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Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Sentrum vir Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie
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&
INTERFACE

1995: Education Africa Presidential Award for Special Needs
1998: Rolex Award for Enterprise: Associate Laureate

CENTRE FOR AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD:

1 JANUARY 1998 –31 DECEMBER 1998

The year 1998 has been a most productive year for the CAAC. As a result of the successful introduction of the Honours course in 1996 we saw an increase in MA students which should significantly impact the development of quality AAC service delivery in South Africa. The Honours course in AAC (conducted by distance education) has been considerably enhanced by the development of three videos and an interactive CD-Rom program. These additional support materials, developed by CAAC staff, should make a significant difference in facilitating the understanding of AAC issues in all work contexts. This year also saw the CAAC joining the Internet, with the placement of a homepage on the Web. This homepage can be accessed at: <http://www.up.ac.za/academic/libarts/compat/caac/>.

During 1997 and 1998 the CAAC was involved in a collaborative research capacity building project with the Department of Speech and Hearing Therapy at the University of Durban-Westville to extend infrastructure for implementation and research in the area of AAC and severe disability. This proved to be a most meaningful venture and is expected to culminate in the establishing of a satellite AAC centre in KwaZulu/Natal. It is envisaged that this centre would be a joint initiative of Interface, Durban and the University of Durban-Westville.

A highlight of the year was the presentation of a Rolex Award for Enterprise (Associate Laurette) awarded to Prof Alant in recognition of the work done by the CAAC.

1. OBJECTIVES FOR 1998

- Finalisation of the UDW/CAAC collaboration project aimed at the development of capacity for AAC training and research. This is the first step towards establishing a satellite centre in the Durban area.
- Developing a diploma course to upgrade teachers' qualifications to provide entrance into the Honours degree specialising in AAC.
- Assisting 4 CAAC team members to attend and participate in the International Conference of the Association for AAC (ISAAC) in Dublin, Ireland.
- Investigating the acquisition of new premises on the UP campus to meet the growing training and service needs of the CAAC.
- Developing computer-based programs to facilitate the teaching of practical skills for honours and diploma students.
- Launching of the first local light technology device.
- Developing a new practical block for the second year honours students.

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF THE CAAC DURING 1998

1. FORMAL DEGREE TRAINING

1.1 Honours degree in AAC

The Honours degree with specialisation in AAC is growing consistently and the second group of 14 students who will graduate at the end of 1998. 13 New students enrolled for the Honours degree in AAC in 1998. All of these students completed the three academic assignments as well as the practical module and assignment (2 week block course) successfully.

1.2 Masters degree in AAC

With the first group of Honours AAC students having graduated at the end of 1997, 1998 saw a sharp rise in the number of students enrolled for the Masters with specialisation in AAC . Eight students are enrolled for this degree, four of whom have completed the Honours degree, and four speech therapists. These 8 students have all completed the three academic assignments for 1998 successfully. This could possibly be attributed to the fact that these students all had more contact with the lecturers, due to 2 compulsory seminar weeks. In addition, a list server was set up via e-mail to enable students to have more contact with one another as well as with the lecturers. This increased interaction was noticeable in the improved quality of the assignments.

1.3 D.Phil in AAC

Two students are also currently enrolled for the D.Phil degree in the field of AAC. Prof Lyle L. Lloyd from Purdue University is the co-supervisor for both these students.

2. FORMAL TRAINING SESSIONS (For non-degree purposes) :

Table 1 gives a brief outline of the number and nature of training sessions.

