



The Open Circle



ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

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[The Open Circle](https://www.facebook.com/TheOpenCircle)



[@opencirclegrouphome](https://www.instagram.com/opencirclegrouphome)

Vision:

Good quality of life in a homely environment

Mission:

To provide a safe, nurturing, and therapeutic home that limits and manages challenging behavior and see residents achieve their full potential.

Our goals:

The Open Circle continued this year to manage a 30 bed Residential Home with the following aims:

- To create a medium-high support living environment for adults with ID and challenging behavior.
- To prevent and risk manage challenging behavior through proactive and reactive strategies.
- To promote physical, emotional, and social health and well-being.
- To detect in time and effectively manage acute physical and psychiatric episodes.
- To ensure community reintegration through partnering with families, volunteers, Government departments and other NPO's and community integration activities.

From the facility manager

The Open Circle has been operational for 6 years now and I have never dedicated a section of the Annual Report to share my thoughts with our readers. This year however, as I started going over memories of the past 12 months, I felt compelled to dedicate this report to celebrating The Open Circle and what it stands for and not merely operations and statistics.

I could not be more humbled and grateful as I write to you. Covid has meant much anxiety and frustration for our residents and staff, just like for the rest of the world. Sadly, we lost one of our beloved residents during December 2020. This took its toll on all of us. It has however also been a year that showed me the support of our management committee, the dedication and bravery of our staff complement, the resilience of our residents and the generosity of volunteers and donors. I need to acknowledge and

thank my colleagues, Tozama and Roxanne, who manage alongside me and are leading The Open Circle with me in this new Normal.

I hope you enjoy the many photos of special moments amidst the pandemic.

Helita

Facility Manager

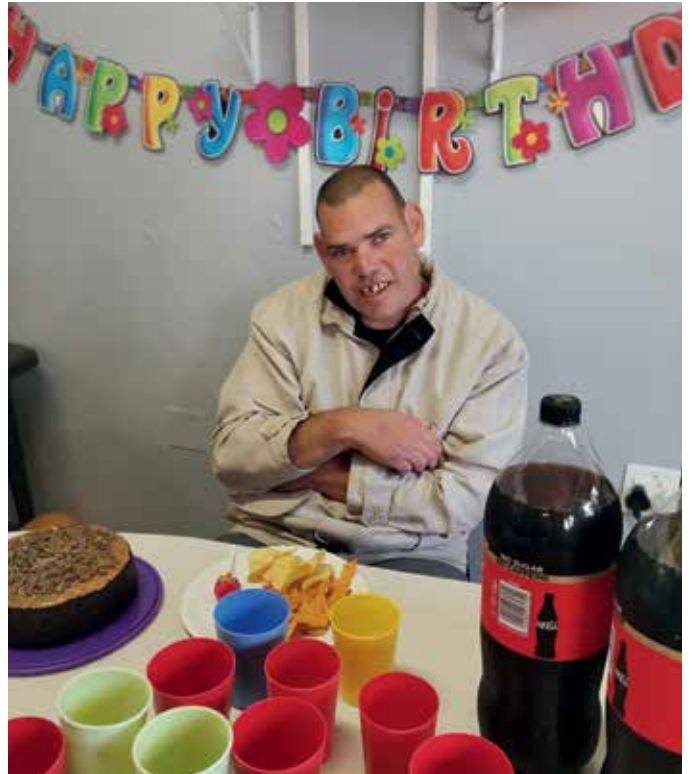
Caring for our Residents!

Despite the hardships of lockdown and restrictions on leaving the premises, we still had loads of safe, in-house fun to ensure smiles and limit challenging behavior. We hosted mostly on-site events in the form of an **Easter-egg hunt** in April 2020, a **Talent show** in July 2020 and **Heritage Day** in September 2020. Once the lockdown eased, we made use of the opportunity to visit the **Blouberg beach** in September 2020 and December 2020 and we enjoyed our **Annual Sportsday** in November 2020, **Valentine's Karaoke** in February 2021, **Christmas** and **New Year's** lunches and visited **Kirstenbosch** in March 2021. (See below)





We followed our usual program under the guidance of our Occupational Therapist as far as possible including: **Daily walks and exercise, Groups therapy daily, skills and independence training, Drumming groups, Music Therapy weekly** and spending our wages on small, controlled **shopping trips once a month**. We had numerous **braai's** over the weekends to boost morale, **climate meetings** and also celebrated **birthdays**. (See below)





Two of our residents (below) who attended Merripack for Sheltered employment pre-Covid were placed at the Food Garden at Oude Molen twice a week when Merripack closed

their program. This is a new placement that was sourced through our Occupational Therapist. We are hoping this partnership can grow from strength-to-strength in the future.



