

25 January 2017

Prof G J de Lange
Director CAEC
NMMU

Re: Report on “Memorandum of Understanding” Cheshire Home Summerstrand – 2016

Dear Prof de Lange,

2016 was a busy year at Cheshire Home Summerstrand, and we were able to accommodate in excess of 200 students from NMMU for various projects and reasons. Some did experiential training, some did community service, some volunteered for ‘Beyond the Classroom’, ‘Pay it Forward’ or ‘Raising Social Development’ and there was a student who needed to volunteer for bursary requirements.

We are privileged to be in a physical position which is in close proximity to NMMU and their residences. Many of the courses that are studied, in some way is adaptable to Cheshire – and we can offer experience in a range of fields.

A number of students had to do modules that included:

- Academic and Life Skills Module (ALM)
- Part of the NMMU WRFC141 Curriculum
- Development Communication Module (DEV104)
- Beyond the Classroom Leadership Programme 2015
- Scholarship support programmes

The many students are busy with studies in the following fields:

Logistics, Tourism, Human Resource Management, Law, Psychology, Agriculture, Accounting, Economics, Tourism, Pharmacy, Nursing, Computer Science, IT, Mechanical Engineering , Public Relations, Journalism, Biokinetics and Human Movement Dept.

Students helped in many ways including:

Assisting residents at meal time (feeding needs), helping to tidy rooms, personal hygiene of residents such as nail care, socializing with residents, entertainment, help in our charity shop, taking residents for a “walk”, reading, helping with events etc. Some residents go above and beyond their requirements, and go the extra mile. Quite often, additional information about the Home was requested as the information was needed for course work.

Specific examples of the impact of this partnership between NMMU and Cheshire Home Summerstrand include:

- The **BioKinetics** which the students offer on a weekly basis. We are not in the financial position to employ a part time or full time biokineticist, or physiotherapist. The residents also don’t have the resources to pay for this either. This is a huge benefit to our residents – considering their limited range of movement, lack of exercise, and poor posture (as a result of

their disability). The provision of this impacts largely, and is not only an expense saving, but more important the health benefits for the residents is invaluable.

- Boccia and disability golf was also introduced by way of the Bio Kinetics department, and the participation and enjoyment by the residents is tremendous.
- Students doing **nursing** also did their experiential training at the Home. This also creates extra hands in the Home, which frees the staff up to attend to various other tasks and duties.
- We had IT students that designed a programme for the administration of medicines, an automated pre-order system. Although we were looking forward to it, we sadly never got to see the end result.
- We again accommodated **international (study abroad) students**. A number of these students also did work at Khaya Cheshire. Some of them assisted with the day to day running of the homes, and another group spent lots of time doing 'girly activities' with the female residents (hand massages, painting nails etc)
- Some students became special friends to the residents, and visited more regularly, even though their required hours had been met. Assistance at the Annual Fete was a great help.

On the 18th of July, we had volunteers from NMMU that came in a private capacity to sing to the residents.

We again this year together with the NMMU Disability Office accommodated a law student at Cheshire. This is his fourth year at the Home and we provide the necessary care and learning opportunity he needs for successful study. As soon as we have space, we will accommodate another disabled student.

We were also blessed on 3 occasions to receive donations of food, which is naturally an expensive item on our budget.

A highlight for 3 of our residents who are "artists" (2 are mouth painters) was the support of the Arts and Culture Department and NMMU Disability Unit in organizing an on-campus art exhibition for the residents. Some of their paintings were sold and the income they generated had an incredible impact on the residents self-esteem and dignity. We do hope that this exhibition will be continued in the new year and perhaps increase participation from the Art Community in PE. The exhibition was aptly entitled "**artABLE**".

Documentation from NMMU

We are grateful to the many Department Heads, and Administrative Staff, who together with a project plan or letter of confirmation, for sending us communique with the students, so that we can record all the information, and develop these relationships. We do hope that this will increase in 2017, and that we are able to support the lecturers more by way of project requirements and experiential training.

Projects

Some students are able to present their project plan, and communicate their needs well. So often the ideas are brilliant and can be used, and sometimes the project is not followed through. We would love to see the projects followed through, so that we can measure their effectiveness, and offer input on practicality.

Representation on Cheshire Home Summerstrand's Management Board

We thank DR M Williams of the Department of Nursing for being a current Home Management Board Member.

Project ideas for 2017

It would be of great benefit to us, and to the students to continue the partnership for 2017. We would love to see the same departments interact with us, and make use of our Home for learning. If possible, we would love to see **new** participation from the following departments:

- Photography
- Agriculture – Tunnels and Landscaping
- Administration
- Social Work
- Arts
- Nutrition and Diet

THANK YOU

We remain committed to the Memorandum of Understanding and partnership we have with NMMU. We are appreciative for the help, and extra hands we have, and of extra importance is the learning platform we have created for the students. Creating awareness about debilitating disease and disability is crucial to society. They will in the future be able to make an informed input in “making a difference” for disabled persons. During the students’ time at Cheshire Home Summerstrand they are given information about the Home and Disability. Many students receive letters from us concerning their community work to use as part of their portfolios. Some students that were donating goods last year, on Freedom Day, had the opportunity to be on Bay TV.

Please could you convey this report with our thanks to the Vice Chancellor Prof D Swartz and Dr Muthwa. We are privileged to have the opportunity to associate with the education and intellectual growth of students of NMMU. The fact that we have so many students offering to help argues well for disability and the future of our country. It is also a credit to all at NMMU. I am sure the impact of the partnership will grow as we move forward.

We also sincerely thank you, Prof de Lange, for coordinating this partnership and your on-going support of the programme. We sincerely hope that we will be able to renew the MOU for 2017 and look forward to a continued partnership.

A beneficial programme to both residents and students – new friendships that are formed and support that is offered by the students; linked with information and friendship from our residents, makes this a successful endeavor.

We want to wish all the staff and students at NMMU a peaceful, successful and happy 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Deidre Burger

MANAGER: CHESHIRE HOME SUMMERSTRAND



Tel: 041 583 2183 Fax: 041 583 5348

Cell: 083 5000 818

E-mail: cheshiresstrand@telkomsa.net

CHESHIRE HOME SUMMERSTRAND

Disabled people live, breathe, learn, teach, eat, work get parking tickets, aspire, loaf, make love, raise families, make friends, laugh, celebrate, mourn, cry, pay taxes, and die. Disabilities are neither focal points, nor something to be ignored. They are facts of life, which each disabled person deals with and adapts to.

As able bodied persons we are potentially a part of every disabled person's environment, an environment that can be as hostile, neutral or welcoming as we make it.

Please make the adaptations needed to interact with disabled people in a positive way - it is well worth the effort.

Thank you NMMU for your interaction over many years