

# KWAZULU NATAL NEWSLETTER

2024 MEMORIES *matter* - A CHRISTMAS EDITION

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## Inroads with the Pastors

In September, our dementia trainer attended and presented at a workshop hosted by The Word Bible College International in Ladysmith, engaging with 37 pastors and leaders from Northern KZN. One pastor shared a tragic account of an elderly woman fatally beaten due to the belief that she was bewitched, emphasising the urgent need for education.

The pastors expressed a strong interest in learning more to better support individuals and families affected by dementia in their congregations and communities. This led to us facilitating a one-day dementia training course for the pastors in October. We will continue with this important work in the coming months.

## Top News

Inroads with the Pastors  
Work in the Prisons  
World Alzheimer's Month



Kim Hellberg

ADASA KwaZulu Natal Regional Manager





## Work in the Prisons

Recognising the need for education in correctional facilities, ADASA KZN has begun working with both offenders and staff. With elderly offenders living with dementia and many offenders having family members affected by it, this initiative addresses a significant gap.

Offenders who are reintegrated into society will also, at times, be the ones who call the elderly person bewitched or cursed due to their strange behaviour or even acting to “deal” with these persons. This year, we delivered an awareness talk and participated in Older Person’s Day at Westville Prison, and trained 16 social workers from Pietermaritzburg Correctional Services.





# Prison Feedback

## On training evaluation forms

*"Thank you so much for sharing your expertise of dementia. Your presentation was incredibly informative and helpful"*

*"I gained insight about the disease called dementia and how to interact with people living with the disease and I was enlightened on the different types of dementia"*

*"Relevant information (was shared) on dementia that created awareness to prevent abuse of people living with dementia"*

## World Alzheimer's Month

We were proud to arrange two main World Alzheimer's Day events during September, at Amberglen Retirement Village in Howick on the 19th and Ngonweni Hall in Ndwedwe on the 26th. Both events featured inspiring guest speakers, and a delicious lunch was served afterwards. Each year, we extend our efforts to different areas of KZN, ensuring no community is left behind. 775 people were directly reached through initiatives which took place throughout the month.



We are grateful that selecting just three highlights was a challenge, as this year has been filled with so many meaningful projects and events, thanks to the loyal support of our donors, volunteers and partners. Thank you for believing in our cause which has enabled us to reach individuals and communities throughout KwaZulu-Natal. As the year comes to a close, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks and wish you all a blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year.



## Actively defying myths in Communities

This article highlights the ongoing challenge of addressing stigma and myths surrounding dementia, as demonstrated by the coverage in The Witness on 9 November 2024. This emphasises the need for our outreach and awareness work across Kwa-Zulu Natal. ADASA KZN is collaborating with groups such as the Traditional Health Practitioners Business Council (THPBC), to equip them with accurate knowledge about dementia and referral channels. Traditional healers hold significant influence within communities and when a family are concerned about a loved one, they are often the first contact.

Creating "Ambassadors for Alzheimer's" in every community is an important step forward. These ambassadors can educate community members about dementia, promote understanding, advocate for the elderly, and guide families affected by dementia, ensuring that no one faces this disease without support. Every person can play a role in the protection and care of our elderly.

By dispelling myths and building networks, ADASA KZN and its partners are paving the way for a future where dementia is met with understanding and support, rather than stigma.

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