Annual General Meeting Report
2017-2018
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Introduction

When disability affects a child, family life is turned upside down and time becomes more precious than ever. The vital practical and emotional support provided by our Social work and Care teamsmakes all the difference, and is provided at no cost to families.

Last year, we supported 396 families, and our presence in the children’s special needs sector grew stronger day by day. This growth can be attributed to the generosity of our supporters. We are enormously grateful to them, as their generosity allowed us to continue to grow and provide much needed respite care and holistic family support.

This impact report is about the difference our supporters, volunteers and staff make to thousands of lives. Together we’ve provided best practice quality care and support to children and families who need it most.
Chairperson’s Report

I would like to warmly welcome you all to the 2017 - 2018 Iris House Children’s Hospice AGM. After three years of major change and development at the hospice, I am pleased to report that the last 12 months have been a time of slower consolidation. However on the maintenance side we have seen an increase in our running cost due to the additional therapies we now offer and our bakkie.

Our new board have worked very effectively together in overseeing all the different aspects of the charity and pooling their shared expertise. The three year strategy plan was finalised over two meetings and I believe in conjunction with the SWOT analysis provides an insightful, accurate and realistic view of our plans for the future. Although the board is functioning very well, we need to appoint a secretary and treasurer so as to further improve the functions of the board.

The care team has provided more care in the past year than ever before and we have seen in recent months an unprecedented increase in the number of hours of care provided to our children and their families both in the community and at the hospice. Although we have attempted objective analysis it is very difficult to be sure of the precise reasons why the demand for our services continues to grow. I believe it is safe to assume more people are getting to know of us and that the estimated number of special needs children in the province is extremely under stated. Respite Care is by its nature is very unpredictable with peaks and troughs in demand for the service. This increase in demand, particularly with families affected by Autism, has afforded us the opportunity to strengthen relationships and sustainable partners in the Special Needs space. To this end, we have engaged with Dunatos Remedial School about jointly taking over the old Chere Botha property.

The growth in the need for our services has led to the expansion of our service areas to include many new underprivileged areas such as Delft. This has been highly appreciated by the local community and recently we held the first Delft Mothers support group. This will clearly have a welcome impact as the community experiences the positive benefits of our involvement.
The team and board have continued to optimally manage our finances. Increased demand in respite care and therapeutic services coupled with increasing administrative and statutory costs means that the overall cost of the service continues to increase considerably. Disappointingly the Department of Social Development have not increased our funding, so we are running on the same grant we had three years ago. For this reason we have placed a large emphasis on reoccurring donations which are invaluable in helping to buffer the peaks and troughs of our event fundraising. Overall our strategy is to increase monthly donations by the public, engage with new corporates for support and reach out to the international community to support the daily running of the charity. We believe this to be a sustainable approach which will over time reduce our dependency on government funding.

The biggest development this year has come within the structure of our team. Our hospice is now managed by a nurse and we now have three care team leaders and two social workers. We have also attracted a high standard of carer to our care teams. This coupled with new reporting systems have seen far more control of the quality of our care and follow up’s with families in crisis. It has led to two families being approved for RDP housing, and better use of our care team, and also empowered them to provide play therapy (Imagination Station) and sensory play as part of their time with a child. Ashley van Heerden has been appointed projects manager and in his role he has been successful with our first Lotto funding, having us listed on the UN disability platform and he continues to nurture existing partnerships as well as find new ones. The fundraising team has taken the initiative to relook our fundraising calendar. The number and diversity of our fundraising events has been relooked, focusing on those that provide the best ROI, which has a combined benefit of both raising money, but also equally important increasing the awareness and understanding of the Children’s Hospice Model in South Africa.
We have also worked hard in increasing our profile as a charity. This includes creating and increasing our social media presence as well as modernising the website and creating a more reactive and user friendly electronic supporter’s data base. Our website has been extensively modernised and is now very functional. I am also proud to endorse the increasing number of partners that we have who are developing regular and long term support for our interests. E.G Woolworths, Checkers and de Vere Acuma. Ashley was selected as a contestant on My Kitchen Rules. Ashley had his “back story” filmed at the hospice, creating a huge opportunity to expose the work we do to a national audience of over three million viewers.

We continue to receive excellent feedback from our families on their level of service satisfaction, and have had some major breakthroughs in our physio and equine therapies We have been short listed for the Rare Diamonds award for excellence in special needs care. It is feedback like this that binds all the members of the team together and reminds us all so powerfully, through all our different roles; of the overarching purpose to which we all aspire.

In common with all healthcare and social services providers we face daunting challenges going into the future. We encourage the increase of respite care into the community and hospice, but we are very aware this will involve overall costs increasing. It will also mean looking to making more robust changes to our fundraising efforts. Now, more than ever, we need to plan wisely for the years ahead; creating a secure financial future but most importantly attracting and retaining the highest quality carers to provide the standards of care that our families have grown to expect. I am confident that we can continue to develop and achieve these aspirations through all the diverse and different members of our team and the overwhelming generosity of time, spirit and enthusiasm that everyone brings.

