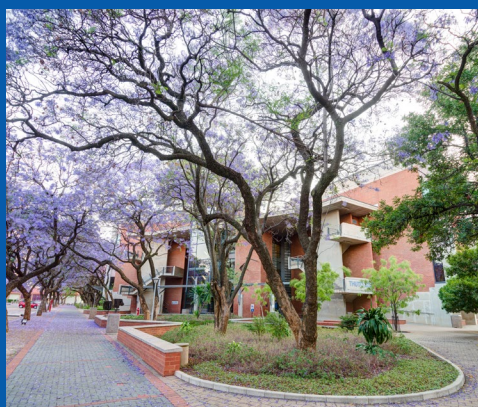


Lentšu La Sechaba

THE VOICE OF THE CE COMMUNITY

Department for Education Innovation
Unit for Community Engagement



Summer: Volume 19 – December 2023



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Department of Community Dentistry - Winners of the 2023 Faculty of Health Sciences Community Engagement Award

Prof Ahmed Bhayat, Dr Ntombizodwa Rosemary Nkambule, Ms Mpho Morule, Dr Tabeho Godfrey Mmethi, Dr Tshepiso Mfolo, Prof Candice van Wyk, Mr William Masinga, Dr Don Chiwaya and Prof Thomas Khomotjo Madiba



The Department of Community Dentistry provides the platform for community engagement (CE) projects within the School of Dentistry. These projects align with the UP 2025 strategic goals 4 and 5, focusing on integrating research into teaching and learning, and embedding CE into academia. The department oversees all outreach activities in the School of Dentistry and has been a part of the curriculum for the Dental and Oral Hygiene programs since the schools' inception.

The department comprises three community Dentistry Specialists, two Registrars, one Dentist, two full-time,

and three part-time Oral Hygienists. All staff members actively participate in CE projects, undertaking various roles including coordination, administration, and supervision.

The staff are essential in planning, maintaining, and ensuring the smooth and efficient operation of the CE projects. The CE projects aim to expose students to underprivileged communities, provide quality dental care in Primary Health Care (PHC) settings, ensure access to dental services for these communities, and prepare students for their year-long community service program. The Department operates two Mobile Dental Units (MDUs), one stationed

at Daspoort Polyclinic and the other at a selected primary school in an underprivileged community.

These fully functional MDUs enable students to provide a range of basic dental services as required by the community. Students also spend time at a Primary Health Care facility and on the Phelophepa Train, with all these activities being planned, administered, and supervised by the Department of Community Dentistry.

Students are required to submit a portfolio file on their CE programs, reflecting on the sites visited, the

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types of services rendered, and patient demographics. During school visits, they conduct a situational analysis of the school infrastructure, student-to-teacher ratios, types of food sold at tuckshops and by vendors around the school, and the nature of food provided in the school feeding scheme, where applicable.

The staff members report quarterly to the school principal and teachers, providing insights into challenges and positive findings, and suggesting recommendations, such as advocating for the sale of nutritious and healthy food items to improve general and oral health. The department offers four modules focused on CE activities to dental and oral hygiene students. The first-year module (POH 170) for dental students includes outreach visits to primary schools in the Pretoria area, where they provide oral and general health education and promotion. They also raise awareness on issues like drug abuse, bullying, teenage pregnancy and smoking. In groups, students prepare topics, visit schools, conduct situational analyses, and present their programs.

The second-year oral hygiene (OH) students (GAP 271) visit various outreach sites to provide oral and

general health education, awareness, and promotional messages.

Both final year dental (POH 570) and OH (POH 371) students are extensively involved in CE projects, performing oral health screenings and examinations, providing oral hygiene education, nutritional information for pregnant mothers and mothers of young children, and offering preventive (brushing programs, fluoride treatments, fissure sealants) and curative services (teeth cleaning, fillings, extractions). Patients requiring complicated or specialised dental care are referred to the nearest dental facility or the Pretoria Oral and Dental Hospital.

The dental and OH students collaborate during these projects, preparing them for multidisciplinary teamwork and fostering respect between different oral health cadres. OH students also work with other disciplines at the Daspoort polyclinic, highlighting the importance of interprofessional collaboration.

Additionally, the Department has adopted four primary schools in rural areas around Pretoria, providing oral health awareness, promotional messages, and supplies like toothpaste and toothbrushes.

The Department actively participates in World Oral Health Day and South African Oral Health month events, offering oral health services to sites not usually included in regular outreach projects. It also provides oral health workshops for learners, teachers and other organisations upon request, and educates teachers about promoting regular oral hygiene in schools.

The department has conducted various research projects on the impact and perceptions of CE activities among students, the community, and the university. These findings have been published in peer-reviewed journals and presented both locally and internationally. A key pillar in ensuring the sustainability of these CE projects is support from communities, schools, and private stakeholders like Colgate and Glaxo-Smith Kline (GSK). The Department continuously engages with these stakeholders to ensure the financial viability and sustainability of its CE activities.

The outreach projects have enhanced the students' social and civil responsibilities. We are grateful to the students and communities for allowing us into their lives and environments. We believe in creating mutually beneficial outcomes for students, the university, and the communities we serve.

Being selected as the winners of the Faculty of Health Sciences CE Award for 2023 is both a humbling and an honourable achievement. We are committed to continuously provide high-quality preventive and curative dental services to rural and underprivileged communities.

We acknowledge the contributions of the following people in the Department of Community Dentistry who have always assisted with the CE activities: Ms Esme Schoeman, Ms Candida Kruger and Mr Thabang Maluleka.

Introducing an assessment tool that may improve the knowledge of dental materials and self-awareness of community dentists

Prof Vinesh Bookhan, Dr Samantha Arnold, Dr Riaan Lombard and Prof Zunaid Ismail Vally
(Department of Odontology: Faculty of Health Sciences)

Dental graduates have to perform compulsory community service after graduation. This involves performing general dental procedures competently on members of the community that they serve. The conscious competency learning model^{1,2} describes four phases of competence as follows: 1) Unconscious competence, 2) Conscious competence, 3) Conscious incompetence and 4) Unconscious incompetence. Unconscious competence implies professional competence. In Dentistry, achieving professional competence requires that students have the knowledge, clinical skills, and attitude (professionalism) to perform tasks independently.

As undergraduates, a student's clinical skills and attitude during clinical training are assessed continuously using rubrics that contain evidence-based, objective criteria. These assessments are referred to as continuous clinical assessments.