Promoting physical, emotional, and social health and well-being and the early detection and effective management of acute physical and psychiatric episodes remained a priority for us in 2020-2021; even more so amidst the Covid Pandemic.

Here a resident is visiting the local clinic accompanied by a caregiver. (Above)

Caring for the carer!

At the end of 2020-2021 I stand amazed at the dedication of our wonderful staff. They did not hesitate for a moment to rise to the challenges this year brought and went above and beyond to see us through. They stayed on the premises when needed to and provided the sense of security our residents needed in this uncertain time. I have included some memories made this past year during our quarterly staff appreciation events.



Woman's day 2020: An ex-colleague and then Beauty Salon owner, generously provided a mini-spa day for our ladies! (above); Heritage Day 2020 (below).



Nurses day May 2020 (Above)



We were able to treat staff members with a Clicks voucher on their birthday through the generosity of a Donor. All staff were vaccinated by the end of this year. (Below)



Thank you

It was amazing to see the generosity of people and organisations through the past year. People just opened their hearts and a year that was estimated to be disastrous, became a testimony of the generosity of our Donors and Volunteers.

The Open Circle wishes to thank:

The Management Committee:

Cheryl Barratt • Frank Bold • Miranda Forshaw
• Rolf Behr • Les Nel • Ekin Kench
Ellen Corrigan (Project Manager)

The Individuals, organisations and businesses who supported us in 2020-2021:

Syringa Trust • WCFID • Vera Grover Trust • Woolworths My School • Claremont Volkswagen • Alexandra Hospital • Pure Legacy Foundation • Malopo Trust • Robin Hamilton Trust • Department of Social Development • Department of Health • Prudential Investments • Rondebosch Golf Club • The Isidore, Theresa and Ronald Cohen Charitable Trust

Volunteers

Surita Linde • Lwazi Mankahla • Kelly Mansfield & Oude Molen Volunteers

Community

Gordonsbay Primary School • Kirstenbosch Gardens

Individuals

Helena Beukes • Annalee Norsworthy • Amy Armstrong • Mr. and Mrs. Uys • Mr. Tony Heher • Tim and Miranda Forshaw • Ellen Corrigan • Simon van Gend • J. Ocroft • Janice, Rolf and Erik Behr and friends • Kate Farquharson & Cara Smith • Graham Barratt • Mr and Mrs van der Westhuizen • R De Waal



Staff Training opportunities were less this year, however we managed to do online workshops through the Western Cape Forum for ID. On-site we did a Covid 19 Workshop with all staff and enrolled 6 staff members in a driving skills training with the aim for them to get their driver's licenses. In September 2020, we had a very exciting Sensory Workshop attended by all care staff and our Occupational Therapist.



Saying goodbye...

Finally I thought I would this year include this letter from Ms. Janice Behr, mom to Aidan who passed away on 25 December 2020, instead of extracts from our survey. Thank you to Ms. Behr for her willingness to share her feelings with us.

There is a big gap in my life as I miss my visits to Aidan and his family. Aidan quickly settled into a new life in Open Circle. He decided that as his brothers had their homes separate from Mom, Open Circle was his home. And his family was the staff and residents. He was so happy at The Open Circle. His brothers no longer spent weekends and Christmas week with Mom. Why should he?

The first two years Aidan refused to leave Open Circle at Christmas time and the third year he had to be tricked to leave. The staff nurse had told Aidan, two residents and a carer to go to his car for an outing, leaving me in my car. As they drove off, I followed with all Aidan's luggage in my car boot. Outside the main gates, the staff nurse's car stopped. I parked behind. Following a short discussion, an uncomplaining Aidan came to sit in my car and travel to my home. Thereafter he always displayed some resistance to his Christmas Holiday departure but accepted that everyone must go home. Aidan blossomed and regained lost skills. He spoke more, as he was spoken to and expected to respond.

We again saw the Aidan we knew. No longer the depressed silenced man that had returned from his two previous adult work hostels. And his

behavior? With help of medication and his loving, understanding environment this was calmed.

Though that bossy and stubborn streak of Aidan could not be controlled. He knew what he wanted, behavior of others that he did not tolerate and whom to envelope in his loving soft and genuine hugs.

Aidan, we all miss your smile, that twinkle in your eye when you think or plan something and your enthusiastic dancing. And your hugs. Thank you for giving your birth family 43 years. Thank you, Open Circle, your home, and your family for your happiest years of adult independence.

Janice Behr (Mother)