Thank you to everyone involved for another very successful year.

Sue van der Linde
This Year We

Provided 1272 Hours of Community Respite care

Provided 5216 Hours of Hospice Based Respite care

Provided 1093 Interventions

578 Donations to Families
In the past year our beneficiary base has grown by over 13%. It is an amazing honor to be able to serve 396 Families, all from different backgrounds, race, and creed. Serving so many diverse families, affected by life-limiting and life-threatening conditions is great responsibility, and as we continue to grow and expand our services, we commit to providing quality care and support to all of our families.

Further highlighting the diversity in the children and families we serve is the wide range of medical conditions they face. In the years 2017/2018 our families are affected by over 77 medical conditions, highlighting the diversity of syndromes affecting the children we serve.
Our Reach

RETREAT
SAMORA MACHEL
RICHWOOD
NOOIDGEDACHT
KRAAIFONTEIN
BRACKENFELL
ELSIES RIVER
BELLVILLE
DELT
BURGUNDY ESTATE
KHAYELITSHA
HOUT BAY
CONSTANTIA
MITCHELLS PLAIN
EDGEMEAD
BELHAR
TABLE VIEW
STELLENBERG
PLATTEKLOOF
SILVERSANDS
PARKLANDS
WELGEMOED
SUNNINGDALE
STELLENBOSCH
RONDEBOSCH
NORTH PINE
PLUMSTEAD
PHILLIPI
PAROW
MILNERTON
DURBANVILLE
KUILSRIVER
BONTEHEUWEL
BROOKLYN
MUizenberg
BLOUBERG
EERSTERIVER
MFULENI
GRASSY PARK

44 Communities
To measure the impact our holistic services have on families' lives, each family is asked to score themselves in outcome areas to gauge the effect of our service. Below is a list of our services and an average score given by our families.
Asiyolise and Iviwe were 3 and 2 when they was diagnosed with Autism. Nolu and William Mbola, their parents, struggled to manage caring for two sons with autism. Nolu had to give up her job to care for her sons, as they required full time care, and there was no one else to assist.

It was in 2013 that Zintle introduced the Family to Iris House. Now an Iris House family, the Mbola’s received much needed respite care and donations. Still feeling the financial burden of raising two sons with special needs, Nolu decided to join the Iris House Care Team in 2015 to earn an extra income, whilst uniquely and empathetically caring for special needs children, in a way that only the mother of a special needs child can. This extra income reduced the huge financial strain on the family. Now, in 2018 Nolu serves as a Care Team Leader at Iris House, providing for her family, whilst actively working to improve the lives of other special needs children and their families.
A mother of four, Nomaindia embodies strength, courage and perseverance. The story of her strength and vigour although superhuman, is not unique, it is commonly shared by all mother's, parents and families of children with disabilities. Her story started with concerns about her son Esona. Born with no limitations, it was at 8 months that he started getting ill. Feeling helpless and unable to understand what was wrong with him, Nomaindia spent endless nights, weeks and months at hospital by her child's side.

It was only after excruciatingly having to watch him suffer, and undergo countless tests that she was told that her son was suffering from Cerebral Palsy. Her focus on the positives such as her son's remarkable defiance of his prognosis, the overwhelming support of her other sons, and the wealth of knowledge she has gained from and through Esona. She even uses that knowledge to help care for others who also affected by disability, as a carer at Iris House.

The struggles of parents and families affected by disabilities are inconceivable, but it is their resilience that speaks volumes. Ours is to support these everyday superheroes by providing them with free quality respite care.
In 2017/2018 we have further expanded on the Holistic Therapy Services we provide to our children and families. Our Therapies now include:

- Equine Therapy
- Adaptive Surfing
- Imagination Station- Sensory Storytelling
- Physiotherapy
- Sensory Room Sessions
We couldn't have done it without you
Neville Gillomee

Raising R25000 “next-level cycling fundraiser”
Neville Gillomee cycled the entire 1591km from Windhoek to Cape Town in aid of Iris House finishing in only 10 days. A remarkable feat of human strength and endurance, and an extra special grand gesture in aid of our cause.

Craig Capper

Loyal supporters and important members of the Iris House Children's Hospice family, Craig Capper and his partner Tash have consistently put their money where their hearts are. Their overwhelming generosity has included the purchase of a brand new Beneficiary Transport Vehicle in 2015 and in 2017 Groom Accommodation to grow our Equine Therapy Program. To date their donations have totaled over a Half a Million Rand, highlighting their dedication to our cause, and the special families and communities we serve.
In their words...

It is an honour to live in a country, where for every challenge there are visionary people trying to make a difference. Thank you Iris House for symbolizing this. Premier of the Western Cape, Helen Zille

We wish to congratulate Sue and her team on the wonderful work they do on a daily basis- to improve the lives of very special children and young people. Former President, FW De Klerk

This country, can become a great nation, If we can ensure that the most vulnerable in our society can experience the true fruit of freedom DA Leader, Mmusi Maimane