



The Open Circle



ANNUAL REPORT

2021–2022

P.O. BOX 140, Maitland, 7404

Cnr of Annex & Alexandra Roads, Maitland, 7405

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

(f) 0866139383 (w) www.opencircle.org.za

Registration no: 120-942 NPO PBO: 93004919 VAT: 4390270942



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



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

Back to business in 2021-2022

by Helita Mankahla
(Facility Manager):

Last year, we dedicated our Annual Report to reflecting on the Covid 19 pandemic and taking a moment to be grateful that we came through it as an organisation, still standing.

As I compile this year's report, I find myself wanting to change direction a bit and give you a few pages reflecting on how we have rebuilt after the lockdown and restrictions of 2020-2021 and how we returned to business-as-usual and even better business here at The Open Circle.

It took some effort to get back to where we left things in the beginning of Covid 19, but I am happy to report that this year we have once again returned to being a vibrant, busy, and industrious home where residents and staff can experience a quality life and where we do things with excellence!

Our foundations have remained unchanged:

Vision:

Quality of life in a homely environment

Mission:

By providing a safe, nurturing, and therapeutic home that limits and manages challenging behaviour and see residents achieve their full potential.

Our goals:

- Creating a medium-high support living environment for adults with ID and challenging behaviour.
- Prevention and Risk management of challenging behaviour through Proactive and Reactive strategies.
- Promoting physical, emotional, and social health and well-being
- Early detection and effective management of acute physical and psychiatric episodes
- Ensuring community reintegration through partnering with families, volunteers, Govern-

ment departments and other NPO's and community integration activities

Over the past year we focused on our routine & programme, special projects, in-house events, and quarterly outings to ensure that life became familiar and predictable again after the disruptions brought on by Covid 19.

This report is therefore a celebration of some new initiatives and some old ones, that we had to start from scratch and a little bit more regarding why getting back to these activities is so important to us.



Birthdays are back!

This year we were able to reinstate our birthday parties for residents. These little parties are about more than eating cake. For us it is a chance for each resident to experience their individuality and to feel loved and appreciated.



Music: a means to an end:

We have been very lucky to link up with a Music Therapist who started attending The Open Circle once every two weeks, this past year, conducting two hour-long sessions involving all residents. Music Therapy is the clinical, evidence-based use of music to accomplish individual goals by a health care professional.

It has various aims and uses including decreasing anxiety & depression, improving self-esteem, enhancing expressive and receptive communication, and developing coping skills. The residents have come to adore Kate and look forward to this time with her.



Hallo to the horses!

We were very excited to introduce some of our more Autistic residents to sessions where they could engage with horses from our neighbours at Oude Molen. These engagements proved to elicit calmness and positive emotional responses in our less verbal residents who got to touch, feed, and brush the horses.

Our Occupational Therapist attended a Drumming course in April 2021 and started Drumming groups weekly after a Donation was received to procure drums. The latest research on the application of Drumming as a therapeutic medium to be used in Mental Health shows that Drumming reduces anger and tension and increases general well-being. We have seen wonderful growth in the residents through drumming sessions including improved participation, social engagement and just increased joy.



Events & Outings:

One of the hardest parts of Covid for us at The Open Circle was probably not being able to get together as a big group and not being allowed to go out into the community.



An easter egg hunt at OC in April 2021.

In 2021 we re-started smaller and later larger groups like our functions and outings followed by the middle of the year. These joyous occasions where residents can socialise, be stimulated, and engage with the outside world included:



A Visit to Saamstaan Dairy in Malmesbury during May 2021.



A small outing to Keurboom Park to celebrate Keurboom Rotary's 31st birthday.



A small Outing to Friends Day Centre's Pancake Day.



Talent show for 2021 takes place in July.



A visit to the statues at Canal Walk in celebration of Heritage Day.



Annual Sports day in November 2021.



Family day was back for the first time in 2 years on 16 December 2021, though numbers were limited.



Maiden Cove Outing on 9 December 2021.



Valentine's Karaoke and braai

Working hard, shopping hard!

Most of our residents have chores within the home and this continued throughout the Covid Lockdown period. However, what they missed terribly, was the opportunity to go to



the shop and spend their well-earned wages on something needed and nice once every two months. Usually shopping goes with a milkshake or a similar spoil, so residents were very excited when we reintroduced this important skills training venture once again this past year.



