



# The Open Circle

Joining hands for care and love

ANNUAL REPORT

2018 – 2019



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## Message from the Chairperson:

The Open Circle is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> operational year. It is a continuing journey of learning, understanding, facing challenges and basking in the joy of progress and achievements of the residents.

While not within this current reporting period, we have recently finalised a Project Review. As a pilot project we felt it important to document The Open Circle from inception. It covers all aspects: from preliminary talks to the opening and the running of the home. Positive aspects and difficulties are listed as well as how this model of care could be improved, changed and replicated. The need for similar residential facilities remains crucial.

This Annual Report, prepared by Helita Mankahla, broadly sets out the running of the home. It however does not do justice to the role she and her colleagues play.

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank Helita for her continuing role of excellence, professionalism, insight and a deep understanding of intellectual disability. Her role is vitally supported by a wonderful team. Our gratitude to you all – your efforts have set The Open Circle on a secure path for the future.

To members of the Management Committee and Project Manager – thank you for your collective and individual contributions. You have all added to a meaningful and fruitful year.

Our thanks to the Departments of Health, Social Development and Public Works for your support, enabling us to progress with confidence.

Fundraising is an integral part of our agenda. We are very grateful to the enormous generosity of donors. Your contributions help to fund new projects, maintain the status quo and support residents who are unable to pay monthly fees. Thanks to family members who have initiated fundraising events, your efforts are so appreciated.

The “**FISH OUT OF WATER**” fundraising event was a great success both financially as well as affording public awareness to The Open Circle. The generosity of artists, donors and advisors enabled us to navigate this daunting venture. Our collective thanks to you all as well as the successful bidders whose homes are now adorned with magical fish.

**ARTISTS:** Beezy Bailey, Annie Bisset, Roxanne Boehme, Merle Beratovich, Anthony Cawood, Marinda Combrink, Elaine Cory, Roelf Daling, Lionel Davis, Adrienne and Tammy de Jongh, Margaux Derhy, Anne Foale-Price, Reinette Fourie, Danielle Frenz, Sonja Frenz, Maximilian Goldin, Margot Hattingh, Stephen Hobbs, Nicola Holgate, Barry Jackson, John Kramer, Aletta Laubscher, Kimberly Leaver, Cynthia MacPherson, Kimathi Mafalo, Carol Mangiagalli, Odette Marais, Nicolaas Maritz, Wonder Marthinus, Maurice Mbikayi, Ros Moltano, Jette Neumann, Marcus Neustetter, Janet Ranson, Jo Roets, Alejandra Romero, Vanessa Sass, Jill Trappler, Jan Vermeiren, Jaquiline Viljoen, Hansie Visagie, Lisa Wakelin, Hazel Woodward.

**EVERARD REID GALLERY:** Charles Shields and Emma Van der Merwe.

**SPONSOR:** Private Client Holdings: Cathy Alexander, Robyn Hopkinson, Directors and Staff

**WEBSITE:** Laeni Gittins **PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Kirsti Lyall **M.C./AUCTIONEER:** Richard Hardiman **CITY VARSITY:** Hansie Visagie and students **ULTRA LIQUORS:** Kim and Craig Robinson

Cheryl Barratt

Chairperson

## Vision & mission:

The Open Circle provides a safe, nurturing and therapeutic residential home for adults with Intellectual Disability requiring medium to high levels of support for varied behavioural challenges. We endeavour to limit and manage these difficulties by developing individual programmes for each resident, enabling them to reach their full, unique potential.

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***STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Creating a medium-high supported living environment.***

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## Creating a homely environment:

The Open Circle is a home to men and women, 18 years and older who have an Intellectual Disability and other associated disorders which may include Autism, genetic problems like Down's syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and psychiatric problems including psychosis. Many display one or more challenging behaviours which may include: opposition, destruction, aggression, obsessions and compulsions, anxiety, sexually inappropriate and self-injurious behaviour. Most of our residents have been excluded from existing residential facilities or programmes, due to their challenging behaviour and therefore The Open Circle is unique in its objectives.

During 2018/2019 The Open Circle maintained a bed occupancy rate of 96–100% (30 beds). Residents who became psychiatrically unstable were mainly managed on an outpatient basis at Alexandra Hospital or through liaison with their private psychiatrist. This was done to prevent unsettling residents by admitting them to hospital and managing them within our homely environment.