Table 1 : Formal training sessions (Non-degree)

Date/ Place	Nature of contact	Trainees	Content	Outcome : evaluation
13/02 CAAC	Sixth AAC Research Symposium	20 re- searchers and students in AAC	Current research trends and priorities in the disability and AAC fields.	An annual event which is very meaningful to all AAC researchers and students who plan to undertake research in the AAC field.
12/03 - 13/03 CAAC	Formal training workshop	38 parents, teachers, therapists	Intervention for children with severe to profound disabilities.	Very practical and innovative ideas on strategies that could be used to facilitate interaction with children with severe to profound disabilities.
14/05- 15/05 CAAC	Formal training workshop	35 SLP's	AAC for Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP).	Specific information that was most relevant and practical with useful ideas on the implementation of AAC strategies for SLP's.
08/06- 12/06 CAAC	AAC Block Course	30 1 st year AAC Honours students, teachers, parents & therapists	A five-day seminar which included theoretical discussions, demonstrations and practical workshops to highlight important issues related to AAC intervention.	Five-day consecutive training provides opportunities for insight to develop as well as growth of practical skills. Participants also felt that more people from the same facility should attend in order to build better support systems.
29/06 - 03/07 CAAC	Advanced AAC Block Course	20 2 nd year AAC Honours students, teachers, therapists	A five-day seminar which included more complex issues related to AAC, e.g. challenging behaviour, literacy issues, technology and life skills. Apart from providing relevant theoretical concepts ample opportunity for providing hands-on experiences was also given.	Students who had already attended the AAC Block course felt that the Advanced Block course equipped them with more skills regarding more complex implementation issues. The students also noted that it provided them with more insight into some of the challenges that face them during the implementation of AAC strategies with severely disabled individuals.
17/09 – 18/09	Formal training seminar	47	Legal issues & communication devices : Why should I know about it?	Day 1 focused on legal issues internationally and locally and was presented by various experts in the field, e.g. Prof Ray Quist from Indiana State University, USA. Day 2 was devoted to dedicated devices. All participants felt this was most enlightening experience to learn from fellow professionals regarding successful device implementation strategies.

3. FOLLOW-UP VISITS AND INFORMAL TRAINING AND INTERVENTION :

Table 2 presents the number and nature of follow-up visits done in the communities as well as informal training.

Table 2 : Follow-up visits in the communities

Date / Place	Nature of work	Trainees	Content	Outcome evaluation
Eersterust Care Centre. Pre-school context for Children with Severe Disabilities (CSD) 05/02; 12/02 24/02; 19/03 26/03; 16/04 28/04; 05/05 7/05; 12/05 21/05; 13/08 20/08; 25/08 22/09; 19/11	Drawing up of a year plan to implement different language themes, AAC strategies, and school readiness programs. Implementation of a stimulation program. Training and counselling of parents. Guiding teachers in report writing and using an evaluation procedure.	4 teachers 28 children	Service entails consultation on AAC principles and, strategies etc. Training of teachers in a stimulation program. Emphasis was placed on AAC modes of communication, viz. Gestures and PCS. Follow-up on service delivery.	Teachers, assistants and parents all benefited from training. Teachers showed enthusiasm and initiative in intervention. They developed skills in planning and implementing a year program. The program is divided into different themes and PCS and gestures are used with each theme. Workbooks were developed for individual children. All showed progress in gaining communication skills.
Eersterust Training Centre . Protective Workshop 06/01; 22/01 27/01; 29/01 02/02; 03/02 10/02; 19/02 03/03; 10/03 16/04; 21/04 30/04; 05/05 19/05; 26/05 10/06; 23/07 13/08; 20/08 28/10; 20/10 27/10; 10/11 18/11	Consultation. Evaluation of workers in terms of work related skills and life-skills. Consultation with parents. Training of workshop assistants in the implementation of a life-skills program. Group intervention: life-skills program. Individual intervention: life-skills, employment program and implementation of AAC strategies.	2 workshop assistants 35 workers (young men and women)	Screening of workers in terms of work-skills and life-skills. Evaluation of new workers in terms of life-skills. Assisting workshop assistants in the implementation and monitoring of a life-skills programme, e.g. telephone use, road safety, general safety in the house and community, number recognition, signing their names, use of money. Individual intervention also focused on life-skills, implementation of AAC strategies: work preparation of four workers by placement with different employers. One worker was taught to wash hair in a hair salon, two workers were taught to wash windscreens and check oil and water at a garage, one worker was taught to price meat and sell over the counter at a butchery. Four workers were taught budgeting skills and social skills in the workplace.	All the workers were included in screening and setting new long-term goals. Workers were grouped according to work skills and productivity. Life-skills intervention: goals were met in terms of number recognition, greeting and answering the telephone. Six workers can now use a public phone, four workers can now successfully sign their names. Three workers can recognise different coins and bank notes. Three of the four employed workers were successfully trained in different work skills and taught to budget.

