

CMR's response on CoVit19 – shelter for the homeless

CMR Ermelo, led by their supervisor, Sonja van Niekerk, work together with a multi-disciplinary team (Msukaligwa municipality disaster management team, SAPS, DSD, CMR Mpumalanga and CMR Ermelo, Department of Health and Health workers and Churches and community members and businesses donating towards the needs) to provide people living on the street with a safe place to stay and decent living during the 21 days lock down period. As strange and new as it was for the beneficiaries, so was it for the team service providers. To get things running, role-players met every morning to plan for the day ahead and to think creatively on how to deal with challenges. What initially felt like chaos was all worked out through hours of dedicated work from all stakeholders, support from church groups who voluntarily donated food and prepared meals despite their own preparations for the lock-down and spontaneous contributions from the community towards the needs of the people in the shelter e.g. most needed toiletries, clothes and cleaning materials. Intensive education was done daily regarding the CoVid19 virus that turned the whole world upside-down. Though, the biggest problem they experienced is the withdrawal from drug dependency. Team members of the Health Department played a crucial and selfless role in this. They provided intensive medical services and service the shelter for 8 hours daily. In collaboration with DSD, CMR and volunteers, information was also given on addiction and withdrawals and people were supported and motivated for rehabilitation. Individual counselling started as trust was built.

On Day 1, 27 March, 55 people was admitted at the shelter. Since then some have sadly left to continue their way of living on the street and use of substances. The 25 that are now left are committed to use this period to detox and go for rehabilitation and hopefully to be reunited with their families. After-care services and support to them will continue by social workers of CMR and DSD.

“Team work makes the dream work”

Salute to all the heroes in this extraordinary and difficult time who help directly or indirectly to relief the need of the poor and the destitute! Thank you!

‘For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.

And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

Mathew 25: 35, 36 & 40

A GLIMPSE THROUGH THE WINDOW OF THE INSTANT SHELTER IN ERMELO:



Fixing his shoes before it was replaced



Thanks for protective masks donation



Father and son enjoying a warm meal



'Bless the hands that prepared this food'



Paying it forward



Food for soul – spiritual inputs