



Josephs

FOR CHRONICALLY ILL CHILDREN

EST 1935

COVID-19 has impacted on the operations at St Joseph's. We asked Christelle Cornelius (CEO) about the challenges.

What has the impact of the virus been on St Joseph's Home?

St Joseph's is a home where children are in long term care and we sometimes see ourselves as a closed environment. The impact has been on many levels and the reality is that we feel very vulnerable for our children as they need access to 24 hours of nursing care. We had to implement many checks and balances regarding every entrance and exit point at the Home, the children's nutrition, their physical and mental wellbeing and their transport to hospital visits. Our more than 130 staff members are screened daily, uniforms disinfected and changed on-site, as well as employees supported during their isolation and positive diagnoses. Caring for our staff is crucial for them to be able to care for the children.

What have you done to abide by the rules and regulations of COVID?

We are a nursing lead facility and guided by the Department of Health (DOH) infection control guidelines. At an early stage, we were already thinking about the impact of the virus and what it could mean. Planning meetings regarding scenarios were discussed as part of our "preparedness". This initially included infection control in our wards, but as COVID hit our country, awareness escalated. We met with the Department of Health and did a risk assessment for the entire Home. Risk factors were identified, like entrance and exit points, screening of staff, the wearing of masks and the complete restriction of all interns, volunteers and parent visits to St. Joseph's.

Facial expressions like smiling, have always been such an important part of all communications and interactions. Now, living behind a mask, how did this change things here?

A child needs to be able to connect with you and that includes a lot of facial expressions. Initially, our therapists wore visors, instead of masks. Since masks have become compulsory we are guided by our values. How do we engage with one another? We cannot see so much of the facial expression, but what is important is that we still engage respectfully. We respect each other by wearing masks.

Why is the physical contact between a parent and a child



Patients wearing masks in the Home

so important and how do you mitigate that at St Joseph's? Now, with the lockdown parental contact has not been possible?

As a mother myself, I cannot imagine going a night without my child, not seeing them and understanding their wellness. Having a place like St Joseph's to care for medically fragile children allows parents to feel that they are well supported and in a safe place. It does not ignore the longing between a parent a child. Maintaining contact with parents throughout is reassuring them that we are giving their children loving care. Nurses and staff can only do so much in terms of daily care, but you cannot replace the bond between a parent and a child. So we recognized that this is difficult and have now started to re-integrate parents back into the Home to visit their children. However, we take many precautions in facilitating these visits and parents are debriefed before visits. Until 5 August a total of 22 individual parental visits have been facilitated, while three parents did not meet screening criteria at the entrance. This has been very sad.

Why is it so important to protect the children in the Home?

All our children who are at SJH are medically fragile and are admitted for 24-hour nursing care. The highest proportion of diagnoses is an infectious disease. They are therefore medically more vulnerable to complications should they contract the virus. It is very important to take all the precautions to keep them safe and not worsen their fragility.



Hand sanitizing liquid equals liquid gold during the COVID-19 pandemic. St Joseph's Home for Chronically Ill Children welcomed a generous donation of 21 boxes of 500 ml bottles of sanitizer from Rheinmetall Denel Munition. Handing over, is Milan Bohacek (CFO) Rheinmetall with Christelle Cornelius (CEO at St Joseph's) and Matron Audrey Gourrah. St Joseph's cares for more than 120 patients and has a bed capacity of 175. All its staff of more than 130 are regarded essential and report for duty each day. More than 75 litres of hand sanitizer is used each week! St Joseph's is situated in Montana and has been under lockdown since the end of March.



Thank you Kimberley-Clark! St Joseph's would like to express our sincere appreciation for a donation of 809 nappy packs valued at R180 975.19! Your donation will be a huge saving to the home, and we are grateful to receive a total of 40 442 nappies. This will stretch the need of nappies in two wards over a period of 160 days.



Thank you! The staff and I thank St Joseph's home for the support in getting your masks from us. Your order encouraged us to get the mask making started and on the go. It has meant we have been able to employ staff and stay open instead of having to close down. Our families have food on the table and we are continuing to make masks

Kind Regards
Gail Brown
Managing director: OGGI ACTIVEWEAR



CORONA VIRUS APPEAL

Help us by making a vital donation. Your R200 buys:

- 10 surgical masks
- 2 pairs of gloves
- 2 aprons

Together we can help our children get through this!

Fighting a new enemy to keep our children safe!

Support our "I care" bag

The COVID-19 pandemic requires the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to keep our staff and children safe. This requires a strict protocol – at a huge unbudgeted cost. The target is to raise R400 000. Your donation of R200 (one bag) will help toward buying 2 000 "I care" bags.

Just click on the link and donate on the secure website or choose the EFT option.

<http://stjosephshome.org.za/pages/icare>

A special video production to archive the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on St Joseph's Home is currently in post-production. This short music montage gives an insight into the impact of the lockdown regulations on parental visits to the Home. This special song, LET US KEEP OUR DISTANCE, was written, composed and performed (with his three daughters) by Anton Scholtz, a resident from St Helena Bay, West: https://youtu.be/Hn6UJ_1rvvA



Cape Town Clothing Guild donates much needed winter clothes!

This donation is a huge expense savings to the Home, and we are grateful to have received the following items:

5 x bags winter clothing (jersys, jackets, pants, sleepwear, warm hats, underwear, socks, dresses, tops, shorts, scarves, vests, etc.)

2 x boxes infant clothing (towel nappies and baby blankets)

The above donation will help us to reduce the quantity of stock that still has to be purchased, and will keep our children looking beautiful and warm throughout the cold days of the 2020 winter season.

Thank you!