<p>Uitkoms Care Centre. Institution for adults with disabilities 06/02 ; 03/03 10/03 ; 03/05 14/05 ; 11/09 29/09</p>	<p>Training was provided to the young adults during group therapy sessions. Consultation and training with an emphasis on the importance of independence was provided to the manager and caregivers.</p>	<p>20 disabled young adults ; 2 care-givers ; 1 workshop manager</p>	<p>Guidelines were given regarding the facilitation of life skills with this group of young adults. Issues related to personal care, e.g. independent hair washing and blow-drying, grooming of hands, feet and nails etc were addressed. Attention was also given to the non-speaking young adults by facilitating their interaction with various aided and unaided AAC strategies.</p>	<p>After the intensive therapy in 1997, the trainer was able to withdraw slightly and work in a more consultative way. There was however a change of staff, but the new workshop manager was keen on the implementation of AAC strategies. Continued contact with the CAAC is requested.</p>
<p>Conductive Education Playgroup. Pre-school for CSD 06/03</p>	<p>Consultation regarding classroom implementation of AAC strategies.</p>	<p>1 teacher 8 mothers</p>	<p>Information was given regarding AAC strategies with the non-speaking children in the group. Adaptations for children with visual problems was also discussed.</p>	<p>Teachers and parents found advice helpful, and are keen to implement AAC strategies. Realised that AAC can facilitate classroom interaction.</p>
<p>Phelang Special School for children with mental disabilities 18/02; 24/02 03/03; 04/03 10/03; 11/03 17/03; 18/03 24/03; 25/03 14/04; 15/04 21/04; 22/04 28/04; 29/04 05/05; 06/05 12/05; 13/05 19/05; 20/05 28/07; 29/07 04/08; 05/08</p>	<p>Consultation and classroom implementation of aided and unaided AAC strategies.</p>	<p>Intermediate group: 5 teachers, 12 children</p>	<p>Needs assessment. Teaching a class, using the whole language approach. Multi-level teaching. Literacy issues – reading & writing. Teaching social skills – how to handle abuse.</p>	<p>Children showed emergent literacy skills. Teachers were able to conduct a lesson confidently. Teachers able to teach functional reading goals and incorporating aided language stimulation in class.</p>
<p>Mpho-e-Ntle School for children with mental disabilities 17/02; 03/03 10/03; 17/03 24/03; 31/03 14/04; 21/04 28/04; 12/05 19/05; 02/06</p>	<p>Consultation and classroom implementation using AAC strategies</p>	<p>6 teachers</p>	<p>Weekly sessions aimed at facilitating the implementation of a daily schedule and introducing communication strategies to encourage active learning and participation in functional activities e.g. literacy, gardening and carpentry.</p>	<p>Levels of participation increased dramatically as both teachers and pupils discovered their own abilities and resourcefulness. Community involvement increased.</p>

Date / Place	Nature of work	Trainees	Content	Outcome evaluation
Mamelodi Association for Physically Disabled People. School for children with physical disabilities 6/10; 7/10 13/10; 14/10	Training of class aid in using AAC strategies to communicate with non-speaking children	10 children 1 class aid	Communication boards with PCS were made for children to use during lessons. Lessons were presented using PCS and aided language stimulation.	Children were able to participate during lessons. Use of communication boards to interact was successful. The class aid still needs assistance in including non-speaking children.

4. IN-SITU TRAINING SESSIONS AT SPECIFIC SCHOOLS/INSTITUTIONS

Table 3 gives a brief outline of formal in-situ training sessions.