Special Projects:

One more casualty of Covid was the fact that Merripack Factory in Pinelands, who provided protected contract work to a large group of adults with Intellectual Disability had to close this section down. Our two working residents were taken aback by this drastic change in

their routine and loss of independence. Thanks to wonderful networking and hard work by our OT, the two residents however started working again in 2021 at Oude Molen Food Garden twice a week. Between October and December 2021, a third work placement of a female resident took place at Friends Day Center once a week.



Working gives a resident a sense of value and self-esteem that few other activities can.

Therefore, we also continued persevering this financial year to get our Sensory Garden up and running for residents who cannot go out into the community to work to engage with gardening as a work task, but also for the garden to provide a sense of tranquility and beauty on our grounds.

Our Garden was started purely on donations made for this purpose. This year we were able to complete beautiful, raised cement garden planters in May 2021. Winter delayed us slightly, but by September 2021 all planters were filled with large stones and soil and compost and Volunteers from Oude Molen Food Garden (Kelly Mansfield) came out to donate and plant seedlings with the residents. We further planted two fruit trees on the hedge area. Residents were allocated to and remained involved in watering and weeding the garden as a job. The vegetables and herbs have been growing well and we have been able to harvest for use in our kitchen.

We would still like to do a few things to complete this garden but will require further donations. Our vision is to make the area more wheelchair accessible, add garden furniture and possibly a few chickens.





Thanks to a wonderful Donor, we were able to adapt one of our bathrooms to be a more suitable space where staff can render assistance to residents who are less mobile.

The donor paid for the project in full and we are so happy with the achieved result. We gained 2!



Welcome back to students & volunteers!

We welcomed back our UCT third year OT students and a few Volunteers this year.



Our staff matter!

At The Open Circle we firmly believe in showing appreciation and support to our staff and this past year was no exception:



Nurses day in May 2021



Woman's day celebration in August 2021



Staff Year end function December 2021



Heritage Day in September 2021

After all clinic follow-ups and Hospital visits were prohibited during Covid, this year we returned to accompanying residents to their appointments and follow-ups and being able to provide optimal interventions in terms of their health and well-being.

Staff accompanied residents on 148 health-related visits including their Vaccinations and booster shots against covid 19.

Keeping our staff equipped for the work at hand remained a top priority, after social distancing hindered us last year.

Training attended by staff:

Driving Skills – 6 staff members
 Easy-to-Read programme – Facility manager
 OT Grow Group therapy – Facility Manager
 UCT Virtual Conference on ID – Facility manager
 Back saving techniques – ALL staff
 Forensics and ID – Facility manager
 Emergency Management Internal – All staff
 Community Chest Workshop on Marketing – OT
 Diversity management Workshop – ALL staff
 POPIA Act – Facility Manager & OT

Positive feedback goes a long way!

In 2021 The Open Circle for the first time conducted a Family Feedback Survey on Google forms, making it more convenient for families to complete on their phones. The average satisfaction rate achieved across the questions was **97%** positive responses towards various service aspects rendered at The Open Circle. Thank you to our staff for their dedication and hard work!

The Open Circle wishes to thank:

the Management Committee

Cheryl Barratt • Frank Bold • Miranda Forshaw
 • Les Nel • Ekin Kench
 Project manager: Ellen Corrigan

The Individuals, organisations and businesses who supported us in 2021-2022:

Syringa Trust • WCFID • Vera Grover Trust • Woolworths
 My School • Alexandra Hospital • Pure Legacy
 Foundation • Robin Hamilton Trust • Department
 of Social Development • Department of Health •
 Frank Robb Charitable Trust

Volunteers

Surita Linde • Lwazi Mankahla • Kelly Mansfield &
 Oude Molen Volunteers • Michelle de Goede •
 VA Corps

Community

Gordon's Bay Primary School • Gordon's Bay Church
 • Kirstenbosch Gardens • Saamstaan Dairy and
 Farmers (Malmesbury) • Kromboom Rotary • Robin
 Trust • Friends Day center • Rentokil staff • Old Mutual

Individuals

Mr. and Mrs. Uys • Tim and Miranda Forshaw • Ellen
 Corrigan • Simon van Gend • Kate Farquharson &
 Cara Smith • Les Nel • Susan Luyt • Brenda Coetzee
 • Lynn Smith • Jacqueline Beckerleg • Gerda de
 Jager • Jacqueline Mostert • Kate Lord • Kenneth
 Radford • Graham Barratt • Robud de Waal

