

CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021

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 27 May 2020.

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

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

1.1.3 Fr Kenson Koh continued as Spiritual Director.

1.1.4 With the amendment to the Constitution (approved by the Registrar of Societies on 19 March 2020), the post of Assistant Treasurer was discontinued with effect from the 2020 elections.

1.1.5 The incoming Management Committee will continue to 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.

1.1.6 At the time of writing this report, the 2020/2021 Management Committee met four times. This meets with the requirements of both CARE Constitution and the Code of Governance for IPCs. Attendance at the meetings is as follows:

| Name | Attendance | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Rev Fr Kenson Koh | 4/4 | 100% |
| Ambrose Tan | 4/4 | 100% |

**CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021**

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|------|
| Antony Ng | 4/4 | 100% |
| Nicholas Chee | 4/4 | 100% |
| Anthony Soo | 4/4 | 100% |
| Susanna Goh | 2/4 | 50% |
| Francois Bretault | 3/4 | 75% |
| Jacinta Rajoo | 1/4 | 25% |

2. **MANPOWER**

2.1 **Employees**

2.1.1 The following were employees of the Charity as at 31 December 2020:

| <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. In its place, we had three part-time workers who covered the duties of the Night Supervisor.

2.2 **Salaries**

The Executive Director is the key management personnel for the Charity. 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, 8 served on the Management Committee.

2.4 **Volunteers**

2.4.1 As at 31 December 2020, there were 24 active volunteers on the CARE Register of Volunteers.

2.4.2 One new volunteer joined in the year under review. She is a member of our Singing Team and Praying Ministry. She also provides administrative support as and when needed.

**CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021**

- 2.4.3 The Circuit Breaker came into effect on 3 April 2020. However, as early as March of the year, we were already advised by the relevant authorities to restrict volunteer activities at the Shelter. Social distancing measures were put in place and volunteer involvement was significantly reduced. From 3 April, all volunteer activities had to be discontinued. We wrote to all volunteers informing them to stop coming to the Shelter until further notice as required by the Covid-19 guidelines.
- 2.4.4 With the Circuit Breaker in place, the majority of our volunteers took on the role of praying from home for the needs of CARE and special intentions for individual residents.
- 2.4.5 When Phase III came into effect on 28 Dec 2020, there were some relaxation of the guidelines for volunteer involvement. However, CARE being classified as a Category 1 facility, had to continue adhering to stricter guidelines recommended by the relevant authority. This was for the protection of CARE residents who are categorized as 'highly vulnerable'.
- 2.4.6 In the year under review, we did not have any opportunity to work with corporate volunteers given the situation with the pandemic.

2.5 Training & Development of Employees & Volunteers

- 2.5.1 Staff and volunteers attended various training programmes which help them improve their skills and knowledge in areas pertaining to their job scope. In the year under review, different staff attended various training conducted mainly via webinar. One staff completed the short course on Family in Rehabilitation conducted by NUS.
- 2.5.3 In line with the HR guiding principles set out by the Catholic Archdiocese, CARE's Executive Director also emphasises the importance of emotional and spiritual growth of his staff. Although it was not possible to meet face-to-face for the weekly staff support meeting during the lockdown period, staff continually shared with each other their feelings and issues via various means like whatsapp messaging, talking over the phone and zoom. On a few occasions, individual staff had personal consultation with the ED at his home.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Institution of a Public Character

CARE continued to operate as an Institution of a Public Character. Our IPC status remains valid until 31 January 2022.

CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021

3.2 Governance Evaluation

As reported to the Commissioner of Charities, CARE is compliant in all areas except for Internal Audit which has become compulsory for CARE since the Revised Code of Governance for Charities and Institution of Public Character came into effect from 1 January 2018. The Management Committee has set up a committee to look into this.

The evaluation for year 2020 will be submitted after the 2021 AGM. Members may log on to the Charity Portal (www.charities.gov.sg) for more details.

3.3 Revised Code of Governance

In accordance with the Revised Code of Governance, the MC has formed an Audit Committee with MC member, Francois Bretault as its Chairman. The other members are Tan Aik Na (Vice President of Administration, Nanyang Technological University) and Janice Wu (Head of Corporate Development, Singapore Press Holdings).

