

Meet Our Hero: Gaone

Child's condition: Anorectal malformation

D.O.B.: June 24, 2007

"Thank you, thank you, thank you! Our time at SickKids has been very good and Gaone got treatment much better than she would have received at home. The doctors and nurses have done good work!"

- Tshiamo, Gaone's mother

Born at a hospital in Botswana, Gaone was Tshiamo's fourth child. Tshiamo's joy was over shadowed with worry when Gaone didn't pass meconium as most newborns do in their first days of life. Doctors quickly discovered that Gaone had the most complex form of anorectal malformations: a cloaca. The doctors in Botswana carried out a diverting colostomy as a temporary solution until definitive surgery could be planned.

Tshiamo and Gaone travelled between two different hospitals in Botswana, trying to get the treatment and answers needed. In July 2008, Tshiamo met Dr. Azzie, a paediatric surgeon from The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) who works in Botswana for three months a year. After a consultation with Dr. Azzie, it was evident that Gaone's medical needs would best be addressed outside Botswana and they were introduced to the Herbie Fund that assists children around, to receive high specialized surgical treatment.

Upon arrival in Toronto to June 2010, Gaone came under the care of Dr. Georges Azzie, Division of General Surgery along with Dr. Joao Luiz Pippi Salle, Head, Division of Urology, and their respective teams. Given the complexity of her anomaly, she required a combined work-up and stage procedure by paediatric urologists and general surgeons. The medical team assessed Gaone and performed a life-altering surgery in June 2010.

Gaone received post operative care and has recovered well from her surgery. They plan on going home on November where she will receive follow-up treatment from local doctors and follow-up from Dr. Azzie when he returns to Botswana in March 2011. She will be able to play with her brother and sisters while resuming all the normal activities of a three-year-old Motswana.

Tshiamo is very grateful to Dr. Azzie, Dr. Salle and all the staff at Sickkids as well as the Herbie Fund changing Gaone's life forever.

