

Overstrand Hospice Newsletter

From the pen of our Chairman...

At Overstrand Hospice our mission has always been simple yet profound: since our inception nineteen years ago, we have been committed to providing compassionate, professional palliative end of life care to patients and their families.

Our hospice was and still is an unique medical facility. Our services are totally free of charge to all who need them, regardless of background or financial situation.

Our care is not only for the patients, but also for their families who often need emotional support and bereavement counselling. This makes our service both unique and deeply dependent on the continued goodwill and support of our community.

We have never received any government support and are often asked how we sustain this vital service.

Our Hospice Shop is so much more than simply a business. It is a vital source of income, the profit from which contributes well over half of our annual budget.

The remaining funding must be raised through donations, bequests, our 600Club and our events.

There are so many families over the years who can testify to the love and care of our nursing team, through sad and emotional times.

We remain committed to transparency and our financials are available to anyone at any time.

Hospice belongs to the community, and it is the support of the community through donations, sales items for our shop and volunteering your services, that keeps us going!

Thank you for standing with us.

John Ross-Smith
Chairman, Overstrand Hospice



"When you are a nurse you know that every day you will touch a life or a life will touch yours."

Patient Care

A day in the life of a hospice nurse

When people think of a nurse they think of the busy corridors and wards in a hospital. For hospice nurses, the ward is a living room, a kitchen table, or a bedroom where families are navigating the final stages of a loved one's life.

A typical day is a blend of clinical skill, compassionate conversation, and logistical juggling – all delivered behind a front door.

The day begins with a short discussion on planned visits, possible interventions needed and loading all the equipment that might be of assistance to the patients. A well prepared approach means fewer trips back to the office and more time at the bedside!

The first patient of the day is Mr L with obstructive lung disease. He is mostly bedridden due to his shortness of breath and while listening to him reporting on how he feels today, the nurse performs a focused assessment: respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, blood pressure, and a pain check. She reviews the medication list and confirms that the prescribed medication is taken correctly. The visit ends with education on breathing techniques to relieve anxiety and shortness of breath.

Next visit is Mrs Y with squamous cell carcinoma, living in an informal settlement home without running water or sanitation. She has no close family and is cared for by her neighbour who works full day. Mrs Y is in so much pain when we arrive as she did not understand that she needs to take her pain medication in regular intervals to alleviate the pain. Language barriers are a huge problem, and we try to explain the best we can about pain management and use of medication. The one thing that she wishes for when asked what she needs, is to have porridge and sour milk, and she got her wish. We check in later to establish if her pain is better after she's taken her pain medication.

In between visits we need to stop at the clinic and hospital to find some information on Mrs H. It takes a while to get hold of her file and we then need to search for a doctor to write her prescription. The family are informed that they can collect her medication later in the day.

And so, we continue to take you on our journey, on a stroll through a patients' vegetable garden, shown with pride, and never leaving empty handed. We dodge the dogs that are not always that friendly and change the tyre of the car after the same dog attacks the vehicle and punctures the wheel.

Returning to the office we finalise documentation and update patient care plans. We reflect on the day, review the day's cases and discuss any concerns.

Hospice nurses are skilled in pain management and symptom control, but their most powerful tool is the ability to listen. Home environments vary widely – some visits occur in cramped spaces, others in spacious homes with beautiful gardens. Adaptability ensures that care remains patient centred. The nurse is the hub, coordinating information and ensuring that the patient's wishes guide every decision.

While the work can be emotionally taxing, the gratitude of a family who feels supported, or a patient who can spend their final days at home surrounded by loved ones, provides a deep sense of purpose.

Patient care team, Overstrand Hospice.

A hospice nurse's day is not measured in hours, but in moments – an attentive hand, a calming voice, and a quiet presence. In the homes they serve, they turn the final chapter of life into a space of dignity, comfort, and love.

Patient Care Stats

January 2025—Nov 2025

Home visits: 1636

Active patients:

Average 90 patients per month

New patients: 236

Calls: 1150

Our Hospice Shop

OUR HOSPICE SHOP – THE HEARTBEAT OF HERMANUS

The 2025 festive season has begun in the Overberg and the shop is already buzzing with excitement and activity. We possess a special space in the community and every year at this time we are reminded to count our blessings. Amidst a tough financial climate the *Hospice Shop* remains a beacon of hope for many.

