

**THIS IS A DESPERATE PLEA TO ALL MHA RESIDENTS:
UNLESS YOUR TRIP OUTSIDE IS REALLY NECESSARY, PLEASE
STAY SAFE, AT HOME.
IF YOU DO LEAVE YOUR HOME, PLEASE WEAR YOUR MASK.**

CovidCom was formed on 10 March 2020, and the first meeting was convened under the fancy-sounding banner of the Corona Prevention Action Planning Meeting. Those present quickly changed the name of the decision-making group to CovidCom, and that body has been responsible for the planning and execution of MHA's battle plan against Coronavirus. Including yesterday's meeting, CovidCom has met officially twelve times, and we have had a great many ad hoc meetings, usually via e-mail and at least weekly, and countless telephone conversations. We have had a single mission: to save lives. We have chosen to ignore the handful of critics and naysayers (one cannot please everyone all of the time), because of the enormity and complexity of the challenges thrown at us on a daily basis, ultimately involving almost 700 people spread across our eleven facilities. If CovidCom had the time, its members could stand back and take stock of what has been achieved over the past ten months; what worked, which decisions were flawed, what we could have done differently or better, or how we might have reduced inconvenience. However, that analysis will have to wait for another day, at another time. Right now, CovidCom continues to review its battle plan on a daily basis, so that we are able to adapt to changing circumstances on the ground within MHA, in our Metro and across the country, while remaining within the rules and regulations contained in the Disaster Management Act and its subsequent gazettes. In yesterday's CovidCom meeting, its members reviewed a range of MHA rules and regulations which have been put in place from time to time, all aimed at protecting residents and staff. We can share with you now the outcome of yesterday's meeting:

DOMESTIC HOUSEKEEPERS AND GARDENERS:

- Privately-employed domestic housekeepers and gardeners, including businesses providing such services, will be allowed back into our 'independent living' Villages, with effect from Wednesday 27 January 2021
- MHA will not be providing any screening or monitoring services; it will be the responsibility of each resident who engages with such individuals/service providers to ensure that those who come into a MHA facility:
 1. Are free of Covid-like symptoms (high temperature, cough, headache etc)
 2. Move directly from the entrance gate to the cottage concerned, and then exit in the same fashion
 3. Confine themselves to the cottage(s) where they are engaged to carry out their duties
 4. Sanitize frequently, using a product provided by the resident
 5. Wear a face mask at all times
 6. Practise social distancing

HOUSEKEEPING SERVICE (IN CONTRACT) PROVIDED BY/PAID FOR BY MHA (FROM MONTHLY LEVY):

- This matter remains under review, and discussions with prospective service providers are ongoing. A decision will be made in the near future, and costing has been catered for in the 2021/22 Budget assumptions

EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS:

- Businesses/individuals whose services are required by residents in order, for example, to carry out repairs or to install a product, may enter MHA premises, and proceed to the cottage involved
- It will be the responsibility of the resident involved to ensure that those who come into a MHA facility:
 1. Are free of Covid-like symptoms (high temperature, cough, headache etc)
 2. Move directly from the entrance gate to the cottage concerned, and then exit in the same fashion
 3. Confine themselves to the cottage where they are engaged to carry out their duties
 4. Sanitize frequently, using a product provided by the resident
 5. Wear a face mask at all times
 6. Practise social distancing
- MHA will screen and monitor those external contractors who are appointed by MHA to carry out work which is the contractual responsibility of MHA

HAIRDRESSERS:

- This still remains under review, and so hairdressers will still not be allowed onto any MHA premises

VILLAGE HALLS:

- In compliance with Government's regulations regarding gatherings, our Village Halls will unfortunately remain closed, until further notice. As announced on 13 January, libraries are open for business

VISITORS:

- Visitors to MHA Village cottages may continue, as per existing arrangements
- Unfortunately, visitors to CP Bradfield Frail Care, Maranatha Frail Care, Bob Zeiss Bedsitter and Epworth Close will still not be permitted. CovidCom is acutely aware of the extreme hardships which this Lockout brings to residents, and to their families and friends, and we continue to consider professional interventions in order to address this

CHURCH SERVICES:

- We acknowledge the importance of worship, in the lives of our residents, in particular those who are locked in. Regrettably we are still not able to allow church services at any MHA facility, but this is being regularly reviewed, especially in the light of a lower Lockdown Level being announced

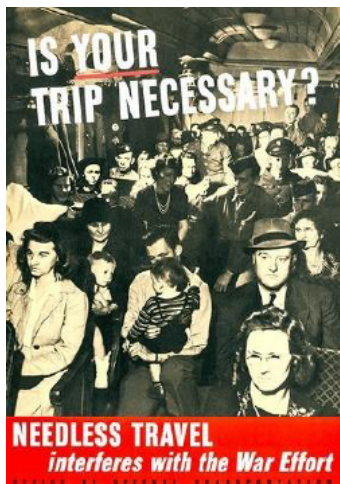
SELF-ISOLATION:

- Residents in our Frail Care (CPB and MFC) and Bedsitter accommodation (BZB and EC) are required to self-isolate in their room when returning from a visit to a medical facility or

healthcare service provider. The period involved must remain at 10 days from the time of return; unfortunately a reduction to seven days cannot be considered

CovidCom will meet again next week, and a further Newsflash will be issued. Please continue to comply with Government's and MHA's rules and regulations; they will save lives, including your own. In particular, please wear your mask whenever you leave your cottage, and this includes when you walk about your Village or other facility. When you leave your front door you step into a public place, and the law requires you to wear a mask. It's that simple!!

COVID-19: NEWSFLASH #72: WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2021



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THIS IS NOT A DRILL!!!



We're going through Hell, aren't we?! This time last year the rumours and stories about a flu-like virus started to filter down to the Southern tip of Africa, and we began to see images of a deserted Wuhan, and people wearing masks. A flood of facts followed. Then on 27 March 2020 Lockdown hit our country. As a nation, and as the MHA community, we spent 36 days locked down at Level 5, then 30 at Level 4, then 78 at Level 3, then 34 at Level 2, and then 99 days at Level 1. That took us to 28 December 2020, by which time we had spent a total of 277 days in some form of Lockdown. But by then the country was in the midst of its 'second surge' and so we were moved to an adjusted Level 3 on 29 December, and this is where we are currently (and until 15 February at least, it would seem). We

are rapidly approaching the 300 day Lockdown mark!

CovidCom stated months ago that it would not bombard readers with depressing statistics, but we should be aware of the scale of the pandemic. As of today the total number of recorded Covid cases across the world stands at 90.3 million, with 1.93 million deaths. In South Africa there are 1.23 million recorded cases, with 33163 deaths. A recent statistic which really resonated was that 1 in 10 Americans have been infected. Closer to home, about 1 in 10 MHA residents and staff have tested positive over the past nine months, and

we continue to mourn the passing of 7 residents, to date. All of this reminds us that we need to continue to be vigilant and disciplined, and to be community-minded.

We also need to be positive. It is a mammoth task to do this, but we must keep going, we must have faith that this nightmare will end during the course of 2021, and that we will be able to recover much of what we have lost over the past year. We crave to be reunited with family and friends and to hug them, to return to church, to enjoy a visit to the beachfront or our favourite coffee shop, to have a decent haircut or fancy hair-do, and to take Covid off our 'worry list'.

If you are becoming overwhelmed with worry and fear, if you are struggling to cope, or you find yourself wanting to just give up, please chat to your Manager. MHA can provide you with a counselling service, at no cost to you. A listening ear, and words of encouragement, have helped many folk across MHA, especially during these terrible Covid times.

This is lovely quotation from Alice in Wonderland: "When you can't look at the bright side, I will sit with you in the dark".

Keep going. You are not alone.



Do you remember this epic 1966 Spaghetti Western film (so-called because it was written and produced by Italians!)? It featured Clint Eastwood, and is credited with having catapulted him into stardom. He turned 90 last year, and is still a 'film star'!

CovidCom didn't disappear over the festive season, although some members took some time off, to be with family, and to re-

charge batteries. We continue to review our position and our protocols on a daily basis, and we can bring you up to date with some Covid-related matters, as follows:

THE GOOD: CovidCom and the Managers have unanimously agreed that Village libraries can now re-open. We know that this will be greeted with great joy by the scores of bibliophiles within MHA. Your Manager will inform you about how and when this will happen. We want to keep it as uncomplicated as possible, and you don't need to be reminded about the hygiene and safety protocols involved! We thank you for your patience and understanding over these past months when the libraries had to remain closed.

THE BAD: Regrettably CovidCom believes that it remains in the best interests of all residents that privately employed Housekeepers and Gardeners, and cleaning/gardening service providers, remain away from our Villages, at least until there is a significant reduction in the infection rate associated with the second surge. We are acutely aware of the hardship and inconvenience which this brings to residents. Similarly, hairdressing services will remain suspended, until further notice.

THE UGLY: CovidCom members are committed to dealing with issues before they become ugly!!! So far, so good---mainly!

Sadly, politicians and leaders have the knack of distorting the truth to suit their own agendas. The media is full of this, on a daily basis, and Covid-19 has been a fertile breeding ground. This then leads to so many rumours, conspiracy theories and reckless statements flying around on a daily basis: Will South Africans even get an effective vaccine in 2021? Does the veterinary product Ivermectin combat Covid (or even Old Brown Sherry!)? Our