Table 3 : In-situ training sessions

Date/Place	Trainees	Content	Outcome of evaluation
Harvey Cohen. School for children with disabilities. 03/02; 23/02 24/02; 23/04 28/05	4 teachers, 8 general assistants, 1 occupational therapist, 1 speech therapist and 20 parents	Needs assessment, followed by 2-day workshop at school and 2 monthly follow-up visits. The workshop covered aspects such as 10 Golden Rules for implementing an intervention programme, adapting a daily schedule, expanding current communication skills by incorporating AAC, using communication boards and finally adaptive play.	All trainees were excited after training and keen to implement new AAC strategies. Teachers also mentioned that they could support each other, and could work together on themes in order to build resources. SLP at school could assist with more difficult clients. During follow-up visits more advanced strategies were demonstrated, and previously learnt skills were revised. All teachers reported that the children were more active in participation following the training.
Itereleng Special School. Community school for children with disabilities. 03/08; 17/08 18/08 21/09; 19/10 20/11	23 care givers, parents and members of the community 4 care givers 5 parents	A needs assessment was followed by a 2-day workshop which included practical aspects of positioning, feeding, toilet training, coping with epilepsy, implementation of a daily schedule, play activities and making toys and musical instruments from waste. Three follow-up morning sessions to facilitate the use of new skills and knowledge gained during training.	Participants were most encouraged by the practical skills they acquired. Commented that they were better able to integrate skills learned on their 'home ground'. The daily schedule is being implemented and the caregivers are becoming increasingly effective and resourceful. The level of skill of caregivers and parents is steadily increasing to the benefit of the children. Both the participants at Itereleng and the CAAC staff feel that a mutually beneficial partnership is developing to the benefit of children and young adults with disabilities.

Date/Place	Trainees	Content	Outcome of evaluation
Klerksdorp 05/09; 08/09	2 teachers 8 therapists 16 parents	Individual assessments were conducted after which a two-day hands-on workshop was presented. This covered the most important areas related to AAC intervention and it discussed all the different modes of communication (aided and unaided) as well as the implementation of these modes in a interactive setting.	All participants were enthusiastic and willing to learn AAC skills, as this was their first contact with the CAAC team. They were co-operative and tried their best when asked to practice. Participants were taught how to implement multi-modal communication. The parents were also keen to start an AAC core group which can meet regularly to discuss their progress and problems.
Institute of Urban Primary Health Care 21/10; 22/10	14 Community-based rehabilitation workers	A two-day workshop was presented. The focus was on assessing and rehabilitating people with disabilities in the community.	All CRW students found the training helpful in giving them skills to assess in the community. They also felt confident in the making and use of communication boards.
Bloemfontein 04/11; 05/11	15 Speech Language Pathologists (SLP's)	SLP's received training regarding evaluating people with no or little speech, the most important AAC strategies (aided and unaided) and how these strategies could be implemented to facilitate interaction.	All therapists felt that they gained a lot of knowledge and skill, and that they were better equipped to provide services to potential AAC users. These SLP's felt that prior to the training they were very isolated due to the geographical areas that they serve, and that they wanted to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Recruited 3 potential MA (AAC) students.

5. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION ON THE USE OF AAC STRATEGIES : VISITS TO THE CAAC

Table 4 presents the number of people that visited the CAAC during the past year, and explains the nature of the visits.

Table 4 : Visits to the CAAC related to information dissemination

Date	Nature of contact	Trainees/Visitors	Outcome
30/01 ; 27/02 27/03 ; 24/04 29/05 ; 31/07 21/08 ; 25/09 30/10 ; 27/11	<i>Open Days</i> : During Open Days trainees were exposed to the latest available high and low technology devices and systems.	Well attended by parents, therapists (Speech, Physio and OT), teachers and engineers. 87 Trainees.	These sessions are most meaningful as they provide opportunities for participants to view and handle current material and equipment that can be used to aid non-speaking people. After an initial visit by people from a specific facility a tendency prevails that on subsequent visits more people from the same facility attend these sessions.
05/02	Discussions	Dr L Rosetti	Dr Rosetti, an internationally acclaimed early interventionist visited the CAAC and shared experiences related to young children with severe disabilities.