This Committee looked into setting up the internal audit framework for CARE and has identified three main areas: data protection, emergency preparedness and workplace safety and security.

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 2020 | 12 |
| Total admissions during the year | 10 |
| Total discharges during the year | 5 |
| Total as at 31 Dec 2020 | 17 |

4.1.3 Distribution by Religion:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Buddhism/Taoism | 5 |
| Christianity - Catholicism | 4 |
| Christianity - Others | 3 |
| Hinduism | 2 |
| Islam | 2 |
| Others | 1 |
| Total | 17 |

CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021

4.1.4 Distribution by Ethnic Groups:

| | |
|---------|----|
| Chinese | 13 |
| Malay | 2 |
| Indian | 2 |
| Others | 0 |
| Total | 17 |

4.1.5 CARE provides care and shelter to people from all walks of life, race and religion as long as they are certified to be suffering from HIV/AIDS and are homeless and are found to be suitable and are willing to live in community.

4.1.6 CARE continued to receive referrals from the National Centre for Infectious Disease (formerly known as Communicable Disease Centre) and the Singapore Prison Service. In the year we also had referrals from various acute and regional hospitals as well as family service centres.

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. For example, counselling is provided only when the individual resident requests for it.

4.2.2 Residents are free to choose to participate in the programmes of their choice according to their interest, talents and ability. CARE's Dum Spiro Spero project slowed down during the year for 2 main reasons. First, most of the residents found employment during the lockdown period and were unable to participate. Second, without the advocacy outreach at parishes, the few residents, who were not gainfully employed, found little purpose and meaning in continuing to make the handmade items. Production was mainly to meet orders received from regular supporters through the year.

4.2.3 The main purpose of Dum Spiro Spero is to help the residents 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 takes home one of their works, they affirm their belief that they are not forgotten and this gives them hope and a sense of self-worth to carry on living fulfilling lives.

4.2.4 Another aspect of CARE's approach to pastoral care is promoting a helping culture among the residents. During the lockdown period, many of the residents felt closer and chipped in to help out in the household chores and maintenance of the garden at the shelter. One resident set up a bird cage and reared different species of singing birds for the enjoyment of

CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021

all residents. A working resident often brought back food from his workplace for his friends who are not working.

4.2.5 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.

4.2.6 Although group activities and support sessions were temporarily discontinued, staff continued to engage individual residents and attended to their emotional and other needs.

To give the residents the assurance that volunteers and Management Committee members have not forgotten them in spite of not being to visit at the shelter, we held regular sessions via zoom with the residents. Our Spiritual Director, Fr Kenson Koh, also attended these sessions to give a short homily to uplift them spiritually.

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. Several residents had accepted the Catholic faith and received the sacrament of baptism in the past years, of their own volition.

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. All staff try their best to form friendship with the residents which is the most effective way to gain their trust and confidence.

One of the most effective methods of forming friendship is going out with the residents in group outings and social activities outside of the premises. However, these had to stop as the Covid-19 guidelines did not permit group activities and outings.

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. The year under review saw an increase in the number of residents who are gainfully employed. More than seventy-five percent of the residents are now working. Many of them worked as health screeners at hospitals or social distancing ambassadors.

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

CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021

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.

4.4 Non-Residential Programme

4.4.1 In the year under review, the Non-Residential Programme (NRP) benefitted a total of 25 persons, all of whom are living with HIV/AIDS and staying on their own. This group comprises 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 attend individual monthly consultation with our Programme Manager.

4.4.4 In the year under review, CARE provided special financial assistance to an NRP beneficiary and her family to help her defray her medical and other household expenses. The beneficiary who was suffering from cancer eventually passed on.

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

| Non-Resident Description | Chinese | Malay | Indian | Thais | Total |
|--------------------------|---------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| PLWHA Women | 0 | 1 | 1 | 12 | 14 |
| Children | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| PLWHA Men | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Ex-residents | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 | 25 |

**CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021**

4.5 Advocacy

4.5.1 Student Outreach

The student outreach programmes were suspended due to the pandemic.

