



The Open Circle

Celebrating 10 years of changing lives



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

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

Manager's note

There is an African Proverb that states: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together"

The official opening of The Open Circle took place on 6 March 2015, making 2025 our 10th year of existence. I can recall that it was a beautiful day, attended by many friends who played a role in getting us to that point.

Little did I know then that the dream would only take real shape over the next 10 years as we learnt and grew together through the highs and lows of running a home for adults with Intellectual Disability, other associated disorders and challenging behavior.

I can hardly believe this year we are celebrating a decade of changing lives. I say we, because The Open Circle owes her success to our residents, staff, families, management committee, many individuals and organisations, donors and government departments who have partnered with us over the years.

It was only fitting for us to tag 2025 as a year of **#Somethingnew**, speaking to our vision to remain consistent, yet to challenge ourselves and our residents to new heights.

This Annual report is dedicated to each friend and partner who has walked the road with us and is a **celebration** of memories of our 10th year, a year of **#Somethingnew**.

Here's to another 10 years and beyond.

Helita



Our Management team Gretchen Bains, Helita Mankahla and Emmanuel Mathepe

Celebrating our management committee

The Management committee of The Open Circle is a group of volunteers who work passionately behind the scenes, providing direction and oversight.

In 2025, Ms. Cheryl Barrat has been our Chairperson and Fundraiser for 10 years. We celebrate the person she is and the invaluable contribution she has made to changing lives.



Miranda Forshaw, Frank Bold (Treasurer), Cheryl Barratt (Chairperson), Ekin Kench. Les Nel, Ellen Corrigan (Project manager), Absent Dr. Judy Bentley

Celebrating our Achievements

- Creating a unique model of care for adults with Intellectual Disability, dual diagnosis and who display challenging behaviour.
- Integrating residents who were excluded from other services into a homely environment.
- Prevention of Occupational deprivation through the implementation of a daily routine and stimulation program. Residents have grown and developed in line with goals set out in their care plans.

- We have established a family-model where both our residents and staff can flourish.
- Management of acute psychiatric episodes on an outpatient basis and prevention of institutionalisation of our residents.
- The lives of family members have changed, since The Open Circle provides them with the opportunity to lead quality lives and have positive engagements with their relatives.
- We have seen staff develop and become experts and have seen some individuals take up higher-level positions in the organisation through intentional creation of opportunities.

Celebrating #Somethingnew

The Open Circle values the benefit of a routine filled with a variety of activities for our residents to participate in, enjoy and learn from.

They must feel safe through the creation of predictable days, but also be challenged to learn new skills, hence we have started introducing some aspects of difference to our program to achieve this. This has formed a part of our aim for **#Somethingnew** in 2025 and have challenged the staff and residents to embrace this vision daily as we go about life. The results have been evident!

Below you will find moments to celebrate from 2024-2025!



Every resident's birthday is important, and we pause on these occasions to make them feel loved and happy.

Our daily walks have continued this year, but we have changed our route and distance and have also involved Riley on occasion. The physical and sensory input that walking provides is essential to maintain a relaxed and calm atmosphere. Riley, our puppy-volunteer, has obtained her KUSA K9 Good Citizenship Bronze Certification this year, we are so proud of her hard work.





General group and leisure activities take place daily and include a variety of activities like swimming, baking, crafts, exercises, relaxation and many more. This year one of the new activities included in the program are the celebration of specific days like Mother's Day and movie days. Now what is a movie day without popcorn that we made ourselves?



Riley was not our only family member who achieved a new height this year. One of our residents made a real difference for adults with Intellectual Disability, by participating in a project by the WCFID looking at Digital Literacy for his peer group. The world is changing, and we want our residents to stay in touch with new technology. Thank you to the Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability for this awesome opportunity to consider accessibility and inclusion.





Our program is complemented by the involvement of friends like Michael Raven, our Music Therapist who conducts two sessions a month this year and Top Dogs Therapy who visit us once a month for some puppy-love. We changed things up and started taking our residents to Oude Molen Eco Village for their Equine Therapy sessions. It allows for more excitement and community engagement skills. We have been proud of their behavior during these outings.





