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**Salood joins Driscoll to deliver non-medical financial aid to child cancer patients**

Driscoll is teaming up with Salood, a Dallas nonprofit that supports pediatric cancer families in need of financial aid. The new partnership announced Tuesday will see financial aid delivered to families of pediatric cancer patients in Driscoll’s service area in South Texas, one of the most medically underserved regions of the U.S.

"We're excited to collaborate with Driscoll, who has an outstanding reputation for pediatric care. Our combined efforts will enable us to serve more families,” said Kenny Freeland, co-founder of Salood.

The aid will go to indirect healthcare expenses including mortgage, utilities, lodging, food, and more, ensuring that families can focus on their child's treatment without added stress. These non-medical expenses, referred to as ancillary costs, prevent many Texans from receiving care. The out-of-hospital expenses that pile up, or the lost wages due to time off work can discourage families from receiving the care they need.

“Childhood cancer does cause financial strain on families. Many families must temporarily relocate here to be close to the hospital. There are some households with single parents who must stop working completely or take prolonged leave causing loss of income. Other households with more than one parent may also be affected since at least one parent will likely have to take prolonged leave or stop working. These families often struggle to pay their own household bills, care for siblings, etc., while their child gets the needed cancer treatment. Those who do not have Medicaid may also have increased medical bills in addition to out-of-pocket expenses for food, gas, and lodging,” said Laura Esparza, a medical social worker with Driscoll’s Cancer and Blood Disorders Center.

As part of this ongoing collaboration, Salood and Driscoll will work together to identify families that will benefit the most from the aid. Salood and Driscoll aim to provide pediatric cancer families with not only the best medical care but also the necessary financial resources to help them navigate through their journey.

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**About Driscoll:** Driscoll is the premier healthcare provider for kids in South Texas. We are a nonprofit healthcare system that has served communities in the Lone Star State since 1953. Today, Driscoll is the largest and fastest-growing pediatric healthcare system in the Coastal Bend and Rio Grande Valley.

**About Salood:** Salood is a nonprofit organization committed to supporting pediatric cancer families facing financial hardships. Through financial aid and various programs, Salood ensures that families can focus on their child's treatment and recovery without the burden of overwhelming financial stress. Salood was founded by Kenny Freeland and Joshua Castillo and has consistently worked to make a meaningful difference in the lives of pediatric cancer families.