Knowledge however, is only assessed using traditional written tests, objective structured practical exams (OSPEs), and written examinations that are scheduled periodically. Knowledge of dental materials during clinical training, is essential for performing dental procedures competently.

Still, there are no objective strategies or assessment tools to continuously assess a student's understanding of dental materials and their self-evaluation of competence during

The novel rubric will form part of a future PhD study by Prof Vinesh Bookhan.






Performance phase level	Incompetent (No competence) 0	Novice (Unconscious incompetence) 1	Beginner (Conscious incompetence) 2	Learner (Conscious competence) 3	Competent (Professional competence) 4
Description of criteria	 The student's knowledge of dental materials contains an irreversible error and the student requires a demonstration to progress to the next learning experience.	 The student's knowledge of dental materials contains multiple errors and the student requires multiple instructions to progress to the next learning experience.	 The student's knowledge of dental materials contains a single error and the student requires a single instruction to progress to the next learning experience.	 The student's knowledge of dental materials contains no errors but the student requires guidance to progress to the next learning experience.	 The student's knowledge of dental materials contains no errors and the student requires no guidance to progress to the next learning experience.

Figure 1: Rubric for assessing a student's knowledge of dental materials and self-evaluation during clinical training

clinical training in Odontology. This gap in the literature motivated the development and creation of a novel analytic rubric (Figure 1) to objectively assess a student's knowledge of dental materials and their self-evaluation of their competence during clinical training.

The novel analytic rubric was created by modifying and combining two evidence-based performance models described in the medical and dental literature. The first model^{1,2}, describes four phases of learning in medicine, and the second model^{3,4}, describes five levels of clinical competence in dentistry. Supervisors and students in the Department of Odontology will use the novel analytic rubric to assess knowledge of dental materials and self-evaluation of clinical competence.

Students will use the rubric to perform self-evaluation. The intention of the novel analytic rubric will be to improve the

knowledge of dental materials and self-evaluation of dental graduates from the School of Dentistry so that they can perform general dental procedures on community members with professional competence.

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It is never too late to start!

Dr Nyeleti Manganyi (State Veterinarian: Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform [DRDAR])



I enrolled in three degrees at the University of Pretoria (UP). I successfully completed a BSc in Veterinary Biology (graduated in 2011), a BVSc in Veterinary Science (graduated in 2016), and an MSc in Veterinary Science (graduated in 2022). I am looking forward to enrolling for a PhD in the future.

Can you briefly describe your career trajectory since graduating?

I was a Compulsory Community Service Veterinarian immediately after completion of my studies for a year. I then worked as a State Veterinarian (SV) for the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), which is now known as the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) for a few years, then joined Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD). I am currently with the

Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR).

What motivated you to choose your current profession?

I always had the strength of wanting to help where I could. I realised that some communities needed veterinary services at affordable rates, if not free. As a result, I decided to work for the state to reach that goal.

How did your experiences in community engagement projects at UP contribute to your professional development?

My involvement in community engagement activities at UP contributed positively. I got to understand the planning, effort, time and teamwork that goes into executing a community engagement project and making it a success. I understood that, at times,

the involvement of third-party stakeholders, such as sponsors, was essential. I learned more about people skills when engaging with the communities, which involved respecting and knowing when to listen and address the community. I got better at these skills every time I got the chance to engage with the community.

As a result, I have improved a lot in my stage presence and public speaking. In 2022, our state veterinary office was allowed to hold a World Rabies Day event for the province of Eastern Cape.

I could utilise the skills I learned to take leadership in making the event successful. Both internal and external stakeholders such as the media, were involved. This proves that 'if you want to go far, go together'.

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Are you currently participating in community engagement or social responsibility projects?

Yes, as a SV, I engage a lot with communities, especially in rural areas, where I work with groups of clients such as farmers or pet owners, especially during vaccination campaigns. Veterinary officials such as Animal Health Technicians (AHTs) greatly assist. I would safely say every SV needs and appreciates the involvement of AHTs. That is where the skill of planning and working as a team to execute projects comes in.

What advice do you have for current students planning to participate in community engagement projects?

Grab it with both hands if you can participate in community engagement projects. You will realise how much the community appreciates your meaningful efforts and sometimes sees you as their only help. This will boost your confidence and make you proud of yourself one day when you are older and qualified. Thank me later.

Are there any specific community engagement projects you have been involved in at UP that you are particularly proud of?

The one that stands out is Veterinary Student Community Outreach (VETSCO), founded by a group of veterinary students over a decade ago. This was the brainchild of a classmate with a vision who entrusted us by making us part of the executive team.

As a team, VETSCO managed to help many communities with essential veterinary services under the supervision of a qualified veterinarian and exposed students to fieldwork.

This helped many students like me who lacked an animal handling background. As a result, students gained experience and confidence in animal handling and people skills.



It became one of the organisations the University and many third-party stakeholders were proud of. That way, it received sponsorship from various veterinary product companies. It got a free advertisement from displaying material with their company logos.

Do you wish you could have learned any specific skills or qualities during community engagement to prepare you for your field?

Ironically, I wish I could have learnt that the more you do right by the community, the more your services will be in demand. As a result, it becomes challenging to reach everyone who needs your services. Consequently, that increases the vacancy rate in your team. As an SV, you must know when to take time out without feeling guilty, as the

demand can be overwhelming. If you do not prioritise your health, you will burn out.

Are there any specific accomplishments or milestones you would like to highlight in your career?

I have participated as a facility inspector at the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC). I decided to get exposure to various categories of veterinary facilities to study more about what is required for a facility to comply with the minimum standards of SAVC. As a result, this ensured that veterinary and para-veterinary professionals offered quality veterinary services as best as possible. By exposing myself to such, I got the opportunity to improve our facility, too.

Matters of interest

- Refer to the links below to some of the recommended journals for submission of community engagement articles:
 - [Journal of Rural Studies](#)
 - [Journal of Applied Communication Research](#)
 - [The Journal of Applied Social Science](#)
 - [International Social Science Journal](#)
- Copies of the previous CE Newsletters are available at <https://www.up.ac.za/education-innovation/article/257709/community-engagement>

The Unit for Community Engagement invites you to report on community engagement activities by submitting articles for publication in the following newsletter (Autumn 2024).

