

**CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT**  
**Annual Report**  
**(1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018)**  
**Adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 22 June 2019**

1. **MANAGEMENT**

1.1 **Members of the Governing Board**

1.1.1 In the course of the year under review, an Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 28 June 2018.

1.1.2 The following members were elected to the Management Committee (MC) at the AGM:

President	-	Anthony Soo
Vice President	-	Ambrose Tan
Secretary	-	Nicholas Chee
Treasurer	-	Antony Ng
Asst Treasurer	-	Susanna Goh
Committee Members	-	Francois Bretault

1.1.3 Fr Kenson Koh continued as Spiritual Director.

1.1.4 The incoming Management Committee will steer the Charity towards achieving its goals and objectives as stated in the Vision and Mission:

**Vision**

“Be a sign of God’s love in restoring dignity of PLWHAS accepted by society without prejudice or discrimination.”

**Mission**

- To cater to the spiritual, psychological, financial and physical wellbeing of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAS) so as to give them hope to live a fulfilling life.
- To help raise the level of public awareness of HIV/AIDS, and to promote greater compassion and understanding towards PLWHAs.

1.1.5 Attendance at meetings of the MC is as follows:

Name	Attendance	Percentage
Rev Fr Kenson Koh	4/4	100%
Anthony Soo	4/4	100%
Ambrose Tan	3/4	75%
Nicholas Chee	3/4	75%
Antony Ng	2/4	50%
Susanna Goh	3/4	75%
Francois Bretault	4/4	100%

CARE Constitution requires the MC to meet at ‘least once every 3 months’ whilst the Revised Code of Governance merely states that, for Intermediate Tier IPCs, ‘the Board should meet regularly’. In the year under review, the MC met 4 times aside from its AGM.

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2. **MANPOWER**

2.1 **Employees**

2.1.1 The following were employees of the Charity as at 31 December 2018:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>
Michael Charles Loh	Executive Director	1 May 2011
Florence Seah	Programme Manager	1 July 2011
Joseph Ang	Programme Executive	14 May 2014
Diana Khoo	Admin/Accounts Executive	1 May 2018

At the time of writing this report, the position of Night Supervisor was vacant. The position has been filled by part-time staff since December 2018.

2.2 **Salaries**

The key management personnel for the Charity is its Executive Director. His compensation falls under the remuneration band of S\$100,000 to S\$200,000.

2.3 **General Membership**

2.3.1 At the time of reporting, there were 24 members on the Membership Register. Of these, 7 served on the Management Committee.

2.4 **Volunteers**

2.4.1 As at 31 December 2018, there were 21 active volunteers on the CARE Register of Volunteers.

2.4.2 One new volunteer joined the volunteer pool in the year under review.

2.4.3 The different areas where volunteers are involved include advocacy and pastoral care work. Pastoral care includes, among others, befriending residents and providing companionship to PLWHAs who are living on their own.

2.4.4 We also have a group of volunteers who are prayer warriors. They pray from home, offering up prayers for the needs of CARE, its residents as well as its staff and volunteers.

2.4.5 Besides individual volunteers who helped out on a regular basis, CARE also had external groups visiting its residents. These include members of the Catholic Nurses Guild and Kampong Kapor Methodist Church.

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2.5 Training & Development of Employees & Volunteers

2.5.1 Two new staff who joined in 2018 attended the Workshop on 'Building the Kingdom Together', organized by Caritas Singapore. CARE also sponsored five staff and 3 volunteers to attend the Caritas Social Mission Conference.

2.5.3 Besides skills training and development, CARE's Executive Director also emphasised the importance of spiritual and emotional growth of his staff. Weekly bible sharing and pastoral care sessions were held with full participation by all staff. These sessions were also useful as a platform for staff to air their emotions about issues and problems they face in their work and with residents and reflect on these from a faith perspective. It also provides a form of support among staff and helps in fostering better staff relation. This approach to staff development is very much in line with the HR guiding principles set out by the Catholic Archdiocese which places emphasis on the spiritual growth of employees.

