



HEALTH
KwaZulu-Natal

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EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPERATION SMILE FREE CLEFT LIP/PALATE SURGERY

The KZN Department of Health, together with Operation Smile and the Star Smile Fund, will be providing corrective facial surgery to children and adults who have Cleft Lips, or Cleft Palates. Cleft Lips and Cleft Palates are holes in the roof of the mouth and lip that have caused the lips not to fully form. This service of free cleft lip and cleft palate surgery will be provided in September from the 7-16th, at Ngwelezane hospital in Empangeni. Should you know of any person, child or adult, born with this disfigurement please contact the KZN Health Operations Centre on their toll free line: 0800 005 133.

The person's details will be taken and they will be advised on where to go for pre-screening and medical evaluation. This is necessary to determine whether the person will be a candidate for the free corrective surgery in September.

Pre-screenings will take place over 4 days in August at the following venues and dates:

- Monday 14th August: **Port Shepstone Hospital at 10H00**
- Tuesday 15th August: **Ladysmith Hospital at 10H00**
- Wednesday 16th August: **Manguzi Hospital at 08H0**
- Thursday 17th August: **Nkonjeni Hospital at 10H00**
- Friday & Saturday 8th and 9th September: **Ngwelezane Hospital at 07H00**

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CLEFTS

- Clefts do not result from evil omens and bad spirits
- Clefts do not result from holding or cutting with a knife during eclipse
- Parents should not search for reasons to blame themselves for "causing Cleft Lips or Cleft Palates" because it's not their fault.

- Persons with clefts are not less gifted than others and their intelligence falls within the normal range provided it is not associated with other complications or syndromes. Clefts can be repaired!

ENDS

For more information please contact Mr. Leon Mbangwa on 083 459 8695