



The Sunflower Fund

Partnered by DKMS

## MEDIA RELEASE

*For immediate release*

### THE SUNFLOWER FUND ANNOUNCES NEW DATE FOR ANNUAL SUNFLOWER DAY CAMPAIGN

The Sunflower Fund's annual Sunflower Day campaign will be commemorated on Friday 13 November this year.

The campaign, which is one of The Sunflower Fund's biggest fundraising and awareness raising initiatives, is centred on the sale of a multipurpose accessory called a Tube of Hope (TOPE). Proceeds from the sales of the product enables the organisation to recruit blood stem cell donors offering the hope of cure for patients diagnosed with life-threatening blood diseases like leukaemia, sickle cell disease and aplastic anaemia to name a few.

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, the campaign is being moved from its signature date on the third Friday in September, to a new date in November.

"The impact of the lockdown has placed strain on our existing model of recruiting donors and has necessitated that we change operational processes to continue to do the life-saving work we do," said Alana James, CEO of The Sunflower Fund.

"As such we've had to focus our efforts and resources on counteracting this impact for the benefit of the patients we serve," James added.

"Through the unwavering support of our partners like Pick n Pay we were able to re-strategise and will bring the Sunflower Day campaign and our signature TOPES to South Africa on a new date in November," James continued.

"The sale of TOPES provides much needed funding for The Sunflower Fund, but it also creates crucial awareness in our stores of the need for more stem cell donors. We've worked with a local supplier to manufacture the new TOPES and we are excited for them to land in stores so that we can once again rally support for the hard work The Sunflower Fund does on a daily basis," said Suzanne Ackerman-Berman, director of transformation for Pick n Pay.

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Retailing again for just R30 at Pick n Pay stores nationwide, selected independent pharmacies and online at Zando, the design is inspired by people taking action to bring hope to patients in need of a stem cell transplant.

The TOPE comes in six vibrant unisex colours in a great quality fabric and go on sale from mid-October.

In addition to the sale of TOPES, the Sunflower Fund is urging all supporters to consider planning a mini event or fundraiser to commemorate Sunflower Day and help with much needed fundraising efforts to grow the patient support fund.

To pre-order your TOPE, sponsor prizes for the schools' competition or to partner with The Sunflower Fund as a host for a Sunflower Day celebration event contact Traci Sassenberg on 021 701 0661 or [traci@sunflowerfund.org](mailto:traci@sunflowerfund.org).

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### **About The Sunflower Fund partnered by DKMS**

The Sunflower Fund partnered by DKMS is a donor recruitment centre and stem cell registry for Africa and is part of a global network, dedicated to creating awareness about blood diseases and stem cell donation, recruiting blood stem cell donors and maintaining a registry of committed donors.

The Sunflower Fund partnered by DKMS pays for the cost of the tissue-type testing. This is fundamental to saving the lives of South Africans and patients globally who need a stem cell transplant. The chance of finding a matching donor is 1 in 100,000 – and as ethnic origin plays a significant role in the search for a donor, South Africa's rainbow nation is at a distinct disadvantage, requiring a large pool of prospective donors.

### **About DKMS**

DKMS is an international non-profit organisation dedicated to the fight against blood cancer. Founded in 1991 in Germany by Dr. Peter Harf, DKMS has expanded internationally in recent years by establishing entities in the US, Poland, the UK, Chile, together with BMST in India and in South Africa together with The Sunflower Fund partnered by DKMS. Together, they have registered more than 9.9 million potential blood stem cell donors and have given more than 84,000 patients across the globe a second chance at life by facilitating blood stem cell transplants.



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