

Title	Centre for Children with Special Needs
Organisation	Bertha Gxowa Hospital, Gauteng Department of Health
Innovation	<p>The Clinical Support and Therapeutic Services, specifically the Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Audiologist initiated the Cerebral Palsy (CP) Clinic in 2016 due to the large number of children living with CP that were getting referred to the department. In assuring holistic approach to the children, a CP Children and Mothers Support Group were established. The group was established to provide rehabilitation services, information, resources and support to all children living with CP and their caregivers. The group grew significantly and a building within this hospital was identified to house what became the Centre for Children with Special Needs.</p> <p>The Clinic runs every Wednesday from 9am to 12pm for rehabilitation, Dietician and Doctors consultations. From 11am to 12pm there are Support Group Sessions for Mothers and Caregivers. The model used is child and family centred. Children are assessed and treated individually before group therapy. For group therapy, children are grouped according to the Gross Motor Classification System (GMCS) which assess the child's mobility. Other classification tools used are EDACS (eating and drinking ability), FCCS (communication ability) and MACS (handling of objects). The sessions are multidisciplinary involving a paediatrician, speech therapy and audiology, occupational therapy, physiotherapist, psychologist, dietician and social worker.</p>
Impact	<p>Before the establishment of the Centre, children, mothers and caregivers used to spend more than a day in the hospital joining different queues to consult different specialists. Now they spend half a day and are able to receive all the services they require. By allowing patients to be consulted simultaneously, limited resources are used efficiently.</p> <p>The hospital pharmacy has played a significant role in assisting the Centre by allocating a special counter for parents and caregivers attending the Centre to collect medication without joining long queues.</p> <p>Furthermore, there has been the creation of a Neurodevelopmental Clinic at the hospital in 2024. Through its establishment, children that are newly presenting with developmental delay no longer need to be referred to other facilities for diagnosis and management. This has impacted positively on patient experience of care whereby timeous diagnosis is done allowing for tailored treatment to be administered early.</p>