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Transdisciplinary community engagement seminar

Dr Martina Jordaan (Head: Community Engagement Research and Postgraduate Studies), Dr Eugene Machimana (Head: Curricular Community Engagement), Ms Londiwe Mahlangu (Project Coordinator: Community Engagement), Mr Albert Matlheketha (Project Coordinator: Community Engagement), Ms Lorraine Makena (Senior Management Assistant: Community Engagement) and Mr Clement Mathebula (Intern: Community Engagement Research and Postgraduate Studies)

As part of the October University Social Responsibility (USR) Month, the Transdisciplinary Community Engagement Seminar held on 10 October 2023 was a huge success.

The Unit for Community Engagement organised it in collaboration with the Mamelodi campus Community Engagement Office. The seminar aimed to allow lecturers, students and community partners to share their experiences. Dr Melissa Nemon from Merrimack College in the USA was the keynote speaker for the event.

Her *'Transdisciplinary Research, Bringing Academia and Community Together for Research and Impact'* presentation was insightful and engaging. Dr Nemon emphasised the importance of collaboration between academia and communities for impactful research, which generated a lot of discussion among the attendees.

One lecturer reflected that community engagement had become central to their teaching philosophy. The seminar allowed them to share what they were doing. A student

who presented indicated that the seminar permitted her to share her experiences in the community with the broader community engagement community.

The seminar provided an excellent platform for sharing knowledge and experiences. It offered a unique opportunity for participants to network and learn from one another. It was a fantastic event highlighting the significance of community engagement and transdisciplinary collaboration in promoting positive societal change.



Viability of taking solar power to informal settlements: a pilot project in Melusi Informal settlement

Dr Edith Madela-Mntla (Department of Family Medicine and COPC Research Unit) and Mr Kenny Mafale (COPC Research Unit)

The Community-Oriented Primary Care Research Unit (COPC RU) of the Department of Family Medicine coordinated a pilot project to install solar panels on two households in the Melusi informal settlement. The project aimed to demonstrate that informal settlement dwellings can generate power adequate for household needs and income generation.

The pilot's objective was to determine if the system could generate enough power for the household's needs and any access that could be used to create income to alleviate poverty in the informal settlement by allowing access to other users.

The COPC RU teamed up with its partners on the South African Population Research and Innovation Network (SAPRIN) project, the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The two institutions are the University of Pretoria's (UP) partners in the Gauteng Research Triangle (GRT) initiative, and this project fits into UP's collaboration in this relationship. The project was led by Prof David Everatt, the Professor of Urban Governance at Wits and overall Director on the SAPRIN project, and Prof Willie Cronje from the School of Electrical and Information Engineering, which produced the battery pack used in the project.

The solar team was from LighTec, a private company that sponsored the project and did the solar installation.

Some Community leaders, who were central to selecting households to benefit from the project, were in attendance. Two of them volunteered to oversee each beneficiary household close to them. The two households were in different sections of Melusi.

For the pilot, a 1-panel solar system was installed on each shack and connected to the battery/inverter brick, a product manufactured by PECO, a company owned by Wits. One of the criteria for selecting shacks was having a stable roof to carry the solar panel's weight.

The plan was for the performance of the system to be monitored over a 6-12-month period to evaluate its feasibility on a larger scale. This period has not yet elapsed, and the team is getting ongoing reports on the solar system's performance. The Department of Engineering was invited to monitor the system as part of a postgraduate student research project. This has, however, not happened yet.

The project was received with a lot of excitement by community members, and many of them started to engage the partners on how they could have it in their homes.



Solar LED light installed in a shack



Technicians preparing to install solar panel on a shack

Challenges

- The choice of shacks for the installation was a much-debated subject, with everybody wanting to be the beneficiary, which led to delays in the pilot project.
- Beneficiary households have complained about the power from the system because they need to power more appliances than initially envisaged for the amount of energy the system produces.

Empowering Tomorrow's Innovators: JCP and Sifiso EdTech's Robotics Holiday Bootcamp



Dr Lelanie Smith, Senior Lecturer (Head of Community-based Projects) and Bonolo Mokoka (Lecturer: Community-Based Projects)



- The JCP students enhanced their teaching, communication, and leadership skills, enriching their educational journey.
- The boot camp successfully inspired interest in coding, robotics, and STEM subjects among students, aligning with UP's mission to contribute to a knowledge-based society.

Despite its success, the project faced the following challenges:

- Given varying ages and skill levels, adapting to diverse student needs required creativity and teamwork from the JCP students.
- Teaching complex robotics and coding concepts was made manageable by leveraging the diverse skills of the JCP students.
- Meticulous logistical management was crucial for organising a boot camp for a large group of students and teachers, a challenge overcome through exceptional organisational skills demonstrated by our JCP students.

The Joint Community Projects (JCP) is a compulsory service-learning module for the Engineering, Built Environment and IT (EBIT) Faculty. As a component of its extensive community engagement initiatives, JCP joined forces with *Sifiso EdTech* to organise the Robotics Holiday Bootcamp, involving 14 students in an educational coding and robotics training camp hosted at the Future Nation Schools-Fleurhof campus.

The Robotics Holiday Bootcamp programme had a clear vision of introducing robotics to public school students through several objectives:

- It aimed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of robotics, fostering awareness of its potential and applications.
- The programme offered hands-on experience by allowing students to interact directly with robotics components, reinforcing their theoretical knowledge.
- It sought to impart foundational principles of robotics, including the role of coding and the

- functions of various parts.
- The programme encouraged creativity and innovation by empowering students to work on unique projects, promoting problem-solving and innovative thinking.
- It raised awareness about Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and robotics career paths by involving university students as training assistants.
- Ultimately, the boot camp aimed to stimulate interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, showcasing its exciting possibilities for future academic and career pursuits.

The collaboration between *Sifiso EdTech* and the UP's JCP students had mutual benefits:

- It fulfilled the University of Pretoria's (UP's) commitment to community engagement, providing practical teaching experience for UP students while promoting STEM education in the local community.

The collaboration between *Sifiso EdTech* and the UP's JCP students showcased the power of university-community partnerships. The project achieved its objectives and created a meaningful impact on the local community by fostering STEM interest among students. The JCP students' dedication, adaptability, and professionalism were instrumental in the project's success, and their contributions will continue to benefit future boot camp sessions.

