

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OVERSIGHT VISITS CONDUCTED AT EBENEZER ELDERLY SUPPORT GROUP ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2012 (BUSHBUCKRIDGE MUNICIPALITY)

1. Introduction

The Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development (the Committee) has a mandate in terms of rule 112(2) of the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature to conduct oversight over the Department of Social Development (the department) by holding them accountable through various measures which the Portfolio Committee may undertake during the course of a financial year.

One of the instruments that enable the Portfolio Committee to execute its mandate is to undertake oversight visits to health facilities in the province. The oversight visit to the Ebenezer Elderly Support Group was held on 18 September 2012 were part of the 'Taking Legislature to the People' at Hluvukani, Bushbuckridge Municipality.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the visit were to:

- ❖ To obtain the views from the community members on Basic Service Delivery;
- ❖ To assess the support provided by Department of Social Development with regards to the programmes offered by the centre;
- ❖ Interact and deliberate on the overall functioning of the Ebenezer Elderly Support Group

3. Method of work

After the approval of the programme for the 'Taking Legislature to the People' project, the Committee informed the Department about the site visit and the purpose thereof; the Department and management of the Centre were invited to be part of the visit. The invitation was also extended to the following stakeholders:

- ❖ Member of the Executive Council
- ❖ HOD
- ❖ The District and Executive Mayor
- ❖ Councilors
- ❖ Ward Committees
- ❖ Community Development Workers

The Chairperson of Committees explained the purpose of the oversight visit and due to the non-attendance of the HOD at the site visit, the researcher was then requested to brief the Committee on the pre-site visits findings. After the briefing sessions, the management of Ebenezer Elderly Support Group was given an opportunity to brief the Committee on their successes and the challenges faced by the centre. Clarity seeking questions from the Committee and the councilors were raised and thereafter physical inspections were conducted at the centre.

4. Observations

The Committee noted with concern that the HOD does not attend site visits and delegates junior officials to participate in meetings, this raises a challenge when official responses are required.

5. Presentation by the Management on the state of Ebenezer Elderly Support Group

The manager of the centre briefed the Committee on the history of Ebenezer Elderly Support Group. It was reported that the centre offers a variety of services to the elderly, youth, disabled, orphans and vulnerable children and the centre was registered in 2001.

The centre is funded by Department of Social Department and Department of Health. The Department of Health has injected an amount of R282 000 for the current financial year to the Home Based Care including the stipend for 16 care-givers and the three (3) administrative staff that include the Manager, the Project Coordinator and the Finance Officer.

The Department of Social Development is allocating an amount of R92 400 which provides for the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme; this includes paying the stipend for 14 care-givers. The funding has been paid for the last 60 months. During the discussion, the Manager further indicated that she would want to leave a legacy behind to the people of Shatale.

She reported that councillors and principals normally help in identifying the orphans. There are teachers that are working in the support group who need further training. The Home Based Care Centre has 24 volunteers who visit bedridden patients and assist by washing their clothes, referring them to clinic; the volunteers do not receive any stipend.

The Committee was also informed that they get their strength and wisdom from the women who pray very hard and this has truly encouraged them. There are forty three (43) elderly women doing beadwork and their work is normally bought by tourists who visit their centre. The Committee also noted that some kids are chased out of school because they are perceived as being slow learners.

It was further reported that there used to be a functioning **Drop In Centre** but the funding thereof was stopped. The centre has its own programmes such as Imbizo and they supply condoms to communities.

Services Rendered by the clinic

The centre renders the following services:

- Elderly people: sewing mats, gardening, physical exercises (there are 24 care givers who visits them)
- Children with disabilities: day services from 08:00 – 13:30
- Orphans, some of whom are accommodated in the centre while vulnerable children are provide with after school services
- People living with chronic disease (28 care-givers visit them) and
- Youth Care Centre (day service/after school service such as drama classes, doing their homework, sports and poetry

Staff Establishment

The centre has 24 staff members comprising of the following:

- 1 Project Manager, 1 Project Co-ordinator, 1 Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), 1 Elderly People Coordinator, 4 Child-minders, 4 Cookers
- 1 Teacher for disabled children, 1 Arts and Culture Teacher, 1 Sewing Teacher, 2 Finance Officers, 2 Administrators, 1 Auxiliary Social Worker, 2 security guards, 1 gardener and 1 driver

Site inspection

A site inspection was done at the centre and the Committee expressed its profound appreciation with regards to the cleanliness of the centre.

6. Findings made by the Committee are as follows;

- 6.1. There are delays in terms of transferring funds to the centre by the Department;
- 6.2. No longer getting funding for the **Drop In Centre**;
- 6.3. The teachers in support group need further training;
- 6.4. No training is provided by the Department of Social Development for elderly care-givers;
- 6.5. Volunteers do not receive any stipend;
- 6.6. There is no transport support for people living with disabilities;
- 6.7. There are new and quality beds for the centre;

7. Recommendations

The Committee recommends as follows:

- 7.1. The Department must ensure that Non Profit Organisations (NPOs) are paid on time;
- 7.2. The Department must submit a comprehensive report on all programmes funded by the Department e.g. **Drop In Centre**.
- 7.3. The Department of Social Development must coordinate further training to capacitate the staff at the centre, especially the educator;
- 7.4. The House adopts the report with its recommendations and the Department must submit a progress report by end of February 2013.

8. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson would like to express her heartfelt gratitude to all the Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development for their attendance and active participation during the oversight visit. She further thanked the Mayor; Councillors; the management team of the centre, stakeholders for cooperation and the Legislature staff for providing support to the Committee.

Lastly, the Chairperson requests, on behalf of the Portfolio Committee, that the House adopts the report with its recommendations.



HON. P NGOBENI

**CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

29/10/2012
DATE