4.5.2 Outreach to Parishes

Although there were plans to do outreach during the year, these too had to be shelved indefinitely.

4.5.4 In collaboration with Caritas Singapore's Agape Experience, we reached out to 946 confirmands, catechumens and catechists from different parishes. Due to the pandemic, these sessions were conducted via zoom. During the experience, participants are given information about CARE. In the session on human dignity, CARE is used as an example of how people who are sick and who are facing difficulties, are helped to regain their dignity.

4.5.6 World AIDS Day (WAD)

The WAD Mass, a major advocacy event for CARE, took a different form in the year 2020. In view of the restrictions imposed on church attendance because of the pandemic, it was not possible to hold the Mass physically at a designated parish church as in previous years.

Instead, the advocacy message was shared by Archbishop William Goh through his online Mass on 29th November, the first Sunday of Advent. Several other parishes also screened our advocacy video at the end of their Masses over the weekend of 28th and 29th November. The outreach was tremendous and we received positive and encouraging feedback from attendants.

The WAD Mass is also an opportunity for Catholics to come together as one 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 and that there are people who still care for them.

4.5.7 Advocacy through Catholic Media

Two articles relating to CARE were published in Catholic News and Hai Sing Pao as follows:

My Experience Volunteering at CARE, Hai Sing Pao 8 December 2020

CARE volunteer, Stephen Chen, shared about the challenges he faced in forming a group of Catholics to volunteer at CARE and the fears they had and how they overcome it by drawing strength from the assurance of Jesus who said, "Do not be afraid, I am with you." Besides companionship and providing a listening ear, he wrote that the best gift volunteers can offer to the shelter residents is the gift of Christ and his redemptive grace.

**CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021**

Caring for AIDS Patients with CARE, Catholic News 6 December 2020

The same article by volunteer, Stephen Chen, was published in the Catholic News.

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 Caritas Singapore also supported CARE's Dum Spiro Spero programme by making orders of candles for their special events.

5.2 **Covid-19 Pandemic**

5.2.1 2020 saw the start of the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in several changes in the way CARE operated and managed its service to beneficiaries. These changes were in line and adherence to guidelines stipulated by the relevant government authorities including Ministry of Trade & Industry (MTI), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Social & Family Services (MSF) and NCSS.

5.2.2 For purpose of classification based on level of risk exposure and vulnerability of beneficiaries, CARE falls under Category 1 meaning we had to adhere to the strictest level of caution.

5.2.3 Some of the measures put in place at CARE shelter included the setting up of an isolation room for residents who are sick or exhibit symptoms of the Covid-19 infection, safe distancing (including meal times) at the shelter, daily monitoring of body temperature for all residents, staff and visitors, recording of staff movements and interaction with beneficiaries, recording of visitors for purpose of contact tracing etc.

5.2.4 Administratively, staffing was divided into two teams working at the office and from home on a weekly rotation basis. All meetings including those of the Management Committee were conducted via zoom.

5.2.5 With the implementation of the Circuit Breaker, all volunteer and group activities were suspended indefinitely until notice of resumption is received from the relevant authorities. As at the time of writing this report, all activities remain suspended.

CATHOLIC AIDS RESPONSE EFFORT
Annual Report
(1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020)
For Adoption at the Annual General Meeting 2021

5.2.6 CARE also tapped on the available government grants for which we are eligible to pay for the purchase of protective items such as face masks, sanitisers and gloves as well as other items such as thermometers. We also benefitted from the NCSS-COMChest grant that supports strengthening of business continuity measures.

5.3 Premises

5.3.1 The lease for use of CARE's shelter home will terminate on 1 January 2021. However, Singapore Land Authority (SLA) has extended the lease for 9 Mandai Road for an additional 3 years up to 31 December 2024. Meanwhile, SLA will assist in exploring other suitable sites for CARE's relocation when the existing lease expires.

5.3.2 CARE records its thanks to SLA for assisting the Charity with the extension of its lease and for continuing with its search for new premises.

6. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

6.1 The audited Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2020 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 in spite of his extremely busy schedule.

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.

Ambrose Tan
President