Fostering Community Engagement: UP's Meal Prep Workshop

Melissa Cliff (Fourth-year student - Consumer Science Department)

Situated in the heart of South Africa's educational hub, UP is setting a shining example of how community engagement can create meaningful connections and enhance the educational experience. Recently, the university organised a unique event that brought together seven teachers from different schools across the community spectrum and staff and final-year students from the Consumer Science Department for a Meal Prep Workshop.

This collaborative effort promoted a recently published Meal Prep Recipe book. In so doing, it provided valuable culinary training for teachers. It fostered a sense of community engagement, thereby extending benefits far beyond the kitchen.

The event was meticulously designed and planned in recognition of the need for ongoing professional development to enable teachers to improve their skills and knowledge. The workshop was an opportunity to offer these educators healthier food choices to enhance their culinary skills by learning how to prepare healthy and balanced meals efficiently, enabling them to make and improve their meal preparation techniques.

These skills could be shared with their students, promoting a healthier eating culture within the broader community. The university strengthened links with the surrounding neighbourhoods by inviting teachers from the local community to participate. This initiative was part of the institution's commitment to give back to the surrounding communities. The



The seven schoolteachers who attended the workshop paid for by the University. Left to right: Annene Barnard, Sonia Lotz, Rozanne Grobbelaar, Florette Le Roux, Lorraine Sibiyi, Gloria Madiba, Given Ramagofu, and Sophy Mphela.

event enabled the Consumer Science Department to highlight its nutrition, food preparation, and meal planning expertise. This event was about sharing knowledge and demonstrating the practical application of academic expertise.

Seven teachers who attended the event allowed the University to connect with local teachers to build trust and goodwill. This positive relationship can lead to future collaborations and opportunities for shared resources, ultimately benefitting the community. The event showcased the university's commitment to practical learning and its dedication to providing real-world solutions.

This event reinforced the university's reputation as an institution that engages with and serves its community. Participants had the opportunity to network and

exchange ideas with colleagues from various schools, fostering a sense of camaraderie and collaboration among educators. In addition to professional development, the workshop promoted healthier eating habits within the community. Attending teachers can now advocate for nutritious meals in their schools and homes.

The collaboration with the Consumer Science Department was pivotal in making the Meal Prep Workshop a success. The department's expertise in nutrition, food preparation, and meal planning provided the foundation for the event's curriculum. Their Faculty members led informative sessions, ensuring that the workshop was not just about cooking but also about understanding the nutritional value of meals.

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Left to right: Kristen Toward, Kelly Scholesser, Vickie De Beer, Melissa Cliff, Nadia Van Rensburg, Marcel Mills (Bottom left to right), Anje Watt, Shreya Beekham



The fourth-year hospitality students who worked at the community engagement event with the author of the Meal Prep recipe book. Moreover, the Consumer Science Department's involvement

demonstrated the university's commitment to bridging the gap between academia and practical application. The university showcased its dedication to fostering a culture of

continuous learning and community engagement by involving local teachers. The Meal Prep Workshop organised by UP, in collaboration with the Consumer Science Department, exemplifies the power of community engagement in education. By providing teachers with professional development opportunities, strengthening community ties, and promoting healthier eating habits, this event showcased the university's commitment to its mission.

It's not just an event but a testament to how institutions can serve as pillars of support and enrichment for their communities. Through initiatives like these, UP is educating minds, nourishing bodies, and fostering a sense of togetherness that transcends the classroom.



Viva Foundation of South Africa

Meleney B. Kriel (Chief Executive Officer)

The mission is to establish service hubs within communities as a platform from which we and our partners can render services to underprivileged and vulnerable beneficiaries.

Our vision is to be instrumental in transforming the lives of children and families living in informal settlements and other high-priority poverty areas, providing them with education, access to the economy, food security, art- and cultural expression.

We endeavour to meet the felt and expressed needs of the community by creating long-term solutions to poverty and addressing the immediate symptoms thereof. Viva Foundation has been operating since 2007 and is currently based in Mamelodi.



Viva Choir 15th Birthday Celebrations

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The organisation offers the following services to the community:

Children:

Quality and Equality in Education through Early Childhood Development, Independent Education, and Youth Development.

Poverty Alleviation:

Food security, training and facilitating access to the economy, plus integration of orphan care into our programmes.

Development of the arts:

As part of the curriculum and extracurricular activities of the Viva Independent Schools, we offer music tuition, singing, choir and art.

Sexual violence prevention and response:

Training in Community-based prevention and response measures, activism, advocacy, and awareness.

Notable achievements

Viva responds very well to the needs of the communities it serves in crises. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation increased its feeding scheme from 165 000 [one hundred and sixty-five thousand] meals per year to over two million from March 2020 to the end of 2021.

During the July 2021 unrest, the feeding scheme expanded to 19 distribution points with the assistance of partners. Viva provided the food parcels, and local organisations and volunteers in Tshwane and the Johannesburg Metro distributed them.

The organisation has received several awards for its programmes, including being mentioned twice among the top 10 non-profit organisations (NPOs) in South Africa. The true stories are the individual children in the informal settlement around the Viva Village Independent School



Choir at Hatfield Christian Church

that receives quality education. Our learners achieved top accolades in the Mathematics Bee this year, with our top mathematics learner representing the district in the Tshwane district competition later this year.

With great success, our choir toured Germany and Holland in December 2019 and is preparing to travel again to Europe in December this year.

Challenges in the community

Abject poverty and inequality come together in the Informal Settlements of South Africa, where it has its worst impact. Crime is rampant, and police officers do not respond to calls, even serious ones. Our organisation has been targeted several times by criminals, with break-ins, armed robbery and the attempted murder of our groundsman, who was stabbed 21 times. The community is under-serviced in terms of municipal services, and shack homes are vulnerable to flooding, fire and temperature extremes.

Partnership with UP

Viva has been in partnership with the University of Pretoria's Community Engagement Department since its inception in the Mamelodi community in 2009. Several faculties have been involved in the past and are currently involved:

Theology, Nursing Sciences, EBIT, Geology, Medical, Music, Psychology, Education, Humanities, Art and currently research by the Social Work students under Prof Antoinette Lombard.

Working together with UP students on community engagement projects

Viva welcomes UP students with open arms. Invaluable mapping has been done by the geology students, theology students and nursing sciences students who have gone from door to door on outreaches, and art students transformed our hall after an armed robbery with young learners took place in that hall.