Date	Nature of contact	Trainees/Visitors	Outcome
05/03	Discussion group	Mss. M Schneider & M Claassens from CASE	Two researchers consulted the CAAC team regarding research that CASE is currently performing related to mainstreaming. The CASE researchers found this discussion most meaningful in the light of the expertise the CAAC has regarding survey research.
23/04	Consultation and discussion	5 teachers & 1 SLP from Mauritius	These teachers wanted to gain more knowledge regarding AAC strategies, in particular low cost adaptations that could facilitate integration of children with disabilities into education.
22/05	Consultation	Dr R McConkey from Belfast University, Ireland	Dr McConkey visited the CAAC to discuss training that the CAAC staff had conducted in the Third world setting and to share ideas on the training of signficant others in rural settings.
06/06	To familiarise third year engineering students to the field of AAC , with reference to technology	4 Third year students and Prof J Hanekom from the University of Pretoria.	Created much interest especially i.t.o. giving students ideas for practical projects. Prof J. Hanekom expressed gratitude towards CAAC for close collaboration. Want to continue bringing students to the CAAC.
23/07	Discussion of CAAC community projects	Mrs S. Matsebula Deputy Director: Change Management Office on the Status of Disabled Persons	Mrs Matsebula visited the AAC to learn more about objectives of the CAAC and community projects for people with disabilities. Requested closer collaboration between their Department and the CAAC.
05/08	General information on working with groups of children with disabilities	Teachers from Pathways Pietersburg	Establishment of Pathways Pietersburg in October 1998 with acknowledgement to CAAC. After consultation with individual client, need was identified.
10/09	Demonstration of a newly developed communication device.	Mr Jonker	The CAAC has been using this device for demonstration purposes in training sessions and workshops.
14/09 – 28/09	Consultations and discussions. Prof Quist also presented a workshop.	Prof Dr Ray Quist, Professor: Dept. of Communication Disorders Indiana State University (USA).	This visit by Prof Quist was most meaningful as a number of AAC issues were discussed. He also assisted staff with some of the non-dedicated AAC systems, e.g. Talking Screen and EZ-Keys. Finally, he also evaluated the interactive CD-Rom program and made valuable comments and recommendations.
09/11 – 11/11	Discussions regarding dealership in South-Africa	Ms Katie Phillips, Managing Director of PRE (Prentke Römich Europe)	Ms Phillips visited the CAAC to investigate the possibility of establishing a PRE dealership in South Africa. Need for further training of CAAC staff by PRE also identified.

6. CONSULTATIONS

During 1998, 57 formal evaluations were done at the CAAC by a team of therapists. This comprised **18 adults** and **38 children**. In 100% of these consultations one or more team members (parents, speech, occupational and physiotherapists, caregivers, teachers, nurses, etc.) involved in the client's rehabilitation were present. Three medico-legal consultations were also conducted during 1998.

7. PUBLICATIONS

***Alant, E.** (1998). Augmentative and Alternative Communication: The role of the community nurses in the rehabilitation of people with severe disabilities. *Curationis*, 21 (2), 17-21.

Alant, E. & Bornman J. (Eds) (1998). *Quarterly Newsletter : Interface / CAAC*

***Alant, E. & Uys K.** (1998). A play package for disabled children. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*. Vol 27 (2), 4 – 11. First Quarter 1998.

Bornman, J. & Alant, E. (1998). AAC Assessment. Observing Behaviour. Script for Video developed by Teletuks for 1st year BA (Hons) AAC students.

Bornman, J. & Alant, E. (1998). Communication Technology. Script for Video developed by Teletuks for 1st year BA (Hons) AAC students.

Bornman, J. (1998). It takes two to interact and a few other skills... *Clinica: Applications in Clinical Practice of Communication Pathology*. Departmental Publication, Department of Communication Pathology, University of Pretoria.

