

# Hangklip Community Care Centre

Reg No. 102-000-NPO

Quarterly Newsletter – No. 11, April 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 previous newsletter at the end of January, we highlighted the main challenges facing HCCC during the new year (2020), as being: (i) coping with 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 increase our capacity to provide services needed for ensuring the well-being of the Hangklip community.

At that stage the profound effect that the Covid-19 pandemic was about to have on our plans to address these challenges was altogether unforeseen. Apart from immediate impacts on our society, the pandemic is likely also to have long-term consequences which will greatly increase the need for community care and present HCCC with even greater challenges into the future.

Understandably, the initial measures imposed by government to promote social distancing, followed by the stringent lock-down regulations, not only impacted our initial plans for 2020, but have also greatly affected our day-to-day operations. These consequences will become evident in the paragraphs that follow.

## Social activities

All social activities were suspended in mid-March and can only resume once social distancing rules have been sufficiently relaxed. Suspended activities include the newly instituted monthly cultural talks (in partnership with the Betty's Bay Ratepayers' Association), Pilates classes, Bridge club meetings, Friendship Circle gatherings, Wednesday lunch socials in the HCCC dining room and the opportunities we create for clinic patients to socialise and enjoy refreshments while waiting for attention.

## Meals

For now, only subsidised meals (mostly sold at R10 or R15 per meal for a meal costing R40 to produce)

continue to be provided on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for lower-income (or sponsored no-income) members. The decision to restrict provision of meals in this way was taken to relieve pressure on our kitchen, since all volunteer cooks were to be excused from doing duty until further notice. At the same time, the restriction created some spare capacity in the kitchen for meeting additional demands for subsidised meals. Should this spare capacity ultimately prove inadequate to meet growing demands, the opportunity would exist to recall willing volunteers to assist in the kitchen.

Year-end (31 March) statistics illustrate the recent (pre-pandemic) growth in demand for meals and give some perspective on possible accelerated growth in a post-pandemic situation. The total number of meals provided in 2019/20 was 6031, representing a massive increase of 34.5% from 2018/19. Of these, only 1 870 (31%) were enjoyed by members paying the full cost price (R40). The greatest demand (for 3 600 meals, or 60% of the total) was from members meeting subsidisation criteria which enable them to purchase meals at prices of either R10 or R15. Similarly subsidised meals sold during the previous year had numbered 2241, reflecting an increase of 1359 (almost 61%) from 2018/19 to 2019/20.

In the current extra-ordinary lockdown situation, it stands to reason that there would be an extra-ordinarily high demand for meals to be provided at low, or no, cost to recipients having no income – a demand beyond the capacity of HCCC to satisfy. It is, therefore, heart-warming to see local government and residents responding with grants and donations which capacitate local communities to maintain kitchens and keep hunger at bay. A local example is the Mooiuitsig community, in which up to 250 adults and children are receiving two meals per day through the Blue Wave initiative.

## Food parcels

Bulk buying and making up of monthly parcels for delivery to HCCC beneficiaries in April took place before lock-down, ie on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March. Delivery to listed Betty's Bay and Mooiuitsig beneficiaries also took place well ahead of the

normal mid-month delivery date, as by then some recipients were already in desperate need. Several other initiatives, such as those led by local municipal councillors and the Betty's Bay Ratepayers Association, and made possible by community donations, have since started up in order to help the most vulnerable. We have taken steps to help ensure that our relief measures are properly coordinated with these other initiatives. Together with the above-mentioned provision of meals, the delivery of food parcels from various sources should ensure that, nutritionally, the Mooiuitsig community is currently well cared for.

## HAIL

The gathering of information on HAIL-related needs of the Hangklip community was mentioned in the introduction to this newsletter as being one of HCCC's main challenges for the current year. To this end, Joy Rourke, who heads the HAIL initiative, arranged a meeting, held on 28 February, to which our committee was pleased to welcome Dr Leon Geffen and his assistant Robyn Black from the Samson Institute for Ageing Research (SIFAR) based in Cape Town. They addressed us, together with a number of our health care workers and other concerned parties present, on the work of SIFAR and in particular its employment of the Inter-RAI questionnaire as a potential tool for surveying the needs (holistic health) of our population. They generously also offered to assist us in its application. (A few days after the meeting Joy departed for Australia, where she now remains stranded, but safe with her family).

The Inter-RAI survey has the advantage of capturing high quality (well-researched) data which can be used to assist in effective individual medical and ancillary intervention, but when pooled statistically also serves to highlight common needs which can become a useful tool to lobby for improved services.

Decisions, yet to be taken, are whether we should follow this route or use a less probing questionnaire of our own formulation and to include additional information, regarding e.g. available transport and security, and importantly, how the survey should best be approached. We had entered discussions with Hangklip community leaders to seek opinion and guidance in this regard, when the sudden arrival of Covid-19 just 8 weeks ago interrupted the process, which now remains on hold until circumstances improve.

Covid-19 has nevertheless served the cause of HAIL in forcing an urgent focus by our community on many of the deficiencies we seek to address – poverty, hunger, the prevalent risks of age and medical morbidity, isolation and loneliness, limitation of access to essential services and has also made us see how vital it is that we all pull together to support one another. Our very survival depends on it. It has been wonderful to observe how the social media and various neighbourhood WhatsApp groups in particular have promoted the spirit of care and bonding.

The threat of this virus will remain for a very long time – possibly years – and calls for life-changing

adaptation. Our experience of the shut-down will have delivered some worthy sign posts. It is important that the fears which dominate the present are not in the long run allowed to overshadow the awareness of other important needs. We hope and pray that when the crisis has passed, the goodwill and generosity of spirit in caring and sharing currently so well demonstrated, will prevail to assist the broad vision of HAIL and work of HCCC – including its execution of a survey of needs, which we see as a necessary precursor to the formation of an effective voluntary support network able to meet the needs so identified.

## Formal Meetings

The last formal meeting of our management committee took place on 23 March 2020. We continue to schedule monthly meetings, but will make alternative arrangements if these are prevented from taking place by current lock-down or social distancing rules. Instead of our April meeting, committee members exchanged information by e-mail, which allowed compilation of a consolidated report to substitute for meeting minutes in maintaining the continuity of HCCC records.

Our AGM has been provisionally scheduled for 22 June 2020. It was and still is our hope that this AGM would present the opportunity to meet one of our challenges for the year – to expand and invigorate our management committee in the interests of more comprehensive and better service to our Hangklip community. Persons with a passion for community service are therefore urged to come forward, acquaint themselves with committee activities and then avail themselves for election on to the committee at the first opportunity

## Acknowledgement

The generosity of Hangklip community organisations, of their members and of individual residents has yet again been revealed during these challenging times. We have received many unsolicited donations of cash and of items for food parcels, most of them from anonymous sources. We are extremely grateful for this support, which will no doubt prove 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](mailto: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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