Architecture and Building students raised funds for a hall and assisted in erecting it. So many collaborations and interactions have taken place and have been instrumental in Viva's impact on its communities.

How can students actively engage and support the work of your organisation?

- Building of new classrooms
- Engineering and construction of a fire escape at the Refilwe Campus
- Sports Training, Chess Club, Art, etc., of the Extracurricular Activities
- Computer Training
- Feeding Scheme – Vegetable gardens
- Drama & Music – Choreography for our Choir, vocal training and assistance with the Choir's preparation for its Europe trip
- Building of an interactive and sensory Play area at both campuses – Indoor and Outdoor
- Solar installations and clean energy management.
- Viva can host research students.



Oink and out!

Hazel Burutu and Katrin Henzen (BVSc VI - Edited by Dr Nadia de Beer)

A new world opened up for us this week, and we soon realised it was a 'PIG' world out there. It all started Monday morning at 6:15 when we were on our way to Potchefstroom, not knowing what was lying ahead.

Visiting a 600-sow unit is no joke, and we quickly realised that. Many people take a 'wake up' shower in the morning to start the day. Clearly, pig vets have grown accustomed to taking showers. What made it all bearable was the warm welcome and coffee from the farmer.

Looking at the records and numbers, the penny dropped for us that to measure is to know. Accurate and continuous record-keeping is paramount and makes our work as

Vets much easier. Sitting in on the conversations gave us a good idea of the essential parameters that need to be looked at to objectively judge the profitability of the farm and identify areas where intervention is necessary for improvement. Having the opportunity to give training to the workers concerning piglet processing was great. We realised there is a lot we can learn from them as well.

Biosecurity is a make or break for a pig farmer- and I tip my hat to the staff members' discipline, ensuring they keep to the rules regarding walking through footbaths, showering in and out, and sticking to the disinfection protocols. Because it only takes one break in the biosecurity chain to cause havoc. The following day, we travelled to

Welkom in the Free State to complete a Hygiene Assessment System Checklist (HAS) on a high throughput abattoir. Paperwork! Here, we fine-tuned our observation skills by looking at all the finer details, from inspecting the truck washing bays to the dispatch area temperatures.

Regarding saving on transport costs, the abattoir is situated just across the road from the piggery, and no external pigs are slaughtered. This means that the levels of biosecurity are high as only pigs from one piggery are slaughtered. The animals are rested before they are slaughtered, sadly unknown to them. The electric stunning method is used, and the pigs are bleed, dehaired and eviscerated.

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Highly skilled and experienced inspectors do carcass inspection.

The carcasses are cleaned, graded, chilled, and dispatched. The next time one sees the carcasses is in the supermarkets. Since there is a limited market for rough offal, it is instead turned into one of the ingredients of a compost recipe; who could have known?

Hands-on experience is priceless, literally! After you have palpated and seen a *Mycoplasma* lung lesion in the abattoir – it sticks! We had the opportunity to do a proper lesion evaluation on carcasses. From skin lesions, looking for milk spots on livers, lung scoring, and observing the kidneys on pig carcasses. Moving to the rough offal room – we opened pig stomachs to identify gastric ulcers and the ileum. These post-mortem findings can be of value to a farmer to monitor their health status and measure the effectiveness of the protocols on the farm.

We were honoured to attend the inaugural of the South African Pork Producers' Organisation (SAPPO) - SAPPO Congress in South Africa. We opened the congress with a presentation on what customers

believe about farmers, particularly millennials and Generation Z members whose food choices are significantly influenced by their socioeconomic status and life stage. It was determined that customers needed to be informed about farming and animal welfare, and the only way to do this was to utilise social media channels. We chewed on the usage of antibiotics as well, concluding that not all sick animals need them, but that we do need them to treat, control, and prevent disease to boost productivity.

Our European friends suggested gene editing as a potential remedy for the overuse of antibiotics, in which already-existing genetic material is changed to produce a better result. Also included was African Swine Fever, a disease that brought the swine business to its knees. It has a near 100% fatality rate. It is one of the most contagious diseases affecting domestic and wild pigs. The only means of control are increased biosecurity measures and prayer.

Pig X allowed us to learn from the best in the industry. Interesting topics were discussed, and it made us think in a non-conventional way. Being a Pig Vet is not only about

in-feed medications, vaccination protocols, and health plans for piglet scours. We need to be adequately informed about the economic and business side of the industry as well.

For instance, at what parity should we replace sows to ensure a farm's profitability? How to enforce simple yet practical biosecurity measurements, and how important a healthy gut is. Speakers from all over the world joined the congress, and we received insight locally and internationally. Pig X made me realise how integrated the industry is regarding different professions and that we need each other at the end of the day.

Exposure is key in any industry – but it takes time to gain it. Thus, we must start somewhere. During this elective week – we started investing in our futures! We are truly grateful for this opportunity over the past week to see a glimpse of the pig industry and what a daily routine in the life of a pig vet entails. We thank Agri FARMACY SA Herd Health Practice and SAPPO for providing us with this fantastic learning opportunity and investing in us as new upcoming Veterinarians. Pearls of wisdom we will remember after this week: Happy pigs won't tail bite and Dr Grimbeek's advice if someone comments on your 'odour' after visiting a pig farm, you tell them it 'It smells like money!'.

Finally, we want to thank Dr Japhta Mokoete for ensuring that Dr Nadia de Beer (Replacement Lecturer) is appointed so she can organise this fantastic and fully packed week whole of experience when he is on study leave. We thank Dr de Beer for her ability to coach and mentor us during the intensive animal production week as part of the Veterinary Elective Programme (VEP 600) of the Faculty of Veterinary Science at UP.

Obesity prevention

Emma Davidson, Bridgette Motsepa, Janie von Benecke, Kamogelo Nkoana, Marion Beeforth, Phumudzo Tshiambara, Claire Martin and Christa Ellis



Introduction

As final-year dietetics students, we must complete seven weeks of internship for community nutrition. We were placed at the Laudium Community Health Centre (CHC). During our seven weeks at Laudium, we were required to plan an intervention targeted towards a specific population group. We created a time schedule to organise when we would complete the situational analysis, market research and each step of our program plan and intervention.

Planning phases – how did we choose our topic?

After going through the nutrition care records, we noticed that most clients who came to see the Dietitian were overweight or obese. We also realised no educational posters about overweight and obesity throughout the facility.

