

Hangklip Community Care Centre

Reg No. 102-000-NPO

Quarterly Newsletter – No. 12, July 2020



Hangklip Community Care Centre (HCCC) is a fully independent, registered NPO, operating from premises leased from and shared with the Lakeside Chapel, corner of Wheeler and White Roads, Betty's Bay. **Our vision** is to promote a closely-knit Hangklip community (residents of Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooi Els) in which there is mutual caring for one another, and in which problems of inadequate nutrition, loneliness, infirmity, neglect, etc., are effectively addressed. **We facilitate** a range of services to the community, assisted by a large team of dedicated, community-based volunteers. Such services include:

- *Nutritious and enjoyable meals provided at subsidised, affordable prices*
- *Food parcels disseminated free of charge to residents who struggle to meet their basic nutritional needs*
- *A clinic for dispensing chronic medication, also offering routine medical tests and access to medical/nursing aids on loan*
- *Opportunities for group activities, recreation and social interaction.*

These services, along with others more directly concerned with home-based care and support, underpin our **HAIL (Home-based Assisted Independent Living)** initiative – through which residents with diminished capacity to care for themselves, or inability to function with full independence, can be assisted to continue living in their own homes, within the community and surroundings they love, for as long as possible.

Introduction

When we issued our last pre-lockdown (January) newsletter, we highlighted the main challenges facing HCCC for the year 2020 as being: (i) satisfying the rapidly growing demand for subsidised meals in the Hangklip area, (ii) gathering information on health-care and related (domestic, security, transport, etc) needs of the elderly, infirm and disabled in our community in order to plan, promote and give substance HAIL's vision and ideals as set out in a nutshell in the above box and (iii) expanding and re-invigorating HCCC's management committee to keep abreast of the increasing need to provide services for ensuring the well-being of the Hangklip community.

Our next quarterly (end of April) newsletter described the already evident impacts of the Covid-19 lockdown regulations, not only in stalling these plans, but also compromising our ability to continue providing normal, day-to-day services to the community.

Now, three months later, relatively little has changed. Despite some easing of lockdown regulations, the ongoing need for social distancing has prevented the resumption of all activities which require that participants (mostly elderly members of our community) gather together.

Social activities

Social activities therefore remain largely suspended. These include monthly cultural talks (in partnership with the Betty's Bay Ratepayers' Association), Pilates classes, Friendship Circle gatherings and Wednesday lunch socials in the HCCC dining room. While bridge club meetings are also suspended, some members now enjoy playing on-line. Anyone interested in joining may contact Willemien Law (072 368 8780).

Clinic

Owing to Covid-19 restrictions, our eight-weekly clinic service has currently been limited to providing the venue for personnel from Kleinmond Clinic to dispense government-issued chronic medication to registered patients. Medical testing by HCCC volunteer nurses, as well as opportunities for clinic patients to socialise and enjoy refreshments while

awaiting attention, remain suspended until further notice.

Meals and food parcels

For now, only subsidised meals (mostly sold at R10 per meal) continue to be provided on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, to lower-income (or to sponsored, no-income) members. Normally, a large proportion of non-subsidised meals prepared in the HCCC kitchen would have been sold to members at cost (about R40) to meet local demand for reasonably priced, good quality meals. The decision to stop providing non-subsidised meals was taken to relieve pressure on our kitchen, currently manned solely by HCCC staff with volunteer cooks having been excused from doing duty until further notice. Limiting meal production in this way has, furthermore, left spare capacity in the kitchen for meeting the growing demand for subsidised meals due to the worsening recession. Between April and June the demand for such meals increased from 284 to 427 per month, i.e. an increase of about 50%.

To help ensure proper coordination of food relief to vulnerable residents during this Covid-lockdown period, we have maintained close contact with other parties who have become involved in supporting food kitchens or providing food parcels (e.g., the Betty's Bay Ratepayers' Association and other parties with links to the Overstrand municipality). This contact has also resulted in us receiving regular donations of ingredients for meals and more recently, a consignment of soup prepared by a brewery in Hermanus. With the easing of lockdown restrictions and resumption of work by some residents, certain of these other relief initiatives have in the meantime been scaled down or, as in the case of the BBRA, closed completely. BBRA's remaining commitments to beneficiaries, together with food relief funds donated to BBRA by local residents, have since been transferred to HCCC.

