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## **Report by the Directors of the German Seniors Residence NPC To the NELCSA Synod 2027**

Just over 75 years ago, the Deutsche Frauenverein Johannesburg started the German Old Age Home in Johannesburg, now known as the German Seniors Residence. The Board overseeing the Residence consists of 7 directors, 3 affiliated to the Deutsche Frauenverein, 2 affiliated to the Johanniterorden and 2 representing NELCSA. The Board meets every two months with the manager of the GSR.

Sadly, our long-standing manageress, Michaela Thomas, suddenly passed away in November 2023. We, however, were very fortunate to immediately find a replacement in Uta Hall, who has stepped without problems into the shoes of Michaela.

The number of residents at the Residence is more or less stable at around 70 occupants. This is sadly only around 75% of the total available capacity. Still a big hindrance are single upstairs rooms, albeit with on suite bathrooms, that are not occupied. Also, the frail care centre is never fully utilised.

During 2024, the uNowanga program, that was started before Covid and could then not continue during Covid, was taken up again. It is a program in conjunction with Germany, that gives eight young people the opportunity to learn German at the Goethe Institute while getting practical experience in the care of the elderly. The program runs over 9 months and the aim is to enable these students to attend old age care programs in Germany. Sadly, most of the students do not manage to attain the required standard in the German language to be able to go to Germany. Nevertheless, it has been decided to continue with the program and to keep finding ways to help the students to acquire the necessary language skill.

The Deutsche International Schule Johannesburg keeps close ties with the GSR, inviting the residents to concerts, taking the Kindergarten and Grundschule kids to sing and interact with the residents and having senior students help at events like the Winterabend and Adventsbasar. We are also lucky to have Pastor Wilko Hunger from the Nordrand Congregation taking care spiritually of our residents, as well as Father Benedikt from the Catholic Church.

We thank the Synod for taking an interest in the happenings at the German Senior Residence and wish you a blessed Synod 2025.

Regards, for, and on behalf of the GSR Board,  
Dorothea Thiele



**GERMAN SENIORS**  
RESIDENCE