Implementation - How the day went

Clients who gave consent could participate in several activities aimed at maintaining a healthy weight through healthy eating:

Body measurements

Client's weight and height were taken, and their body mass index was calculated.

Education

We educated the clients on balanced plates, energy balance, portion sizes, and healthy cooking methods.

Demonstrations

We also had demonstrations on energy balance, balanced plates, and cooking a sweet potato, which we had to taste.

Individual sessions

After the educational sessions

and demonstrations, we had one-on-one sessions with the clients to ensure they understood the content covered.

Healthy snacks

We encouraged active participation by asking the clients questions and handing out oranges to those who got the answers right.

What did we learn through this experience?

We learned the importance of adaptability and ensuring that screening stalls are always placed in areas that attract the most clients. On intervention day, we moved our screening stall from the less visible service entrance to the facility's main entrance to improve visibility and attract foot traffic to our booth. We also learned the importance of incentives, which make clients feel valued. Moreover, we knew that we must always have a backup plan and adapt as the initial plan can be affected by unforeseen circumstances.

Conclusion

Although our group experienced a few challenges throughout the programme process, we were delighted with the outcome of our intervention. We learnt that adapting is crucial to have a successful event. We thoroughly enjoyed our experience at the Laudium CHC. We learnt so much about providing nutrition education and support to those in the Laudium and Itireleng community.

Community Outreach Project: Serving the Hammanskraal community

Dr Tuelo Matjokana (Lecturer: Department of Early Childhood Education)



The standard research process is characterised by the researcher collecting data from the researched community and disappearing into the comfort of writing an article in their office. In most instances, the researched community is left with little value added. This reduces the research process into an exploitative arrangement, benefiting only one side.

Fortunately, research has since moved from this narrow-focused practice to a practice that creates a symbiotic relationship between the study and all participants. Indeed, much is to be gained when the researched community is allowed to make an input. Not only does this enrich the research process itself, but it is empowering.

Dr Tuelo Matjokana engaged with the Early Childhood Development (ECD) managers and practitioners when researching people with low incomes or non-implementation of ECD policies in the rural Hammanskraal centres. Although data was gathered, the Hammanskraal ECD centres

continue to face difficulties with the inadequate interpretation of ECD policies, funding, registration, leadership, and management.

Dr Tuelo Matjokana's research approach differed from the norm since both the researcher and participants benefited mutually. She collaborated with the International Leadership Research Forum in (ILRF EC) members to address the identified challenges. A training program to improve the quality of early learning and development for young children in Hammanskraal ECD centers was developed by the ILRF EC members from the University of Pretoria, University of South Africa, University of Jyväskylä and Helsinki in Finland, ADA University in Azerbaijan and German Youth Institute.

About 40 ECD managers from the Hammanskraal community were trained to address some of the identified challenges derived from the analysed researched data.

The first training focused on ECD leadership to address inadequacy in leadership. It was observed that ECD

managers lack pedagogical leadership competence but place a greater emphasis on financial management. In this regard, training was provided on an integrated approach to leadership to enhance participatory, educational management and administration skills.

The Department of Social Development's (DSD) registration norms and standards requirements were reported to be a significant hindrance for the rural ECD centres in obtaining funding to access quality ECD services. In this regard, ECD centres in the identified community are experiencing inadequate infrastructure, water and sanitation facilities, which negatively affect young children's quality care and development.

Knowledge was shared with ECD managers on how to meet registration requirements to access funding. Collaboration with ECD stakeholders, especially parents, is critical to strengthen the development and learning of children. In this regard, managers from Hammanskraal ECD centers participated in a discussion on barriers to effective parental involvement.

Strategy in Practice: Financial Management students engage with local businesses

Dr Zack Enslin (Department of Financial Management: Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences)

August is the most exciting part of the FIN702 Strategic Management Accounting module year for students in the BCom Honours in Financial Management Sciences program! This is when they present their Practical Case Study projects to fellow students and interested staff from the Department of Financial Management. The Practical Case Study (PCS) project is a valuable experiential learning and assessment opportunity built on community interaction between students and smaller businesses or, sometimes, branches of larger firms.

For the PCS, students are allocated to one of ten groups and tasked with applying one of the strategic models or tools covered in the module to an actual business to analyse the company and then provide strategic advice and recommendations. These businesses are usually small-to-medium-sized organisations which may not necessarily be able to afford the fees of strategic consultants.

Students gain valuable practical experience applying the theoretical knowledge learned in class within the business environment. The groups are required to present their findings through a written business report and present their findings to the class, myself and other interested attendees. Therefore, the students also learn how to structure a business report and to do business presentations to others. The Chartered Institute of Management



Accountants (CIMA) (United Kingdom) awarded me the CIMA Employability Excellence award for 2021 for how the project enhances the employability of the students of the module.

This year, 2023, the businesses selected and analysed by students included a plumbing business, a business making industrial fans and extractors, a pies bakery and wholesaler, a labour broking service, and an insurance provider, among others.

An interesting trend for 2023 was that many groups selected to apply Porter's Five Forces industry analysis to analyse the businesses and their industries. Ansoff's Growth Matrix and the Boston City Group (BCG) matrix were also applied by some groups. Business recommendations included suggestions for amended competitive product value offerings, diversification into related markets with related products, product portfolio restructuring, and introduction of or improvement to social media and online customer relationship management solutions. Over the years, business owners and managers have indicated that the groups provide valuable ideas for them to consider and do 'awesome' work.

#ChooseUP Day #BDietetics

**Ms Lauren Rix, Ms Jurica Wessels and Ms Mamotlise Makola,
Mr Gontse Dikgole, Dr Heather Legodi (HOD: Human Nutrition) and
Mr Rodney Mudau (Lecturer: Human Nutrition)**

There is nothing like stepping into the heart of a #ChooseUP event, where the air pulses with anticipation as many current students, lecturers, and academic success coaches wait to welcome prospective University of Pretoria students. As representatives of the BDietetics Department, we were excited as we shared our passion for nutritional well-being with the prospective first-year dietetics students.

#ChooseUP day is an event oriented around Grade 12 students who have received provisional acceptance to UP based on their school-leaving results. This annual event is designed to be an enlightening occasion to create enthusiasm amongst potential students regarding their future educational path at UP. Moreover, it provides them with first-hand experience of the intricacies of university life, as conveyed by present-day students.