Our household team and maintenance staff continued to ensure a safe and therapeutic space through various creative strategies including using bolted rods to prevent curtains from being pulled down, moving our gym to a larger area, closing all windows with burglar bars to manage risks, bolting door handles to prevent removal, hanging snapper frames for all signage to prevent removal and heightening the fence around the pool ensuring the area is not accessible to residents unattended.

We were successful in meeting requirements for our Home once again as our Mental Health Licence was renewed by the Department of Health and all other audits were successful

as conducted by the Department of Social Development and Alexandra Hospital.

At the end of this financial year, we have a waiting-list of 36 residents with roughly 3 new applications received per month throughout the year. The need for more facilities like The Open Circle remains evident from the numerous telephonic enquiries and visits received. To this end the Management Committee has finalized a documented project review, which could assist with future projects.

## Training and support of staff:

The organisation remains indebted to our 33 full-time staff members who fulfil various roles in the organization. This year, we welcomed a new caregiver (Siphamandla Siloqo) and a new Kitchen-Assistant (Busisiwe Madyosi) to our Team. They replaced Zanoxolo Mngomeni (caregiver) and Carmen Thomas (kitchen-assistant) who left us for other opportunities. We wish them every success and thank them for their dedicated service to our Home.

The Open Circle believes that happy staff equals happy residents. This is the reason we regularly try to show our staff that they are valued, through quarterly events and other gestures. This year we had a Strategic Planning session where staff could provide input into the organizations plans for the year, various staff lunches and braais, celebrations with those staff who were experiencing new things like a baby on the way or a new job, Nurses Day celebrations, Easter and Woman's day hampers and sympathising with two staff who lost parents.

Our vision for training this year was to continue training the staff in sensory awareness and to ensure that newly selected health and safety representatives are trained up to date in line with the Health and Safety Act requirements as expected by the Department of Health. Training needs of staff continue to be monitored through keeping a database and discussing Individual Training Plans with each staff member once a year. Our vision for training is not just to skill staff for their jobs, but to raise leaders in various areas of our Home and the community.



**Table 1: Summary of Training attended during 2018-2019**

Tax Workshop	1
Ethics	6
Caring for the carer	3
NPO Good Governance	1
Early identification of ID	3
Autism	6
Challenging Behaviour	4
Sensory Stimulation	2
Business Etiquette and Diversity	1
Health and Safety Rep Training	3
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Symposium	1
Practical Communication Training	3
Assessment of Adaptive behaviour	1
Sensory Workshop at OC	12

## Provision of training:

The Open Circle trained 2 Stellenbosch University and 6 University of Cape Town third year Occupational Therapy students this year. Occupational Therapy students always add value to our programme by providing much needed idealised assessments and interventions under the guidance of Tasneem Toyer our OT. Tasneem further supervised and trained a volunteer from America who was a trained caregiver and assisted with our programme for 3 months.



## ***STRATEGIC GOAL 2: To promote quality of life by preventing occupational deprivation and encouraging independence***

The stimulation programme we provide at The Open Circle continues to be something we are extremely proud of since we can see year after year how residents improve in their participation and skills. Our Occupational Therapist again ensured evidence-based practice and outcomes-based activities were implemented by carers in 2018-2019.

This year residents were involved in 316 Individual and 450 group sessions indicating an increase in focused work rather than just stimulation. Group sessions included Arts and Crafts, Life skills, Baking, ADL's, Sports and Games.

Leisure activities remained an important aspect of our daily routine including morning and afternoon walks, swimming in summer, socialisation, gym sessions, movies and music. Many residents also participated daily in their own leisure exploration like drawing, puzzles and beading in the Home.

One of our goals this year has been to ensure that residents who earn wages for performing chores are guided effectively in terms of shopping excursions and buying necessities. We are proud of a few residents who were able to buy their own tekkies, radios, clothing and toiletries in 2018-2019.

Another success has been that two of our residents are well-settled at Merrypack factory and travel independently to and from work using public transport three days a week. Despite a history of challenging behavior, through the provision of support they are now working successfully at the factory for the second year.

