



Beth Shalom has been in total lockdown, no visitors, nobody coming in and nobody going out, for the last 33 days - since Thursday 12 March – 2 weeks before President Cyril Ramaphosa put the country into lockdown.

We believe that we were the first and only retirement home in South Africa to impose self-lockdown and possibly the only home that has had their staff living either on the premises or at the Durban Jewish Club (DJC) where we have converted the Minor Hall into a dormitory for the staff – from the GM to the cleaning staff and from the Matron to the nursing staff and caregivers - 60 people in all. These wonderful people have lived in make-shift accommodation and worked 12-hour shifts for the last 4 ½ weeks without a day off and separated from the families and basically put their lives on hold for ‘Our Residents’.

The reward is that we have not had a single resident nor member of staff who has shown any signs of having contracted the Coronavirus and we hope and pray to Hashem that this will continue at Beth Shalom and that the world will soon be freed of this terrible pandemic.

Of course, all this comes at a cost and we have had to incentivise our staff to live in by paying them an additional 50% of their salaries. In addition, we had to erect showers and ablution facilities at DJC and purchased beds and linen. We also provide 3 kosher meals a day for the staff as well as transport from the DJC to Beth Shalom and back for the 2 shifts and so the lists go on and the expenses are high, but all worth it in the long run so long as the status quo remains!

We are in desperate need of PPE, face masks, bottles of sanitizers, additional beds for Beth Shalom itself, clothing, food and additional tables for the dining room in order to maintain social distancing.

Any assistance that ChaiSouthAfrica can give us in this regard would be greatly appreciated.

Chag Pesach sameach!

Warm regards,

Sidney Lazarus
President Beth Shalom, Durban

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