The interaction between the university delegates and prospective students provided a complete understanding of the robust academic journey, extracurricular offerings, and stimulating prospects available at UP. The fun, friendly and relaxed environment of #ChooseUP day facilitated opportunities for prospective students to engage with current students and, in doing so, instilled a greater motivation and confidence toward their selection of specific academic programs. Subsequently, it established



potential mentorship relationships, ensuring they had informed guidance concerning their future academic pursuits. This event is a great marketing opportunity for the university. It allows current students to build essential communication and marketing skills through networking activities, fostering character development.

Concerning promoting the dietetics degree at UP, individuals lacked awareness regarding dietitians' specific responsibilities and roles within the Faculty of Health Sciences. Numerous concerns and questions were addressed by the current students about the duration of the four-year degree, module structuring and scheduling, the utilisation of nutritional equipment such as BMI scales and skin fold callipers and the methods through which dietetics



students participate in community engagement projects within informal and hospital settings, as well as the incorporation of nutritional considerations within these settings. The dietetics students also created a nutrition-related quiz and held a raffle with exciting prizes to be won.

This promotional strategy facilitated the dietetics students' ability to attract greater attention from those traversing the area, enabling them to disseminate information about the captivating prospects that the field of dietetics at UP has to present to a broader audience. The Department of Human Nutrition can be proud of their efforts in promoting dietetics at UP and effectively fostering enthusiasm among prospective dietetics students for 2024. We express our gratitude for the opportunity to provide our services to this esteemed organisation.

Attendees from the Department of Human Nutrition:

Ms Kayla du Toit, Ms Lauren Rix, Ms Khadija Azaroug, Mr Neo Maubane, Ms Mamotlise Makola, Ms Therosha Govender, Mr Gontse Dikgole, Dr Heather Legodi, Mr Rodney Mudau, Ms Jurica Wessels and Ms Pertunia Baloyi.

Residences unite for Mandela Day: project #CleanUP

Callum Ross (Community Engagement Representative of The Tower Residence, Department of Residence Affairs and Accommodation, University of Pretoria)



Throughout 2023, UP and UP Reach Out and Give (RAG) have been committed to promoting extracurricular activities centred around giving back to the community and encouraging students to grow through selfless acts of kindness.

To celebrate Mandela Day 2023, the residents of House Khutso, a female residence, and The Tower, a residence, gathered on Saturday, 29 July, to celebrate Mandela Day by donating 67 minutes of their time to the community. The residence students spent their 67 minutes cleaning the streets around the University's Hatfield Campus.

The initiative aimed at providing students the opportunity to give back to the community and spend 67 minutes in selfless acts to promote keeping the streets of Pretoria clean.

The students were supplied with black rubbish bags and gloves and encouraged to look on the pavement and in the brush at the edge of the street, as the largest amount of waste was discovered within the shrubs.

The students then walked from the House Khutso Residence entrance past the Hatfield campus entrances and circled the blocks around the entrances.

The students found the initiative extremely enjoyable, as the materialisation of the difference made was instant, as the streets were transformed from rubbish heaps to clean walking spaces. The students enjoyed the time in the sun with the group, and morale was high on the day as they learned the importance of being selfless to the community.

Overall, the initiative was a fantastic success. The students could commit themselves to 67 minutes of active service while learning about the importance of keeping the community in a clean and safe environment.



What can students benefit from participating in a community engagement project at UP?

Mr Daddy Kgonothi
(PhD Food Sciences Candidate - University of Pretoria)

I did my under- and post-grads at UP in Food Sciences. I finished my undergrad in 2019, then enrolled for my master's in 2020, which I finished in 2021. In 2022, I started with my PhD studies.

What motivated you to choose your field of study?

What motivated me to choose this field was my curiosity about food. There is much more to consider regarding the food we eat than we might initially think, so I wanted to learn and understand the science behind it. Another motivating factor was my desire to contribute to tackling some of the challenges faced by the food industry. Once I understood the role of a food scientist, I was equally driven to make my own mark as well.

I continued my postgraduate studies to further educate myself by gaining

more knowledge. I also wanted to learn research skills, and South Africa does not have enough black researchers; this also motivated me to try to close the gap. Being a researcher, especially in the food science field, can help a lot in our country, especially in addressing the food security challenges facing our country and as a global issue.

How did your involvement help you develop valuable skills?

I have learned to work in teams and with people from all walks of life; you learn to appreciate people as they are and not to discriminate, especially in the community engagement project where you work with people from all races.

Therefore, you get the chance to see things from a different perspective. Time management is also one of the skills I have learned. I can apply them daily, and I am sure I can use them for longer, even professionally.

In summary, one could say that participating in community projects helped me to acquire many soft skills, which will be beneficial when I start working in any field.

Are you currently participating in community engagement or social responsibility projects?

Currently, I am not participating in any project because doing a PhD study requires more of your time. Besides, you also have other work that needs you to do, which

does not give you enough time to go out and do extra projects. However, I hope I will be able to engage in other community projects in the future.

What advice do you have for current students planning to participate in community engagement projects?

Just do what you love. I have seen most students doing it for marks, and they have more passion for this project. I will say that once you start loving what you do, you have more chance of learning from it and obtaining other soft skills.

They should not be shy to engage with one another, especially if they are part of a multi-racial group. Do not exclude yourself from them; engage and learn from one another. This can help you in your career and your whole life.

Are there any specific community engagement projects you have been involved in at UP that you are particularly proud of?

During my time with community engagement, I have participated in several projects. The highlight included helping the Mamelodi community project, where we were helping the ladies and gentlemen sewing to sell their items.

I also participated in the Moja Gabedi project, which is still running. We also used to go to the Kungwini Welfare Organisation and helped during the world choir competition.

ECD students equip ECD practitioners to incorporate a sensory garden in their pre-schools

Dr Susan Thuketana
(Senior Lecturer: Faculty of Education, Department of Early Childhood Education)
Dr Martina Jordaan
(Head Community Engagement Research and Postgraduate Studies - Mamelodi campus)

UP's Mamelodi campus has a unique focus on educational pathways, providing access to programs in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) for postsecondary school attainment. One of the features of the campus is a STEM sensory garden. During 2022, training was provided to 30 practitioners of early childhood development centres to help them incorporate sensory gardens into their centres. The feedback from the practitioners was overwhelmingly positive, and many were eager to learn more.

