

Melomed Mitchells Plain Achieves Historic Milestone with Landmark Adolescent Scoliosis Surgery.

Advanced spinal surgery now available closer to home for our communities.



Melomed Mitchells Plain has reached a **significant milestone in specialist healthcare with the successful completion of its first adolescent scoliosis correction surgery** - a landmark achievement that also represents one of the first procedures of its kind to be performed within the Cape Flats region.

The pioneering surgery was led by Dr Hammaad Gamieldeen, Melomed Orthopaedic and Spinal Surgeon, whose growing reputation in complex spinal surgery continues to bring world-class expertise to local communities. The procedure demonstrates Melomed's commitment to expanding access to highly specialised surgical care, allowing patients to receive advanced treatment closer to home rather than travelling to tertiary centres.

A Life-Changing Procedure for a Young Patient

The patient, a 16-year-old Grade 10 learner from the local community, had been living with adolescent idiopathic scoliosis - a condition where the spine develops an abnormal three-dimensional curve during the adolescent growth period. Having first noticed changes in her posture at the age of 12, the curvature progressively worsened, leading to increasing discomfort and a visible spinal deformity. Following comprehensive clinical assessment and specialised imaging, Dr Gamieldeen determined that surgical correction was required to prevent further progression and improve both spinal alignment and long-term quality of life. The patient underwent a posterior spinal correction and instrumented fusion from T5 to L3, a highly specialised procedure designed to restore spinal balance, correct the deformity and stabilise the spine.

Expertise in Complex Spinal Surgery

The operation was performed by Dr Hammaad Gamieldeen, with senior support from renowned spinal surgeon Professor Robert Dunn, and assistance from Dr Z Bawa. The surgery utilised modern posterior spinal instrumentation together with continuous intra-operative spinal cord neuromonitoring, ensuring the patient's neurological function remained protected throughout the operation. Normal monitoring signals were maintained during the entire procedure. What makes this surgery particularly remarkable is its technical complexity.

Scoliosis correction requires meticulous planning and exceptional surgical precision. During the operation, pedicle screws and spinal rods are accurately positioned before carefully correcting the spinal curvature while protecting the spinal cord and surrounding nerves. In this case, the spinal instrumentation was inserted using an advanced free-hand anatomical technique, with fluoroscopy used only to confirm spinal levels - demonstrating a high level of surgical expertise and anatomical accuracy.

Bringing Advanced Healthcare to the Cape Flats

Historically, patients requiring complex spinal deformity surgery have often needed referral to large academic or tertiary hospitals. The successful introduction of this procedure at Melomed Mitchells Plain represents a major advancement in healthcare delivery for the Cape Flats, significantly improving access to specialised spinal services for local patients and their families. For many families, this means receiving world-class spinal care within their own community, reducing the burden of travelling long distances for highly specialised treatment.

A Passion for Improving Access to Specialist Care

Dr Hammaad Gamieldeen has a special interest in spinal deformity surgery and is passionate about making advanced spinal care more accessible to communities that have historically had limited access to these specialised services.

"This is a proud moment for the hospital and for the community," says Dr Gamieldeen. "Scoliosis correction is complex surgery, and being able to offer this level of care on the Cape Flats is an important step in making specialist spinal treatment more accessible to our patients. Every patient deserves access to high-quality specialist care, regardless of where they live."

A Commitment to Clinical Excellence

This milestone highlights the continued growth of Melomed Mitchells Plain as a centre of excellence for advanced orthopaedic and spinal surgery. Supported by experienced multidisciplinary theatre teams, modern surgical technology and highly skilled specialists, Melomed continues to invest in delivering exceptional patient outcomes while expanding specialist healthcare services for the communities it serves. Through innovations such as this, Melomed remains committed to ensuring patients receive world-class medical care, advanced surgical expertise and compassionate treatment - close to home.



About Dr Hammaad Gamieldeen

Dr Hammaad Gamieldeen is a Melomed Orthopaedic and Spinal Surgeon with a special interest in spinal deformity surgery, spinal trauma, degenerative spinal conditions, minimally invasive spinal procedures and complex reconstructive spinal surgery. He consults at Melomed hospitals, providing comprehensive specialist care for adults and adolescents with spinal and orthopaedic conditions.

Appointments

T: 021 300 9247 E: drhgameieldien@gmail.com W: www.melomed.co.za