2.5.4 The Archdiocese encourages Catholic staff to attend retreats with the view to revisiting their purpose in their call to service. In the year under review, CARE's Executive Director attended the Caritas Overseas Leaders Retreat held from 27-29 April 2018, and a one-day retreat organized by the Legion of Mary at Holy Spirit Church on 2 June 2018.

All staff and MC members attended a weekend retreat at San Damiano Retreat Centre, Church of St Mary of the Angels from 19-21 January 2018. Fr Kenson provided spiritual direction.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Institution of a Public Character

CARE continued to operate as an Institution of a Public Character. Our IPC status is valid up to 31 January 2020.

3.2 Governance Evaluation

As reported to the Commissioner of Charities, CARE is 100% compliant with the Code of Governance for Charities and Institution of Public Character. This evaluation is for the period 1 January to 31 December 2017. The evaluation for year 2018 will be submitted after the 2019 AGM. Members may log on to the Charity Portal ([www.charities.gov.sg](http://www.charities.gov.sg)) for more details.

3.3 Revised Code of Governance

The new requirements for the revised Code of Governance for Charities and IPC effective 1 Jan 2018 were reviewed and steps have been taken to ensure compliance as soon as possible.. Some of the changes in governance reporting are already reflected in this report and its accompanying audited statements of accounts.

3.4 As required by the Revised Code of Governance, the MC has appointed an MC member to look into setting up an Audit Committee. This Committee will oversee CARE's

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governance, risk management, financial and internal control processes and practices. Its immediate task is to look into setting up the internal audit framework at CARE.

- 3.5 The MC is continually looking into updating its operational policies and practices in order to be in alignment with the Code of Governance.

**4. PROGRAMMES & SERVICES**

**4.1 Residential CARE Shelter**

- 4.1.1 During the year under review, the CARE Shelter continued to be our major activity.

4.1.2 Admissions:

Total residents as at 1 Jan 2018	17
Total admissions during the year	8
Total discharges during the year	6
Total as at 31 Dec 2018	<b>19</b>

4.1.3 Distribution by Religion:

Buddhism/Taoism	9
Christianity - Catholicism	3
Christianity - Others	2
Hinduism	0
Islam	2
Others	3
Total	<b>19</b>

4.1.4 Distribution by Ethnic Groups:

Chinese	15
Malay	2
Indian	2
Others	0
Total	<b>19</b>

- 4.1.5 CARE continued to receive referrals from the Communicable Disease Centre (CDC), Tan Tock Seng Hospital and the Singapore Prison Service. In the year we also see an increase in direct referrals from other acute hospitals such as Singapore and Changi General Hospitals.

**4.2 Pastoral Care for Residents**

- 4.2.1 CARE adopts the Caritas' Principles of Service for the delivery of care to its beneficiaries. In line with these principles, CARE places emphasis on the dignity of the person and allow our beneficiaries to make their own decisions and take responsibility for the outcome.

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- 4.2.2 Residents are free to choose to participate in the programmes of their choice according to their interest, talents and ability. Our menu of activities includes CARE's Dum Spiro Spero project. With this initiative, all residents of our shelter are encouraged to participate in a series of handicraft works where they produce candles, rosaries, crucifixes and Christmas cribs, by hand. It does not aim to provide a livelihood for our residents. However, its purpose lies in a far more meaningful and poignant reason. It helps them to appreciate the joy of work. The sale of these beautiful handicrafts produced by our residents give recognition of your acceptance of these often 'forgotten' individuals in our society. Each time someone take home one of their handicraft, they affirm their belief that they are not forgotten and gives them hope and a sense of self-worth to carry on living fulfilling lives.
- 4.2.3 Another aspect of CARE's approach to pastoral care is promoting a helping culture among the residents. Residents who are more able are encouraged to assist fellow residents who are less capable of doing things for themselves and who require help such as in their activities of daily living. In this way, the helper feels useful and validates himself while the one being helped feels loved and cared for.
- 4.2.4 CARE's approach to pastoral care has always been holistic in nature. Besides seeing to their physical needs, we also attend to their psychological, emotional and spiritual needs which are our real focus. Our holistic approach to giving care has resulted in positive attitudinal changes in many of our residents.
- 4.2.5 In tending to the emotional and spiritual needs of our residents, we hold weekly sharing sessions with them. The residents enjoy these sessions where they get to talk about their life stories and express their feelings about events that have happened. They also share, very candidly, various issues affecting themselves. This has helped them to get in touch with their own emotion which is the first step in the healing process.
- 4.2.6 Residents who require counseling and personal coaching are given personal attention by staff and a team of specially selected and trained volunteers. Our Spiritual Director, Fr Kenson Koh, is also available to any resident seeking spiritual guidance or reconciliation.
- 4.2.7 While CARE provides free service to all races and religions and allows them to practise their own faith, we are open to sharing the Catholic faith with residents who show interest.