After the training, Dr Martina Jordaan and a colleague from the United States of America (USA), Prof Audrey Falk, visited the schools to assess whether the practitioners had incorporated sensory gardens as a teaching method in their centres. However, the findings revealed a need for further training. In 2023, third-year students of Dr Susan Thuketana enrolled in early childhood education courses at the Faculty of Education's Department of Early Childhood Education presented training sessions to the 2022 cohort of Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners. After the first



training, the practitioners were uninformed about how to start or incorporate sensory garden aspects into teaching. However, after the second training, the practitioners felt more equipped to integrate different concepts of using a sensory garden in their teaching practice. The students enjoyed sharing the theoretical-based ideas taught in class with

the practitioners. They visited the centres to see how practitioners incorporated the learned skills into teaching. The sensory garden at UP's Mamelodi campus has become an ideal environment for other faculties to use students to get involved in community projects, and campus staff has taken ownership of the garden.

Vet Books for Africa

Anje Dercksen (Social media, marketing and fundraising)

- Eight African countries
- Eight South African veterinary students
- Six weeks
- Thousands of kilometres
- Hundreds of lives changed

Vet Books for Africa is a non-profit organisation and life-changing project run by a committee of veterinary students from UP. About 30 years ago, the initiative started with the idea to provide other African veterinary faculties with adequate resources to help their students become knowledgeable veterinarians.

Today, students, universities, schools, communities, rehabilitation- and conservation organisations all over Africa thrive a little more because of Vet Books for Africa's work.

For a period of two years, our team works hard to gather resources such as textbooks, medical equipment, and stationery. We collaborate with various animal welfare and rehabilitation organisations, as well as community engagement projects, with one goal: To unlock the true potential of conservation in Africa through educating its people.

As a student-driven, non-profit initiative, Vet Books for Africa relies solely on fundraising, donations and sponsorships from external companies, institutions, and individuals. To raise funds, we have an online bookstore where we sell older edition textbooks and animal



and nature reading books. We have many small fundraising events at the Onderstepoort Campus and many more innovative ideas we would like to implement during this two-year term. To get students involved, we have a stationary drive for schools in need and a new initiative for our 2024 trip: a clothing drive for rural African communities. We appreciate the companies and individuals who take hands with us to help fund this incredible project.

We have big plans for our 2023/2024 term. We want to continue building on the incredible project established in the last 30 years and empower even more students to become

more knowledgeable, skillful, and independent. We strive to promote education and conservation through our actions and unite the veterinary students of Africa, aiming to preserve this world for generations to come.

To make a difference in the lives of animals and people is an honour and a privilege. We look forward to putting our hearts into this project for the next few months.

Visit our website or social media pages to see more of what we do and how you can make a difference.

<https://www.vetbooksforafrica.org>
[@vetbooksforafrica](https://www.vetbooksforafrica.org)

Occupational Therapy Collaboration with Cilo Cybin

Zekhethelo Mshengu
(Occupational therapy student) and
Nthabiseng Phalatse
(Occupational Therapy Department)

Cilo Cybin is a pharmaceutical company founded in 2018; it is the first entity in South Africa to have both a medical Cannabis Cultivation and Manufacturing license.¹ They take pride in being leaders in medical cannabis for using scientific research, innovation and commitment to reliable quality products.¹ The facility cultivates around 100 kg of cannabis every month; however, at the time of our visit, they had harvested about 74 kg of cannabis that needed to be trimmed down. The company manufactures products such as oils, tinctures, topical creams and isolates, and they are also involved in third-party manufacturing within the industry.

Human beings find meaning in their daily activities, referred to as occupations in occupational therapy. Older adults are often denied the opportunity to experience life how they want to. They are seen as people who cannot be fully independent and often a liability in the workplace.

This is an occupational injustice as they no longer experience some meaningful occupation after retirement and often become stuck in a monotonous routine. Cilo Cybin



started an initiative where six elderly persons were hired to trim down the cultivated plants so that they could undergo further processing.

This opportunity allows older people to engage in more occupations, regain their independence and find joy in life. The owners of Cilo Cybin aim to have an accommodating work environment for their elderly staff; hence, they invited the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Pretoria (UP) to promote health and provide screening assessments during an initiative planned. The Department of Occupational Therapy saw this collaboration as an opportunity to prepare older

adults for the working environment and to foster future collaboration for community engagement with the pharmaceutical company. Occupational therapy has a significant role to play in the workplace, as there are a lot of ergonomic factors that are often ignored. Because these are older adults, they need all the advice and preparation they can get.

Two occupational therapy students from UP participated in this initiative by presenting to the newly hired employees. The company hired six elderly persons who would be required to trim the cannabis plant. This job requires one to sit in the

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same position for hours and handle scissors. The students were given a tour of the building and led to one of the cultivation rooms where the workers must take the cannabis.

They also had an opportunity to watch how the employees were expected to perform the job. They were able to observe and correct some postures as they worked. The students gave a short education session on the most functional postures to perform their job optimally, as well as energy conservation and joint protection principles. The new employees are over the age of 65 years and have a high fall risk and diseases such as arthritis. It was, therefore, imperative to educate them on what modalities they could use to protect their joints and energy conservation principles.

The students then performed a few exercises with the employees that they can use for stiffness of joints and movements before they go to work,

as sitting down and doing repetitive actions can become strenuous. They were also advised to use heat packs and cooling modalities for joint pain or hand stiffness.

They also liaised with the employers on the working hours, and it was decided that the new employees are only required to work 2-hour shifts. However, they may continue should they feel comfortable. The students also noted that when the elderly persons were working, they had to trim the flowers on their lap, which did not allow them to assume the appropriate functional posture of having their backs straight, their knees flexed at 90 degrees and their feet flat on the ground.

They suggested short tables so the employees could work on them instead of their laps and possibly get cushions for them to sit on for comfort. The day was a unique experience, and the occupational

therapy department is proud to have been involved in such a meaningful cause. The owners at Cilo Cybin were accommodating and were open to being given more advice on improving the working conditions, and seeing how these employees were so pleased to have a job and something to wake up to every day was touching.

We hope that more companies consider hiring the elderly and involving occupational therapists to establish a healthy working environment and conditions conducive to all. After all, work is a vital occupation, so why not get expert advice on accommodating employees?

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