As we look back on the year it is important to always ask two vital questions:

“Why do we need the shop?” and

“What does the shop contribute?”.

The shop must be the heartbeat of the community where everyone feels welcome and understands that as a donor, volunteer or customer we become part of the compassionate care of all our patients. A financially strong and socially impactful shop ensures the long-term well-being of Overstrand Hospice. We strive to offer good value for money and an exciting shopping experience. Finally, the shop should be inclusive and a reflection of the spirit of Hospice care.

If you are getting your home ready for family and visitors, we will happily take your books/magazines, redundant furniture, clothing and other domestic bits-and-pieces. Perhaps you may also have some jewellery that you have not worn for some time and that someone else could enjoy over Christmas and New Year – please remember Hospice. If you have any working toys, dolls and Teddy bears, we will happily sell them on to bring some Christmas joy into the home of a child. Please telephone *Petro or Ellenique* (028 3131884) at the shop and they will arrange for any donations to be collected from your home on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

To every donor, customer, staff member, nurse, patient and volunteer, enjoy a blessed Christmas and a pain free 2026.

Feliz Navidad! Dave Shutte, Vice Chairman, Overstrand Hospice.

The Hospice Shop will be closed from 12:00 on Wednesday 24th December and will reopen at 09:00 on Monday 5th January 2026. Our shop hours in 2026 will remain the same – Monday to Friday 09:00 to 16:00 and Saturdays 09:00 to 12:00.

Shop Donations



**To arrange
pick-up**

of any goods you wish to
donate to us,
please contact

**Petro or
Ellenique**

on 028 3131884

**No item is too big
or too small!**



**Visit our online
Shop at**

<https://overstrandhospice.org.za/>

Shop in the comfort of your
home at all hours while
supporting a good cause!

**Contact Suzette on
028 312 4679**



From the heart of a shop volunteer...

I have been volunteering at the Hospice Shop for 10 years. My main reasons are:

- my small contribution enables Hospice to look after patients with a life-threatening illness.
- although I do not know the name of the patients and they will not know my name, they will know that somebody cares and they are not alone.
- while giving I am also receiving through the spirit and dedication of co-volunteers.
- the generosity of people who donate and knowing that there are still good Samaritans.

A Overstrand Hospice Volunteer for ever!!!!



Bereavement peer support group

The monthly bereavement peer support group at Hospice has been running for a year and a half, offering an open and welcoming space for anyone grieving the loss of a loved one. The group provides a gentle environment where people can connect with others who may be navigating similar emotions, thoughts, and challenges. For many who attend, it has become a safe and steady place to speak openly, share memories, and process their grief alongside others who truly understand. Participants often describe the group as a meaningful

part of adjusting to a "new normal" without their loved one—whether through making sense of their loss, finding language for their experience, or simply being able to say their loved one's name when it feels like the world has already moved on. Grief is a journey that shifts and evolves over time, and the group offers companionship and support at every step. *Esther Naude, Social worker, Overstrand Hospice.*

Leave a Legacy to Overstrand Hospice made in love and memory

A gift in your Will can take on a number of different forms:

A specified sum of money

A percentage of the value of your Estate

Specific gift of property, art, shares or bonds, antiques etc.

The residue of your estate after provision for family and other beneficiaries

Your gift will provide quality in life and dignity in death to patients

diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, as well as support in bereavement to their families.

Overstrand Hospice has been approved by the South African Revenue Service as a Public Benefit Organization. All Bequests are exempt from Estate Duty.



Winners:

August

1st In name patient

2nd J Arangies

3rd S Thompson

September

1st M vRensburg

2nd M Bryan

3rd L Zaaïman

October

1st T Callanan

2nd A Greeff

3rd W Pickstone

November

1st J Cronje

2nd Mr & Mrs Palmer

3rd A & B Jangle

December

1st I Wilson

2nd Drs Abel Muller

3rd A Clayden

Enter to Win!

Join our 600Club!



All that is required is a small contribution of

R50 per month or R600 a year.

The 600club also offers you the opportunity to win one of the following monthly cash prizes:

R5 000, R2 500 and R1 000.