Our theme of **#Somethingnew** has also been integrated into our quarterly in-house events. The usual Easter-egg hunt was exchanged for an Easter-themed Bingo morning where

residents earned their eggs and our Valentine's Day event took place in the evening instead of the usual morning slot. Staff and residents painted the house red with their dance moves and the excitement was tangible. We ended the year on a high with our annual family day where we were joined by more than 50 family members to celebrate the end of a good 2024 with us. The interest of family members in attending this day was heart-warming and echoed the fact that OC is a partnership in so many ways.

Our community outings included a visit to World of birds in Hout Bay, with a lunch at Snoekies restaurant. We were so encouraged when a patron at the restaurant offered to settle a portion of our bill for lunch. This was a memory worth celebrating!

In November 2024 our Maiden's Cove outing was attended by all 30 residents for the first time in 10 years. It was a milestone and victory for all, and we enjoyed a beautiful day together.

We were also invited by the Spur at Canal Walk to enjoy a free lunch in celebration of their Birthday. Our relationship with this Spur has now come on for more than 6 years and we are grateful to partner with them. Our Shopping trips are not complete without a milkshake at this Spur.



We have welcomed two new residents to our Home in 2024-2025, taking our number of residents to 31. Our waiting list remains long, and we look forward to trying to do more in the years ahead with the help of our donors and friends.

Our vision for 2035 extends to opening a second service alongside our residential home where residents who need less support can live more independently, a Day Centre and an outreach and support community-based service.

Celebrating our staff

I am grateful to the 34 members of my team who make up the lifeblood of our home. I could never thank our staff enough for the way that they pour passion and patience into their daily duties. This year, I must specifically thank those who have fought this fight by my side for the past 10 years:



We celebrate them – Nontsikelelo Dyasi, Wade Dankers, Lezell van Rooyen, Noxolo Mveliswa, Lolita Adams, Ayanda Stuurman, Andrew Gilton, Amanda Gxabuza, Thembela Onyejekwe, Joan Apollis, Florah Dlungwane, Aphelele Qobo, Bridgitte Loubscher, Zukiswa Mbalula, Ruth Adams and Sulaiman Isaacs.

The staff events that we had this year to boost morale and say thank you included a Valentine's braai, nurses' day celebration, Heritage Day lunch and our usual year end function.



Development of our staff remains imperative in providing evidence based and up to date care to our residents. We arranged various training sessions again with the financial support of Syringa Trust including Blindness and Intellectual Disability, Autism and managing challenging behavior, Labor Relations, Epilepsy, Ethical concepts, Fire evacuation training for all staff, Studio 3 Training, B-well Caregiver workshop, Inyatelo workshop, financial management, Basic conditions of employment and Teambuilding workshop.



In June 2024 we said goodbye to Tozama Nogemane, who started our home by my side as our professional nurse and who had 9 years of committed service. We wish her all the best with her future endeavors. Mr. Emmanuel Mathepe joined our team In July 2024.

Celebrating our Donors and friends

The Management Committee

Cheryl Barratt * Frank Bold * Miranda Forshaw
* Les Nel * Ekin Kench * Dr. Judy Bentley

Project manager: Ellen Corrigan

The organisations and businesses who supported us in 2024-2025:

Syringa Trust * WCFID * Vera Grover Trust *
Woolworths My School * Alexandra Hospital *
Pure Legacy Foundation * Robert Hamilton Trust
* Frank Robb Charitable Trust * RS Nussbaum
Foundation * Government Departments

Volunteers

Top Dogs Therapy * Kelly Mansfield & Oude
Molen Volunteers

Community

Gordon's Bay Primary School * Gordon's Bay
Church * The Inner Wheel

Individuals

Rosanne De Klerk * Mr. and Mrs. Uys * Tim and
Miranda Forshaw * Ellen Corrigan * Simon van
Gend * Les Nel * Susan Luyt * Brenda Coetzee
* Jacqueline Beckerleg * Jacqueline Mostert
* Jo Oscruff * R De Waal* All The Open Circle
families