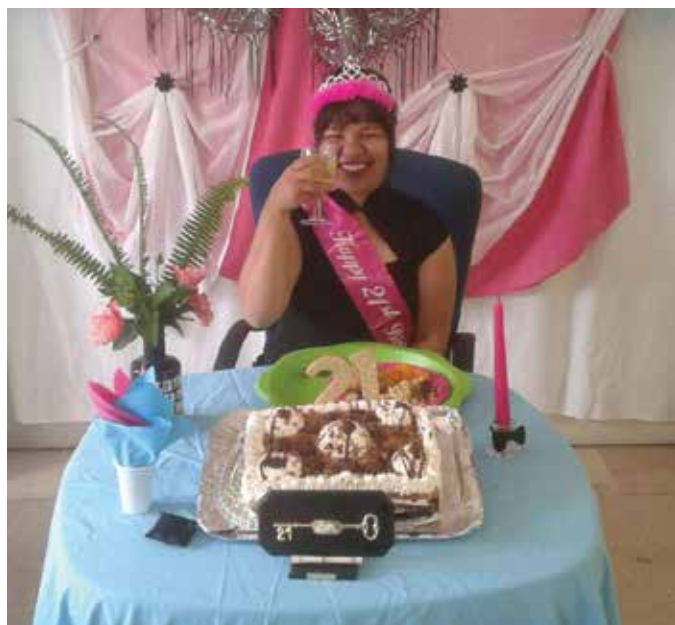
Table 2 below shows feedback received from families during our Family Satisfaction Survey done in November 2018 relating improvements in activity participation observed in their family members.

**Table 2: Percentage of parents completing survey who noticed improvement in their family member:**

Statement:	Percentage:
Needs less assistance to wash and dress	38%
Wakes up more easily and stays awake for longer periods during the day	44%
Interacts better with others in the home	81%
Able to follow a routine at home	75%
Assists with small tasks at home	81%
Improved focus and concentration (decreased ritualistic and obsessive behaviour)	63%
Improved memory and "telling back" stories	38%
Improved interest to participate in activities of any kind	50%
Improved abilities in doing activities like colouring in, playing with blocks, making a sandwich	44%
Improved mood and emotional responsiveness	75%
Trying new activities	31%

**More highlights from our programme for 2018-2019 included various outings and events:**

- Small outings were initiated this year over the December/ January period for those residents with limited family contact.
- At the Open Circle every resident's birthday is special and is celebrated.



- During April 2018 an Easter Egg Hunt was held for residents and staff. We are grateful for the donations of Easter eggs that we so graciously receive every year to make this fun event possible.
- On Casual Day we were visited by a company who reached out to our residents for a special afternoon of braai, music and dancing.

- All residents and staff visited the Aquarium at the V&A Waterfront during the first quarter of 2018-2019. Residents enjoyed Mc Donald's after learning about our sea life.



- The One-to-one day hosted by the Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability was again a hit this year. Thank you to Tasneem our OT and all the Volunteers who joined us for this awesome afternoon at the Cape Town Stadium.





- An exciting outing was arranged towards the end of the year for residents to World of Birds, Houtbay beach and Snoekies restaurant. This was our favourite day this year.



- A special occasion in 2018-2019 was when Zama Dance School came to perform for us at The Open Circle.



- We closed off 2018 with a special family picnic where 80 family members came out for the day to support their loved ones. Open Circle loves our families!



- The year 2019 kicked off with a bang. We celebrated the New Year with an outing to Milnerton Beach – we had ice cream of course!
- Valentine's Day is always fun when we can Karaoke. The residents and staff were singing way after the event had ended.
- 12 Residents went to see a movie at Canal Walk.



- Our adapted Sports day was thoroughly enjoyed by residents in March 2019. It was lovely to see most residents getting active as they were presented with activities within their means.



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**STRATEGIC GOAL 3:**  
**Helping residents to behave appropriately by teaching and supporting them through difficult moments**

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The Open Circle continued to strive to pro-actively manage challenging behaviour displayed by residents in 2018-2019. We are proud of feedback received from families and medical professionals involved in our resident's lives, indicating that clear improvement can be seen. Families further remained consistently involved over the past year, indicating that residents have been more manageable at home.

Table 3 below shows feedback received from resident's families during the Family Satisfaction Survey done in November 2018.

**Table 3: Improvement percentage refers to the number of families who completed the survey who indicated that they had seen improvement in their family members:**

Challenging behaviour before coming to open circle.	Improvement
Receives regular Sedation to calm down	44%
Needed to be brought to OPD before 6 months lapsed	38%
Screaming/swearing/shouting	38%
Destructive behaviour	50%
Physical aggression towards themselves or others like pinching, slapping, biting	50%
Stealing food and overeating	38%
Obsessions/ doing odd things	56%
Over activity-up and down	38%

***STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Health promotion through early detection and effective management of acute and chronic physical and psychiatric conditions***

The Open Circle manages the resident holistically including seeing to the physical and mental health of each residents through the regular checks of vitals and weights (monthly), administering over the counter medication on site as required, ensuring compliance to prescribed physical and psychiatric medication, managing follow-up appointments of residents as well as determining the need for new referrals to services and the management of physical and psychiatric emergencies.