Bornman, J. (1998). Parkinson's Disease : The use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication. Accepted for December 1998 edition of *South African Family Practice*, volume and page numbers not yet available.

Bornman, J. & Alant, E. (1998). Training teachers to facilitate interaction with autistic children using digital voice output devices in the classroom context. Submitted to *South African Educational Journal*.

***Boshoff, C; Alant, E & Wolmarans, Z.** (1998). The needs of Eersterust residents regarding gardening and related services and their perceptions of employing young adults with disabilities in such a service. *The South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Vol 28 (2), 11-14.

Moolman, E. & Alant, E. (1998). Symbol Systems. Script for Video developed by Teletuks for 1st year BA (Hons) AAC students.

Rose, J. & Alant, E. (1998). *Clinica: Applications in Clinical Practice of Communication Pathology*. Departmental Publication, Department of Communication Pathology, University of Pretoria.

***Accredited**

8. PRESS REPORTS REGARDING THE CAAC

8.1 Magazine articles:

"SA se eie Hawking" Article published in *Keur* magazine on 17 July 1998.

8.2 Television:

Rolex Award for Enterprise (Associate Laureatte)
- TV news, SABC 1,2,3: 19 October 1998-10-23

8.3 Newspapers:

- Beeld 20/10/1998

- Pretoria News 10/10/1998 & 21/10/1998
- Citizen 20/10/1998
- Business Day 20/10/1998
- Rapport 25/10/1998
- Star 27/10/1998

8.4 Radio:

- Monitor: 20/10/1998
- Radio West Rand: 20/10/1998
- Radio Jakaranda: 22/10/1998
- Cape Talk: 11/1998
- 702: 10/1998

9. PAPERS

Alant, E. : 2 March. *AAC in special education*. Frances Vorweg Special School, Johannesburg.

Alant, E. 27 August. *The development of a transdisciplinary curriculum for the training of multiprofessionals in AAC*. ISAAC Conference, Dublin, Ireland.

Alant, E. 28 August. Facilitator: *Research Paper on Graphic symbol systems*. ISAAC Research Seminar, Dublin, Ireland.

Bornman, J. 26 January. *"Creating Communication Opportunities for Autistic Children"* Training of teachers at Unica school for children with Autism, Pretoria.

Bornman, J. 27 - 30 January. *"Working with families of people with very limited or no speech : What does support mean?"* From Cradle to Grave Conference presented by the South African Association for the Scientific study of Mental Health, Johannesburg.

Bornman, J. & Uys, K. 14 May. *"The use of switches to facilitate development"*. Talk to parents and therapists at the Baby Therapy Centre, Pretoria.

Bornman, J. 13 August. *"Eendag, lank lank gelede... Die wonder van stories."* Talk to parents at the Orchards parent group, Pretoria.

Bornman, J. 24 August. *"Development of a Primary Level Communication Intervention Protocol for Children with Severe Disabilities."* ISAAC Conference, Dublin, Ireland.

Bornman, J. 21 - 22 September. *There's more than one way of talking: Augmentative and alternative methods of communication for children with severe disabilities*. Jiswa School Conference. Lenasia.

Greyling, T. 6 March. *AAC and Occupational Therapy*. Seminar presented to fourth year Occupational Therapy students at the Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

10. CONFERENCES/SEMINARS ATTENDED :

5 February Fifth National AAC Research Seminar, University of Pretoria.
(Alant, E; Bornman, J; Mophosho, M; Rose, J. Nel, D. & Greyling, T.)

13 - 14 February Early Communication Intervention: New developments in assessment and treatment.

Prof LM Rosetti.
(Rose, J.)

- 28 February** Inclusion for children with Down Syndrome, University of Pretoria.
(Bornman, J. & Uys, K.)
- 12 February, 6 August
12 November** Teleconference between Purdue University, West Lafayette (USA) and the
University of Pretoria and the University of Durban-Westville.
(Alant, E; Bornman, J & Uys, K.)
- 24 - 28 August** Eighth Biennial Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and
Alternative Communication (ISAAC), Dublin, Ireland.
(Alant, E; Bornman, J; Mophosho, M; Rose, J. & Greyling, T.)

