



The Open Circle

Joining hands for care and love

ANNUAL REPORT

2015-2016

A Residential Home for people with Intellectual Disability and challenging behavior.

P.O. BOX 140, Maitland, 7404

manager@opencircle.org.za (t) 021-5101259 (wf) 0866139383

Website: www.opencircle.org.za

Registration no: 120-942 NPO 930049194-PBO



A message from our Chairperson

The Annual Report, prepared by Helita Mankahla, gives an operational account of and strategic goals for The Open Circle. It expresses thanks to the many people and organisations that have supported us this past year and it sets out the complexities and multifaceted aspects for consideration, in striving to provide the best possible service in our facility.

Reflecting briefly Mark Twain came to mind when he said; "necessity is the mother of taking chances".

We were never in doubt The Open Circle was a much needed facility in the disability sector. We took a chance out of necessity and we thank government departments and organisations for listening, setting us on the right path, and taking a chance with us.

Advice, guidance and support from the Task Team is much appreciated. All parties agree this pilot project is on the right course.

Setting up The Open Circle was to some extent the easy part; managing it on a daily basis, quite another. I cannot adequately express our gratitude to Facility Manager, Helita Mankahla, for her vision, commitment and leadership. To her colleagues, Occupational Therapist, Rabia Hassan, and Professional Nurse, Sister Tozama Nogemane and to all the dedicated staff who keep the ship afloat - thank you.

Cheryl Barratt

Chairperson

Vision & mission

The Open Circle strives to provide a safe, nurturing and therapeutic residential home to people with Intellectual Disability requiring medium to high support for varied challenging behaviours. We endeavour to limit and manage behaviour in order that residents achieve their unique potential and a fulfilling quality of life.

Our history

The Open Circle is a pilot project, in partnership with the Departments Health, Social Development and Public Works in the Western Cape.

For a decade prior to 2013, families living with people who have both Intellectual disabilities and behavioural challenges, the future looked bleak.

After registering as an NPO and lobbying government for support, a joint decision was taken to renovate and open a 30-bed supported living facility on the grounds of Alexandra Hospital in the old Nurses Home.

Members of The Open Circle Management Committee, with encouraging support of a Task Team of experts from Departments of Health and Social Development and the Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability initiated the ground-work for this exciting venture.

The first 10 residents moved into the home in January 2015, the second 10 on February 2015 and finally the last 10 beds were filled by July 2015.

The Open Circle was formally opened by Prof. Househam (Department of Health), Minister Albert Fritz (Social Development) and Minister Grant (Public works) on 6 May 2015.

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

Our residents

The people calling The Open Circle “home” are men and women older than 18 years, who have an Intellectual Disability and other associated disorders which may include Autism, genetic problems like Down’s Syndrome, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, and even psychiatric problems including psychosis. Our residents further display one or more types of challenging behaviour which may include: destruction, aggression, obsessions and compulsions, anxiety, sexual inappropriateness or self-injury. Most of our residents have been excluded from existing residential facilities as they do not meet the required criteria, due to their behaviour and The Open Circle, the first of its kind, fills an important gap in the disability sector.

During 2015/2016 The Open Circle admitted 30 residents and reached 100% bed occupancy. At the end of this financial year, we have a waiting-list of 33. More than 20 applicants were turned down as they did not meet our referral criteria.

It is the philosophy of The Open Circle to maintain the dignity of residents, providing individualised rooms, recreational opportunities, toiletries, and clothing.

Residents are unique and have various sensory, supervisory and social needs. The home is therefore separated into a male and female wing with residents who tolerate noise and socialisation better in one section and the quieter, introvert residents together in another. Residents have their own personalised rooms which they can access at any time, should they require their time-out.

The 2015/2016 year has been quite a learning curve in balancing the safety and security of residents, limiting risk associated with various behavioural profiles, whilst keeping a homely environment where individuals feel relaxed and comfortable. It has been imperative to develop a general risk-management plan which is reviewed and actioned quarterly by the three managers. Adverse incident reporting and discussions take place daily at morning management meetings and this enables managers to make practical changes that assist in prevention of risk.



Our staff

The Open Circle prides itself in 31 well-equipped, dedicated staff members, who joined our team in phases through 2015/2016.

Due to the type of service required we have a Professional Nurse and Occupational Therapist managing the facility alongside the Facility Manager. Staff-Nurses act as shift-leaders and work with care-staff over 12-hour shifts, with a day ratio of 1:5 and night of 1:7.

Our Household Department has 4 Household Aids and 2 Cooking staff. Informal staff include a handyman and a gardener once a week and a back-up cleaner who can be contacted if needed.

The Open Circle strives to create a homely and family orientated approach by staff wearing informal uniforms in the form of T-shirts, jeans and “tekkies”, which allows for optimal handling of physical aggression, etc. Staff and residents address each other on a first-name basis. Warmth and affection is allowed within limits. However, the organogram of supervision and accountability still applies.