During 2018-2019 staff escorted residents to 178 public clinic/hospital visits. One new resident was admitted this year after a room became available.

We continued to manage the psychiatric stability of residents effectively this year with only one resident requiring an acute admission in 2018-2019. This stands in contrast to the average admission rate of our population before taking up residence at OC of roughly 60% (of residents) requiring at least an annual

admission. Keeping admissions to restrictive hospital environments down remains what The Open Circle strives for and this is one of our greatest successes.

***STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Ensuring community reintegration through partnering with families, volunteers, Government departments and other NPO's and community integration activities***

Our volunteer involvement was quiet over the past year with only one trained caregiver from America joining our team for three months. She made quite an impact on the residents and worked alongside our Occupational Therapist ensuring additional socialization and stimulation opportunities.



Mr. Charlie Thomson continued supporting us and came to play music and sing for the residents on a 6-weekly basis.

I would like to appeal to anyone who is interested to assist to please contact us. We need a group of volunteers to work in a coordinated fashion relieving some of the burden placed on staff and managers and to enhance the quality of life of our residents.

The Open Circle values our families and believes that one of the most important aspects in the management of challenging behaviour



is teamwork between the staff and family as well as consistent involvement.

We again conducted a Family Feedback Survey to assess how we are doing at the end of 2018 and achieved an average satisfaction rate of 92 % regarding all aspects of our care.

Some sentiments from our families expressed in the survey included:

**“Life has improved, he is calmer and more at peace with his circumstances.”**

**“He seems happier and calmer.”**

**“I am so relieved my son is safe, as he used to run out onto busy roads in the community. His sister is also less anxious and performing better at school.”**

**“As a mother I am much less stressed. X used to pick up my anxiety and become agitated.”**

**“I am very satisfied with the care provided at Open Circle.”**

**“As a single, working mother I struggled to find people who could cope with her and take care of her. I no longer must struggle as the staff at Open Circle are equipped to deal with her behaviour.”**

**“X is no longer lonely but has friends.”**

**“X is very happy at The Open Circle and that makes us happy. We can see he is well taken care of.”**

The Open Circle is a registered NPO with PBO status that needs to raise funds to supplement subsidies by the Departments of Health and Social Development to make ends meet. Only 40% of families can afford fees, leaving the other 60% of residents to only contribute a Disability Grant.

Our vision for the next year is to expand our reach and to be able to assist more families and persons with challenging behaviour, but we can only do this through partnerships and ongoing financial and practical support.

## The open circle wishes to thank:

**The Management Committee for their commitment and service:**

*Cheryl Barratt – Chairperson • Tim Forshaw – Treasurer • Miranda Forshaw – Member • Les Nel – Member • Ekin Kench – Member • Dr. Judy Bentley – Member Project Manager – Ellen Corrigall*

## Donors who contributed to our vision in 2018/2019:

### Businesses

Cash Persuaders • Eye Save optometrists • Osmans Spice Centre • Faldi Movie Mania • Mazars • Athlone Transport

### Volunteers

VaCorps • Projects Abroad • Charlie Thomson

### Community

Gordons Bay Primary School • Gordons Bay NG Church • Jolanda De Jager (Zest Dance connection) • Zama Dance School

### Organisations & Individuals

Parents of Open Circle residents who drop off donations regularly • Syringa Trust • Rolf Stephan Nussbaum Foundation • The Inner Wheel • The Frank Robb Charitable Trust • The Robin Hamilton Charitable Trust • P Inglis • R de Waal • R Gordon • J Butters • L Mienie • J&R Griffen • Amy Armstrong & Kyle Blumberg • J Behr • Pam Knipe • Gerda de Jager • Esmè Goldblatt • Claremont Rotary • Cornelia Newton

### Pro Bono

Bowman Gilfillan • Prilli Stevens • Simon van Gend • Graham Barratt

**Finally, to our dedicated, wonderful staff, you are our heroes! THANK YOU for all you do!**