11. CAAC STAFF

This year has been marked by not many changes in the CAAC staff. One speech language therapist resigned at the end of May, and this position was not filled.

11.1 Employed by the CAAC

- Occupational therapist: (Mrs T. Greyling): 25 hours per week. Her appointment was changed to 40 hours (full-time) since September 1998.
- Speech pathologist: (Mrs D. Nel): 25 hours per week
- Physiotherapist (Mrs J. Rose) : 25 hours per week
- Technical assistant: (Mr N. Smit) : 5 hours per week (engineering student)
- External lecturers involved in Honours degree in AAC
 - Ms K. Uys: Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria.
 - Mrs T. Buys: Private/ Part-time: Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria.
 - Mrs A. Kritzinger: Centre for Early Intervention in Communication Pathology, Department of Communication Pathology, University of Pretoria.
 - Mrs A.M. Wium : Therapist in private practice, Pretoria.
 - Mrs E. Moolman: New Hope School, Pretoria

11.2 Employed by the Department of Communication Pathology

- Director : Prof E. Alant : 40 hours per week
- CAAC co-ordinator: Mrs J. Bornman: 40 hours per week
- Speech Pathologist: Mrs M. Mophosho: 40 hours per week. In September 1998 Mrs Mophosho's involvement in the Kellogg Leadership Programme came to an end. From October 1998 she is thus full-time active in the CAAC.
- Secretary : Mrs F. van Greunen 25 hours per week

11.3 Volunteers

- Ms K. Uys: Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria.
- Mrs I. Pansegrouw : Unica School for children with Autism, Pretoria
- Prof P. Cilliers: Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, University of Pretoria

A. Training objectives :
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National training for teachers and parents: The CAAC once again conducted various formal (6) and informal (5) training sessions at different schools and centres around the country. Training in rural areas was maintained during this year and was extended to include one setting in Winterveld. It is clear that these training sessions have been most successful in making teachers and parents aware of the impact that AAC strategies can make in the life of people with severe communication disorders. 2. The use of ambassadors (AAC users) and their role in the activities of the CAAC/INTERFACE is becoming more prominent. This project will be extended for 1999, particularly in view of the possible involvement of Prentke Römich Europe (PRE) in the country. 3. Employment project in Eersterust: Training was done to equip students with severe disabilities to participate in employment in the communities. Based on this project, a bigger project is planned for 1999 aimed at developing community-based training for young adults with disabilities in “stepping out” and obtaining employment in community settings. This project will include urban and rural settings. 4. The production of videos and a CD-Rom computer program for training: Three videos and one interactive CD-Rom program were developed by the CAAC and telematic staff at the University of Pretoria. These videos will be made available to students and outside agencies to facilitate understanding of more specific AAC strategies. 5. New practical block for 2nd year Honours students: During 1998 a new practical block was developed for second year students in AAC. This proved to be highly successful and will be repeated in 1999. 6. Inter-university collaboration to build research and training capacity in AAC. The CAAC / University of Durban-Westville collaborative effort progressed most satisfactory during 1998. Although this project formally ends in the beginning of 1999, a solid basis for further contact was established.
B. Follow-up visits to schools and community settings trained in previous years:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fewer follow-up visits were conducted in 1998 to venues trained in previous years due to additional training demands on CAAC staff. During 1999 this issue needs to be addressed quite seriously, particularly in relation to support needed by graduated AAC students (teachers and therapists) who work in schools and other settings who need support to facilitate implementation.
C. Information dissemination of AAC strategies :
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Like in the past the CAAC/Interface Newsletter appeared three times this year. The present distribution list includes 400 people/associations. This Newsletter continues to be a most important vehicle for the distribution of information on available material for intervention. 2. As in the past, monthly Opendays were held for people to visit the CAAC free of charge. These Opendays are very well attended and should continue.
D. Technology objectives :
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The light technology beginning communication device “Easy Talk 2-Option” was launched for the first time in February 1998. This project was most successful and will be extended in the future, to also include a “Easy Talk 4-Option”. 2. Interface and the CAAC also received a visit from the Managing Director of PRE (Prentke Römich Europe) from the UK to investigate the possibility of establishing a dealership in South Africa for their communication devices. This is a most exciting development as this is the biggest international company manufacturing dedicated communication devices. The need for further training of staff in devices was identified. Negotiations for overseas manufacturers to come to SA for training in 1999 are continuing.
E. Consultations :
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a steady increase in the number of consultations done in the CAAC. This is particularly important as this also provides a most meaningful training context for pre-graduate speech/language pathology students who observe most of these consultations. The role of the CAAC in providing information in these cases remains most important as an increasing number of professional teams recognise the expertise of the CAAC team in dealing with severe disabilities.
F. Research
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CAAC/UDW collaborative project sponsored by the CSD is reaching its conclusion. Major impact was made this year by training staff and students at UDW as part of the collaborative inter-university project.

