in the hospital for extended periods of time, and they need intensive remedial classes in order to catch up on the work that they have missed. Other students have been bed-ridden for extended periods without any stimulation. Sometimes there are children as old as 12 that have never been in school. Tygerberg Hospital School (THS) wants the best possible education for each and every child in the country. THS is thus very fortunate to be able to accommodate the students and make a difference in their lives. THS teaches the students at their current level of ability and thus build their confidence. THS teaches all students and does not discriminate based on gender, language, race, or illness.

**THS is trying to bridge the gap between the schools they attend at home and the time they spend in the hospital.**

- the school is 100% inclusive
- THS teaches in English and Afrikaans, and HOPE Cape Town has sponsored classes in isiXhosa since 2015
- all of the learners in the primary school are patients in the hospital
- the students typically remain in THS for between 3 days and 6 months, although some stay for longer
- the school strives towards Christian principles, but accepts students of all religious beliefs
- all of the classes are multi-grade and multi-lingual
- the classes are small, enabling students to receive individual attention
- there are no school fees

The High School Unit is called ITHUBA – it is Xhosa and it means hope.

Ithuba was established in 2004. It is supported by the Family Unit of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Tygerberg Hospital. It aims to provide support and assistance with school readiness for adolescents recovering from psychiatric illnesses, enabling them to return to their schools and communities or alternatively to prepare them for the workplace.

## Ithuba Vision

The vision is to educate students at their own level so that they can reach their full potential after they have been discharged.

## Ithuba Goals

- develop students' full potential through effective education
- foster each students' unique abilities
- improve students' self-esteem

HOPE Cape Town has been supporting the Tygerberg Hospital School since 2014 by donating books, clothes, toiletries, computers, and by supporting events run by THS. Furthermore, HOPE Cape Town provides occupational therapy for the Grade R students of the school. HOPE Cape Town has also been financing the Xhosa-speaking teacher for the isiXhosa students since 2015. THS identified a need for a teacher who could speak Xhosa, and Khosi Jelwana was employed in January 2015. Although Khosi was invaluable in teaching the children in the school and the wards,



her work as an interpreter between hospital staff and patients and their families was priceless. She is able to explain procedures to concerned parents in their native language, and parents really appreciated having Khosi there.

Khosi has a warm personality and the students trust her immensely. Her sense of humour is also a breath of fresh air in a place where sadness is part of the daily routine. She is not only an amazing teacher, she also gives a lot of herself to the learners. Since Khosi started here in January 2015, she has taught 301 learners. This is remarkable and it shows the need of the learners, school, hospital and the parents.

Khosi's experience in working with patients with HIV/AIDS is invaluable in her work at the school. She is able to provide her colleagues with knowledge about HIV, and she has insight into the needs of students who are not well.

