



NEW MILK BANK ENSURES INFANTS GET LIFE-SAVING NOURISHMENT, EVEN WHEN MOM CAN'T BREASTFEED

The PATH Window of Opportunity (WinOp) project supported the upgrade and launch of the regional human milk bank at the Lower Umfolozi Regional War Memorial Hospital (LURWMH) in Uthungulu, KwaZulu-Natal. The upgraded human milk bank, which serves a catchment area of 2.3 million people, was launched on October 26, 2015 by the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo.

Breast is Best

Research has shown that breast milk provides the exact nutrients needed to ensure optimal health, growth and development of a child. It also contains essential elements needed to boost babies' immune system and help them fight infection.

However, due to factors such as premature birth, illness or death, the mother is often not able to breastfeed her infant. The milk bank therefore provides a safe way for new moms to donate and store breast milk and for the hospital to provide breastmilk for use by babies in need.

WinOp Support

WinOp supports the South African Department of Health to help mothers and children in the critical first 1000 days of life, including ensuring that infants have access to optimal nutrition through promoting breastfeeding and access to breast milk.

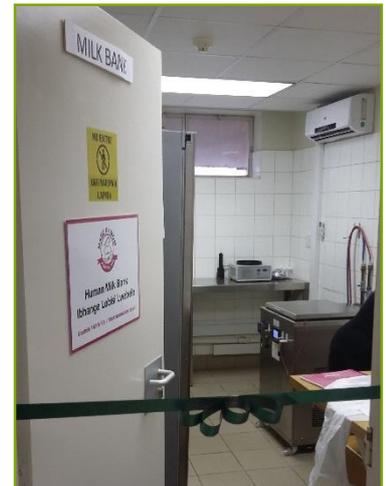
As part of this support, the project purchased a new pasteurizer, freezer and uninterrupted power supply (UPS) for the LURWMH regional hospital and supported the rehabilitation of the existing milk bank infrastructure.

Engaging Communities

To promote the value and importance of breastfeeding and encourage women to donate breast milk, a community event was also held in Umhlatuze, attended by approximately 100 community members.

Hosted by WinOp and Community Media Trust, the event used drama, multi-media and Q and A information sessions to share the importance and benefits of breastfeeding, provide information on the milk bank and encourage women to donate breast milk.

A mother who donated her breast milk and two mothers who received donated milk through the services supported by WinOp also provided testimony on how the human milk bank has changed their lives, helping to ensure the health and survival of their newborns.



The refurbished human milk bank at LURWM Hospital, Empangeni.

“No baby should be left vulnerable to illness, just because their mother cannot breastfeed”

- Dr Dhlomo
KZN MEC for Health



1) KZN MEC for Health, Dr Dhlomo opens the milk bank 2) A donor and two recipients of breastmilk from the milk bank 3) Promoting the milk bank and the importance of breastfeeding in the community