- Different contacts between staff materialised during this year during which research projects were discussed. The aim of this project is to create research capacity for research in AAC and severe disability.
2. Prof Ray Quist from the State University of Indiana (USA) visited the CAAC to discuss joint research projects and to give input into the development of the interactive CD-Rom program for AAC students. This was most useful to all CAAC and telematic staff at the University of Pretoria.
 3. Three teleconferences were held between the CAAC and Purdue University (USA) staff.
 4. Three articles were published in accredited journals in 1998. Four articles were submitted for publication in accredited journals during 1998. One in an International AAC Journal (accepted for publication in 1999), and two in the local Journal of Communication Disorders (one accepted for 1999, one submitted to South African Journal of Education) and one accepted for publication in the Journal of Occupation Therapy in December 1998.

Concluding comments on objectives for 1998

As in previous years, 1998 was a most rewarding year for the staff of the CAAC. The year was characterised by increased contact and consultations with professionals, parents and teachers who work in a most dedicated way towards uplifting the quality of life of people with severe disabilities. It is, however, clear that the demands on CAAC staff in relation to formal degree and teacher training are increasing. This issue needs serious addressing in 1999.

In addition, the problems relating to the facilities of the CAAC are increasing. These difficulties relate to two primary problems: firstly, the lift in the building which works sporadically and secondly inadequate training facilities i.e. venues and storage space. These issues pose an increasing challenge to the training activities (formal degrees and informal sessions) of the CAAC/Interface.

13. FOCUS FOR 1999

A. Formal Training:

1. The development of an advanced diploma in education: severe disabilities for teachers
2. The maintenance and extension of BA (Hons) and MA degrees with specialization in AAC to include more teachers in regular schools
3. Increased involvement in telematic training by the development of relevant material for training
4. Continued training of pre-graduate and post-graduate Communication Pathology students
5. Increased involvement in AAC training at other training institutions

B. Research:

1. The finalization of the CAAC/UDW/Purdue Team Award Report (CSD) as the final step in the completion of the grant
2. Publication of three articles in accredited journals
3. AAC research seminar: Involvement of Prof L Lloyd as guest speaker
4. Research capacity building: The use of teleconferencing facilities with Purdue University to facilitate the development of research protocols for staff and post-graduate students

C. Informal and Community Training:

1. The ongoing training and support of parents, teachers and therapists as well as people with severe communication disabilities in communities.
2. The training of community-based trainers to facilitate the development of life-skills and employment skills of young adults with disabilities in the community.
3. Critical re-thinking of the role of follow-up training in the CAAC particularly in relation to students who have graduated and need support for training in communities.
4. The development of an adequate infra structure within the Interface/CAAC alliance to cope with the technical and training demands of Prentke Römich devices (technical support and software training).

5. The establishment of an “ambassadors program” to formalise the involvement of AAC users in training and advocacy.

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***The recognition that this project received in the Rolex Awards for Enterprise 1998
reflects dedicated team work.
Thank you***