Buy tickets in your own name, in the name of a club or buy a voucher as a gift. All monies raised go towards the care of our patients.

To join: Please contact Suzette on 028 312 4679 or visit our offices at 10 Hope Street, Hermanus.

We thank our loyal members who continue to support the 600club and wish them a blessed festive season! Your contribution makes a difference in the life of a patient.

Society Lottery Scheme is registered with National Lotteries Commission (NLC. 00118/18).



The Palliative Healthcare Standards: Is this necessary in gauging the quality-of-care hospices are providing?

I'm not sure whether much public consideration is given to whether there are standards criteria or a measurement tool that determines the quality of care being provided by Palliative Care Organisations.

The feedback from patients and their families about the experience of care received can be extremely influential and powerful in swaying people's opinions about our services, and to date, the feedback has been very affirming; patients and their families are appreciative and grateful.

However, fundamental to the consistent, high quality and compassionate care being experienced is our commitment to compliance with the Palliative Healthcare Standards which inform and shape our service across all areas of our operations. The criteria within these standards are reviewed every four years by representatives from member hospices, the Association of Palliative Care Centres (APCC), The Council for Healthcare services in South Africa (COHSASA) and the International Society for Quality in Healthcare (ISQua).

In a nutshell, these healthcare standards are critical in gauging the quality of care we provide: they standardise services, promote best practices, and provide a framework for accreditation that builds trust with the community and improves organisational performance. They are crucial for improving quality of life, reducing suffering, and integrating palliative care into the broader health system.

In a recent survey undertaken by surveyors from APCC in November 2025, we were awarded 97% compliance with the Healthcare Standards criteria, which is a 5-star status and means that we are a fully accredited palliative care service provider. Not only does this achievement support our credibility, I would also venture to say that it supports the notion that we are the true custodians of palliative care services in the Overstrand sub-district and surrounding areas. **Fran Tong, General Manager.**

Rugby Chat



Overstrand Hospice hosted a Rugby Chat with Mome Du Plessis, celebrating Madiba and the spirit of the 1995 World Cup at the Hermanus Golf Club on the 14th August 2025. The event was well supported, and all had a relaxing evening enjoying Mome's fascinating behind the scenes stories and the team's interaction with President Mandela.

From left: Fran Tong, General Manager, Overstrand Hospice, Mome Du Plessis, John Ross-Smith, Chairman, Overstrand Hospice.

Various ways of supporting Overstrand hospice:

Donate your time



Make a Donation

Banking details:
Overstrand Hospice
ABSA BANK Hermanus
Account no: 406 593 2088



Support our events

Join our 600Club

Support our Hospice shop

Support our online shop

Pink trees for Pauline Cancer awareness drives

Since its inception in 2012, this inspiring initiative has grown exponentially with over 250 towns in South Africa now involved. Pink Trees for Pauline's purpose is to create awareness, unite communities and raise money for those diagnosed with cancer in a uniquely inspiring way ...**by turning towns pink!**

During the month of October, residents, businesses and organisations were encouraged to wrap the trees and poles outside their premises in pink material bought from Overstrand Hospice. The response from the community was overwhelming and the visual impact of this initiative symbolized unity and hope. It was the first year Overstrand hospice joined this initiative and we are confident that this project will go from strength going forward.

On behalf of our board of Directors, staff and patients, we want to thank every member of the public, as well as local businesses, staff and volunteers for their overwhelming support.



Fashion Show

The Style Consultancy supported Overstrand Hospice by donating all ticket sales from their fashion show held at the Hermanus Golf Club on 28th November to Overstrand Hospice. In addition, they gifted Fran Tong, General manager, Overstrand Hospice, with a beautiful mini makeover.



It was a well attended, stylish and most enjoyable morning!

We are sincerely grateful to **Cindy Meades** and her team for choosing Overstrand Hospice as their charity of choice for this event.

We look forward to collaborating with them again soon.



Quiz evening

Our annual Quiz evening held at the Hermanus Golf Club was a roaring success! New quiz master Gerhard v Rensburg kept the teams on their toes with unusual and interesting questions.

Vice-Chairman, Dave Shutte did a sterling job as auctioneer and we are extremely grateful for the support of our sponsors and supporters for always supporting this popular annual fundraiser.