During 2015/2016 newly appointed staff received a two day orientation and basic introduction and training to some of the theoretical aspects they need to be familiar with at The Open Circle. All staff members signed a specific outputs based job-description and individual training plan upon commencing their employment and supervision took place 6 monthly to ensure staff performance was well-managed. All staff received basic challenging behaviour training in the form of the latest Studio 3 Techniques during 2015-2016. This has been pivotal in the way staff manage challenging behaviour. Other training planned for the financial year includes Fire Safety and managing Epilepsy. WCFID short courses were attended as planned and funded with external sponsorship. The Open Circle boasts qualified staff with knowledge and skill in dealing with our residents.

The management of The Open Circle remains cognisant of the importance of staff morale and preventing burn-out and during 2015-2016 motivational aspects for staff included quarterly appreciation events and having a staff Year End Function. Staff members were encouraged to reflect on the organisation and could identify needed improvements and goals using the SWOT analysis at an Annual Review meeting at the end of the financial year in February 2016.

Planned initiatives for 2016/2017 include conducting a Staff Satisfaction Survey and looking at Staff wellness initiatives.

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

The Open Circle prides itself in a well-developed, structured stimulation program and routine that has been designed based on the needs of residents.

Residents receive a full functional assessment upon admission and a psycho-social care-plan is developed alongside their individualised risk management and nursing plan. This means that although the programme is general, each resident has individual goals set related to their socialisation and skills.

The programme is divided into three broad levels of functioning of which one level caters for individualised sensory and motor stimulation to accommodate residents on the Autism spectrum. Residents at a Group stimulation level are involved in various activities like basic crafts, games, activities of daily living and baking.

Finally vocational level activities allow residents to participate in income-generating projects like crafts that are sold, contract work, life skills, chores in and around the home. Residents at vocational level earn some pocket money according to their productivity, which is then used to promote their independence in aspects like shopping and money management.

The year 2015/2016 saw many changes in the programme in order to accommodate new intakes and lessons learnt.

Outings were initiated in the last year to the Waterfront, McLaren Circus, One-to-one event, movies and Canal Walk in order to start looking at community integration skills and normalisation.

4 Volunteer Interns from America were also placed at The Open Circle this year. They assisted with the activity programme and other administrative projects under the guidance of the Occupational Therapist.

Occupational Therapy 3rd year students from the University of the Western Cape have also, as a part of their clinical training, joined our Team in 2015. **9 Students** in total were placed across the first year, resulting in a relationship to be formed between the home and UCT OT Department.

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

The Open Circle ensures that all new residents are assessed in terms of their behaviour. This process is led by the qualified Occupational Therapist. An individual risk-management plan is developed for each resident to ensure that



Feeling good about oneself impacts on behavior

all staff are aware of what type of behaviour can be expected from a specific person, what their cues and triggers are and how to manage them when they do become aggressive or challenging.



Teaching residents living skills promotes independence

The Open Circle strives to use pro-active (least restrictive) behavioural management strategies like the low-arousal approach and distracters as far as possible. Reactive strategies/ more restrictive care may include physical restraint when a resident is very aggressive and stimulus control if a resident is very destructive to limit risk to the self, others and environment. The Professional Nurse and Enrolled Nurses can make a decision to administer sedation according to prescription when required. Emerging behavioural changes and challenges are referred back to the multi-disciplined team at Alexandra Hospital for additional support when needed.



Crafts stimulate creativity

Residents at the open Circle have displayed a decrease in frequency and intensity of challenging behaviour since living at the home. Although no exact statistics are available for 2015/2016, a significant decrease

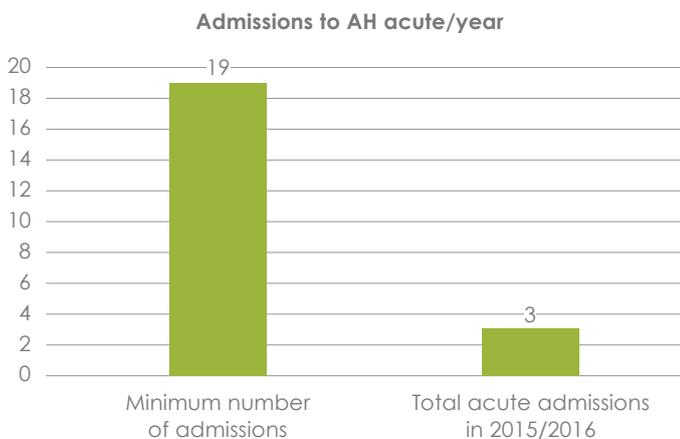


Swimming



Exercise classes

is evident in terms of quarterly monitoring and evaluation of incidents done by the manager, admission required to hospital as well as when comparing behavioural histories to what is observed in our setting. **The graph below highlights the kind of hospitalisation that was required for residents in the past compared to 2015/2016.**



If one considers that at least 19 of the 30 residents definitely had more than one admission to the acute system per year (which in most cases was the minimum), then the results are clear in the graph.

