

Hangklip Community Care Centre

Reg No. 102-000-NPO

Quarterly Newsletter – No. 14, January 2021



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.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HCCC ACTIVITIES – A SUMMARY

In our previous newsletter issued at the end of December, 2020, we looked back at a very difficult year, during which our ambitious plans at the commencement of 2020 for expanding services to the Hangklip community had been thrown into turmoil by the Covid-19 pandemic and different lockdown level restrictions.

For most of 2020, from March onwards, our volunteers remained excused from duty and all services barring the most essential ones, remained suspended. Our kitchen thus continued providing meals, but only to struggling households eligible for purchasing meals at highly subsidised rates. The food parcel service, now coordinated with government food relief initiatives, was able to continue unabated.

We were not able to hold our AGM before the end of June, as required by HCCC's constitution, so the unprecedented step had to be taken to of adopting a resolution to deem the AGM held, and the existing committee members duly elected to serve for a further year. For several months (April to late August) we were also not able to have physical meetings of our management committee, and business had to be conducted remotely. Easing of lockdown restrictions allowed management committee meetings to resume at the end of August.

Despite the easing of restrictions, the ongoing need for social distancing and stringent restrictions on the size of gatherings continued to prevent all group activities. Social and recreational services (Wednesday social lunches, Pilates, Bridge, Friendship Circle gatherings) as well clinic services (apart from the dispensing of chronic medication) remained suspended.

From early October until the start of HCCC's year-end recess on 11th December, further easing of lockdown restrictions had allowed us to recall our

kitchen volunteers and resume the sale of non-subsidised meals and re-institute Wednesday social sit-down lunches. Pilates classes resumed – even though, to maintain social distancing, the group was split in two, one half exercising on a Monday and the other on a Thursday. The first in a planned series of cultural talks (in partnership with the Betty's Bay Ratepayers' Association could be held on 11th November, when Gert Claassen gave a talk on a lost city in the jungles of the Amazon. Only due for resumption early in 2021, however, were the Bridge Club and Friendship Circle gatherings. As regards the clinic, the nursing and catering services which traditionally supplemented the dispensing of chronic medication remained suspended indefinitely.

JANUARY 2021 – THE SECOND WAVE

We emerged from HCCC's year-end recess on 11th January faced with Covid Level 3 restrictions in force. This effectively meant a return to the situation as it was in mid-2020: the HCCC kitchen once again provides subsidised meals only as take-aways on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; all social and recreational services have again been suspended, at least for the duration of lockdown level 3; only the food parcel service has not been affected.

FOOD RELIEF DURING THE COVID-AFFECTED PERIOD

Some statistics provide interesting insight into the extent of food relief provided to struggling households during the course of the Covid pandemic. Over the pre-Covid period of April to December 2019, 2 311 subsidised meals (i.e. meals costing approximately R40 to produce being sold for R10/meal) were provided. During the same (but Covid-affected) period in 2020, this number had risen to 2 762, i.e an increase of almost

a 20%. The growth may have been substantially greater but for two factors: (i) logistical difficulties that remote households could experience in having meals collected (or delivered) and (ii) lack of awareness of this service despite attempts to make it widely known within the community. Clearly, thought needs to be given to addressing these two factors to ensure that needy people are assisted adequately at this time.

The growth in expenditure associated with provision of food parcels is far more striking. At the beginning of 2020, monthly expenditure was approximately R2 850. By the beginning of 2021, this had risen to R7 800 (an increase of 174%). Discounting food price inflation (relatively minor) the reasons for this increase are the substantial growth in demand for food parcels, and a recent decision to increase quantities of certain items and include selected new items to improve the contribution parcels make to meeting monthly nutritional requirements. The new growth in demand for food parcels has been mainly in the Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay areas. In the past most food parcels were destined for beneficiaries in the Mooiuitsig area, but their proportion has now declined to under 50%.

HAIL NEWS

Care and carers

The educational forum for our community's health-care workers has been in recess since February 2020 and at this stage seems unlikely to resume within the foreseeable future. This has not only interrupted the programme of regular talks on topics of educational interest and practical value, but also hampered communication and teamwork among health workers and HCCC. Without the forum, communication with the carer community will, to a far greater extent, have to take place on a one-to-one basis.

We remain committed to working with local health-care workers to ensure that carers' services are extended to community members whose urgent needs remain largely unmet for whatever reason, including issues of affordability. It is important to note that HCCC is prepared to subsidise these services where, based on independent assessment, this proves to be necessary.

We are currently refining medical and financial criteria to be used in assessing the appropriate level of care and the level of subsidisation (where applicable) needed for individual cases within our community. As soon as these criteria have been finalised, we plan to communicate with our health care workers to obtain their further input and hopefully lay the foundation for meaningful cooperation to the benefit of our community.

Assisting with vaccine roll-out

HCCC has the facilities and is fortunate to be able to call on suitable personnel and expertise needed to assist with roll-out of the Covid vaccine. We have decided to approach the health authorities and offer them the use of HCCC facilities as a local base for this purpose.

MEMBERSHIP

At the end of the last financial year (31 March 2020), total membership stood at 213, having shown sustained growth over recent years. During the current year, however, the negative impact of the Covid situation seems also to have extended to our membership. Resignations, relocations and 3 deaths have reduced membership to 184. Furthermore, many members have been slow to renew membership by paying membership fees, in spite of several reminders to do so. The strength and effectiveness of an organisation like ours, which exists solely to ensure that our community has ready access to necessary care in the broadest sense of the word, depends largely on the strength of its membership and the positive influence members are able to exert on the policies and direction of the organisation. We therefore appeal to readers of this newsletter who reside in the Hangklip area to either apply for membership (if not already a member), or alternatively actively promote membership amongst friends and neighbours.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We continue to acknowledge with gratitude the generosity of Hangklip community revealed during these challenging times. We have regularly received unsolicited cash donations, often from anonymous sources. This support is crucial for the sustainability of services HCCC is committed to providing for our community.

Please assist in bringing this newsletter 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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