Between 2012-2018, a total of 8 residents have accepted the Catholic faith and received baptism. At the time of writing this report, 1 resident is attending RCIA and will be baptized at Easter in 2019.

- 4.2.8 Besides providing physical, emotional and spiritual support, another important aspect of our work is to embrace our beneficiaries in friendship and give them the assurance that they have friends whom they can lean on for support whenever needed.

We are constantly thinking of other ways of building this bridge of friendship beyond our daily interaction with the beneficiaries.

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This year, a trip was organized to Johor Baru with precisely this in mind. Five residents and 2 staff went on this trip. Aside from the sightseeing and having fun, the weekend getaway provided many opportunities for the residents and staff to bond and forge closer relationship, opportunities that may not have been so apparent within the setting of the shelter home.

**4.3 Employment for Residents**

4.3.1 Residents who are able and are willing, generally would seek employment so that they can be financially self-supporting. This is one of the steps towards integration to society. In the year under review, five residents held full-time jobs.

4.3.2 Residents who are gainfully employed made contributions towards their own living expenses. This is in line with the Caritas Principles of Care of empowering rather than creating dependency. In the process, residents regain their dignity and ownership, becoming more responsible for themselves.

4.3.3 For the majority of CARE’s residents who are not employed, the most commonly cited reasons were poor health and side effects of their medication which resulted in their inability to cope with the physical stress of work.

4.3.4 Residents who do not go out to work are required to participate in our pastoral care programmes. For more details, please refer to the Pastoral Care Report above.

**4.4 Non-Residential Programme**

4.4.1 In the year under review, the Non-Residential Programme benefitted a total of 33 persons, all of whom are living with HIV/AIDS who are staying on their own. This figure is made up of women PLWHAs and their dependent children, male PLWHAs who are living on their own who require some form of assistance, and ex-residents who have moved out to stay on their own.

4.4.2 Many of the women PLWHAs are foreigners who are married to Singaporean men. As foreigners they do not receive many of the benefits that female citizens are entitled to.

4.4.3 CARE provides them with monthly food rations, transport pocket money for their school-going children, annual school textbook funding and more. They have monthly consultation with our Programme Manager and are invited to join our social activities.

4.4.4 The profile of our non-residential beneficiaries is as follows:

<b>Non-Resident Description</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Malay</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>Thais</b>	<b>Total</b>
PLWHA Women	0	1	1	12	14
Children	0	2	2	4	8
PLWHA Men	3	0	0	0	3

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Ex-residents	7	1	0	0	8
Total	10	4	3	16	33

**4.5 Advocacy**

- 4.5.1 As in previous years, CARE’s approach to advocacy continued to be 2-prong:
- (a) To debunk the common myths and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS thereby reducing fear of the disease, and
  - (b) To change people’s mindset and attitude so that they can be more accepting of PLWHA instead of discriminating against them.