The food parcel service provided by HCCC has continued unabated. There has been a significant increase in demand for food parcels in recent months. Whereas demand over the long term had remained relatively stable at 35 parcels per month, provision had to be made for distribution of up to 50 parcels during

July 2020. Beneficiaries of food parcels currently reside in Betty's Bay, Mooitsig and Pringle Bay.

HAIL

Of all HCCC's initiatives, the Home-based Assisted Independent Living (HAIL) initiative has been most severely impacted by Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions. The planning of a systematic survey of HAIL-related needs within the Hangklip community, vital for developing systems to meet such needs, has been seriously interrupted and remains on hold until circumstances improve. Regular meetings of the care workers' forum, which we have established to provide support in the form of ongoing liaison and education, at the same time encouraging a good professional standard of care and an ethos of cooperation among local carers, have also necessarily been suspended until further notice.

Joy Rourke, who leads the HAIL initiative and currently remains stranded in Australia under enduring Covid travel restrictions, is nevertheless in close contact with local developments and offers the following thoughts:

"As we confront a very changed world with its seemingly bleak uncertain future, there have been some positives. Within the confines of the extended lockdown, most residents have been able to embrace not only the value of our lovely environment, but also the meaning of what defines our community, and the necessity of reaching out to neighbours and pulling together in support of one another in such a time of crisis and beyond. It has been heartening to observe the generosity of spirit reflected not only in the rendering of food and financial aid to the economically distressed but equally through moral support and practical upliftment offered in countless other ways – quietly, individually, or otherwise channeled via caring organisations. It is this growth of a community spirit to reach out in caring and sharing that is at the heart of what HCCC and Hail seek to promote.

"Many have remarked on the necessity of HAIL in these difficult times, but looking towards the future, also the importance of taking into account the needs of a changing demographic as we see more younger families moving into the Hangklip region. Our next census is due in 2021, and we expect this will be enlightening. We anticipate having to expand the focus previously outlined in HAIL beyond the defined needs of the elderly, infirm or debilitated.

"We are also contemplating how best to develop an effective volunteer service aligned to a broader scope of community needs, obviously recognising the current limitations imposed by Covid."

Joy, who is presently based in a rural centre having an impressive volunteer support network, hopes to return from Australia with further ideas regarding a volunteer support base for HAIL.

Formal Meetings

As reported in our previous newsletter, the last formal meeting of our management committee took place on 23 March 2020. While we have continued to schedule monthly meetings, the holding of these has consistently been prevented by Covid-19 restrictions. Nevertheless, communication among committee

members has been ongoing and all essential business has been attended to satisfactorily. Monthly reports have been placed on record as a substitute for minutes of formal meetings. Starting in August, we plan to hold monthly on-line committee meetings for as long as physical meetings remain inadvisable.

Our AGM, which in terms of our constitution should have been held before the end of June, could also not take place because of lockdown restrictions. Even an envisaged two-month postponement to late August ultimately proved to be undesirable. A meeting at this time would fall within the pandemic's peak period when members would be ill-advised to risk exposure to the virus through attendance of a potentially large gathering. With further postponements being increasingly undesirable, the management committee resolved to make the AGM reports available to members without further ado and consider the AGM to have been held. Current committee members would be deemed to have been re-elected for another year. This resolution has been communicated to all members of HCCC, and has been fully supported by those members who have responded to the notification.

It had been our hope that the AGM would present the opportunity for expansion and re-invigoration of the management committee in the interests of more comprehensive and better service to our Hangklip community. Persons with a passion for community service are nevertheless still urged to come forward, acquaint themselves with committee activities and then avail themselves for election on to the committee at the first opportunity. For more information, contact George Green (083 283 4454).

Acknowledgement

The generosity of Hangklip community organisations, of their members and of individual residents continues to be revealed during these challenging times. We have received many unsolicited donations of cash and of items for food parcels, many of them from anonymous sources. We are extremely grateful for this support, which is crucial for the sustainability of services HCCC is committed to providing for our community.

Please assist in ensuring that this newsletter is brought to the attention of as many Hangklip residents as possible, both to inform them of the services that HCCC facilitates and to encourage more to apply for membership. For those wishing to make a once-off or regular cash donation to HCCC (tax-deductible), our banking details follow. Please use your last name and initials as reference and e-mail your contact details to our treasurer, Adrian de Kock (adrian25@telkomsa.net) to allow us to issue an appropriate receipt for tax purposes.

Account Name: Hangklip Community Care Centre **Bank:** FNB

Account No: 62460003818

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