Apart from the fact that more restrictive acute care impacts on the quality of life of a person, it further has a financial impact in terms of what it costs the government to provide hospitalisation for required periods and in some cases permanently.

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

The Professional Nurse is the manager in charge of health and well-being in the home, including the medical and psychiatric management of residents, medication management, infection-prevention and control as well as health and safety.

Once again a Nursing Care-plan forms the third leg to the comprehensive care-plan developed for each individual resident.

The Professional nurse ensures that medico-legal standards are met with regard to record keeping through regular audits and takes the lead in admissions, transfers and discharges as well as managing psychiatric and other appointments of residents. Liaising with various stakeholders like the Community Health Centres and Alexandra OPD is managed by Nursing.

This year systems were put in place to ensure quarterly infection prevention and control and Health and Safety audits are done and discussed at quarterly meetings with the Facility Manager and OT, in order to ensure addressing of issues.

Early detection of health-related problems are imperative in a context where people cannot speak and display challenging behaviour since often a minor physical problem like sinus may present as an exaggerated

behavioural response. For this reason nursing monitors weights and vital signs on a regular basis, flagging concerns with management. The professional nurse investigates and refers as appropriate, for a physical condition or first signs of psychosis.

Having professional skills on site has shown to be imperative in preventing unnecessary adverse incidents and preventing and managing medical and psychiatric emergencies.

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

The Open Circle places emphasis on rebuilding a positive relationship between residents and their family members. Residents go home and receive phone-calls according to a routine as far as possible, which is established with the family.

In November 2015 the first Family Meeting was scheduled and The Open Circle as well as families could give feedback and discuss various aspects. At this occasion families were requested to complete the first Annual Satisfaction Survey, which would allow the manager to make changes and address problems in terms of quality improvement. In the survey 93% of families felt that their family member appears visibly happier. Other comments made by family when asked how The Open Circle had changed and improved their lives:

I can go out now...

I have time to spend with other kids and grandkids...

Resident has changed for the better...

Able to cope as a single parent...

I am less stressed...

I am content that my family member is now safe and not exposed to our dangerous community...

Improved safety of family member in dangerous community...

I enjoy my family member more when he/she is with me now...

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.

In 2015/2016 the high cost of having enough trained staff coverage and maintenance costs in the form of replacing kicked in doors and broken windows became evident, apart from other inflated expenses. The generosity of larger donors as well as some small businesses opening their hearts to our organisation in the last year has pulled us through and we will rely on these partnerships going forward to make ends meet.

The Open Circle staff also attempt to supplement and generate funds through various events and special projects. In 2015/2016 funds were raised through food sales, a small tuck shop, selling of vocational products produced by residents, hosting a Carols by Candlelight, Yard Sale and High Tea. These events allow the home to raise funds, but also awareness regarding our population and how the community can become involved as volunteers or donors.



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
• Toni Tickton-Member • Dr. Judy Bentley-Member
• *A special thanks to Ellen Corrigan who supports the committee as Project Manager

The individuals and volunteers, organisations, businesses and importantly our donors who made a valuable contribution to our vision in 2015/2016! We look forward to your continued partnership and support in 2016/2017.

Pro bono services

Bowman Gilfillan Attorneys • Legal Resources Centre • Professor Brian Robertson • Ekin Kench

Businesses & Organisations

Nussbaum Foundation • Malopo Trust • Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disabilities • Syringa Trust • Schultz fresh produce market • Sonnendal Dairy • Cash Persuaders • Olympic Locksmiths • Dawoods Butchery • Honeys Stationers • Express Marking Solutions • Gift of the Givers • Woodside Special Care Centre • AMKA • Eye Save optometrists • Osmans Spice Centre • Faldi Movie Mania • Inspiring H2O • Messaris Brothers • Mazars • Alexandra Hospital • Athlone Transport • McLaren Circus • Baxter Theatre • Blue Ribbon • Immploy • UCTRAG • Volunteers • VaCorps • Projects Abroad • Full Flow Gas

Community

Rustenburg Girls High School • Gordons Bay Primary School • New Apostolic Church

Individuals

Parents of The Open Circle • Committee members • Libby Ardington • Thea and Alan Ramsay • Rosemary De Waal • Heather Coetzee • Jenny Pannell • Tracey Faul • Mike Kotze • Clive Bilski • Cheryl Barratt • Miranda Forshaw • Mr Uys • Susan Luyt • Mrs Bailey • Mrs Behr • Yolanda De Jager • Prilli Stevens • Mark Lancaster • Jo Oscroft • Graham Barratt