4.5.2 To support the Charity’s advocacy work, Arch Productions was commissioned to produce a new advocacy video which was first shown at World AIDS Day in 2018. At the same time, we also launched the new CARE website. Members can access it by this new link: [www.catholicaidresponseeffort.com](http://www.catholicaidresponseeffort.com)

**4.5.2 Student Outreach**

In the year under review, CARE worked with students from Catholic Junior College on their Local Service-Learning Project. Fifty students from 2 classes worked with CARE staff to design projects that would benefit our beneficiaries.

In the process, they learnt more about the disease and preventive measures to take. They also took part in the experiential workshop and from this experience, came to have a better understanding of the suffering of a person with AIDS.

**4.5.3 Outreach to Parishes**

During the year, the number of parishes visited increased from two in 2017 to five in 2018 namely, St Anthony Church, Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Holy Spirit Church, St Ignatius Church and Church of St Alphonsus.

The central message of the outreach to the parishioners is that PLWHAs can lead life with hope if they receive the understanding and support of the public, and this can begin from within the Catholic community.

4.5.4 In collaboration with Caritas Singapore’s Agape Experience, we reached out to 1,252 confirmands and catechists from 25 parishes.

4.5.5 We conducted one Experiential Workshop on 7 July 2018 at Agape Village. This was held as part of the pre-conference Exposure Programme of the 2018 Caritas Social Mission Conference.

**4.5.6 World AIDS Day (WAD)**

The WAD Mass, a major advocacy event for CARE, was held on Sunday 2 December 2018 at Church of St Alphonsus (Novena Church) with Rev Fr Kenson Koh as celebrant.

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This is one occasion when Catholics gather as a community to pray for those suffering from the disease and their families. This show of solidarity gives PLWHA the assurance that they are not forgotten or alone in their plight. There are people who still care for them.

To spread our message of love and compassion for PLWHAs, an exhibition was put up at the church entrance for parishioners to find out more about the disease, understand the plight of the sufferers as well as get to know the work of CARE. Items made by our shelter residents under the Dum Spiro Spero project were displayed. The parishioners showed their support by buying the items.

4.5.6 **Advocacy through Catholic Media**

Two articles relating to CARE were published in Catholic News as follows:

Because We Care, We Give New Meaning to HIV/AIDS Patients, Catholic News 9 December 2018

CARE volunteer, Diana Lee, shared her experience volunteering at CARE Shelter. She feels encouraged when she sees the shelter residents start to appreciate life and take more pride in their 'home away from home'.

World AIDS Days Mass Catholic News, 23 December 2018

A report of the World AIDS Day Mass was published in the Catholic News. The article highlighted the homily given by Fr Kenson Koh.

5. **MISCELLANEOUS**

5.1 **Caritas Singapore**

5.1.1 During the year, Caritas Singapore continued to be our main sponsor. CARE is grateful for the support received from Caritas Singapore over the years. With this financial support, we are free from having to carry out active fundraising activities thereby allowing us more time to focus our attention on real work such as running activities and programmes that can benefit our residents.

5.1.2 CARE as part of the broader Caritas family supported the activities, events and programmes organized by Caritas Singapore, attending leaders' council meetings, retreats and training courses.

5.2 **Visits**

5.2.1 Minister of State for Social and Family Development, Mr Sam Tan, visited CARE shelter home on 5 November 2018.

The purpose of the visit was to understand the work undertaken by CARE and the service we provide to this segment of the population in order for his Ministry to lend appropriate support to CARE.



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**6. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018**

- 6.1 The audited Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2018 is attached.

**7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

- 7.1 On behalf of the Management Committee, I wish to record our thanks to the following people and organizations:
- 7.1.1 Our Spiritual Director, Rev Fr Kenson Koh for his spiritual guidance and his many invaluable contributions.
  - 7.1.2 Caritas Singapore for funding the operations of CARE Shelter and our programmes.
  - 7.1.3 The hardworking members of the CARE Management Committee, the capable staff and dedicated volunteers.
- 7.2 Without their support, time and effort, we would not have been able to operate the Shelter and offer our services to the people we serve at CARE and in the community. We are where we are today mainly because of their generous support, collaboration and contributions.

Anthony Soo  
President