

# THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

## Purpose of this policy:

This policy explains the motivation for and the guiding values of the work of HBH SENIOR LIVING.

The place of evangelism is discussed and appropriate behaviour standards outlined.

The policy covers the Board and all staff of HBH SENIOR LIVING.

## What it means to be a Christian Health Service provider

### A heritage of faith

We at Howick Baptist Healthcare identify ourselves as a Christian health service organisation. As an organisation we were founded by the Baptist denomination. The Christian faith, and the Biblical traditions faith relies on for inspiration and guidance, are the motivation for our existence and actions as an organisation.

The Biblical stories tell us that all people are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), and have their beginning and end in God. Therefore as an organisation we believe that all people have worth and dignity and are to be treated with respect. We seek to acknowledge and honour the work of God that is in each person.

Faith also tells us that human beings are made of both the dust of the earth and the breath of God (Genesis 2:7). As an organisation therefore we value the totality, physical and spiritual, of people's lives and believe God calls us to care for the whole person.

The evangelical tradition of the Baptist Church acknowledges that humanity as a whole, and human beings as individuals, often choose to ignore and be separated from God, but that through the work of Jesus Christ, God shows compassion and reconciliation. (Gen 11:1-9 and Psalm 103:8-14). Therefore those who follow Christ are called to walk in his footsteps and make real in the world the love of God. (Mk 8:34-36 and Jn 20:21).

Christ calls followers to love their neighbours and told us that our neighbours were those we find who are in need (Lk 10:25-37). The Biblical stories demonstrate that God has concern for those who are marginalised, poor or oppressed, for "the least." Therefore to follow Christ requires that we take part in practical and self-sacrificing love for all people, whatever their creed, status or condition.

In caring for sick, frail and disabled older people, HBH SENIOR LIVING is living out the demands of the Christian faith. Simply - we care for older people because we, and they, are loved by God. When we care, we act out the story of redemption.

## **Christian faith and service delivery**

In the delivery of our services HBH SENIOR LIVING will demonstrate the love of God and the respect of the human person. The focus of our organisation will be on providing the best possible care, and the needs of people will come first. We will meet the standards and requirements of the government and also the standards and requirements of Christian love and compassion. We will show in our planning and our delivery that we seek first to serve, and that we look for those who others might 'step over' - for "the least" amongst us in our time and place.

In doing this we seek to work in community, as Christ did. We will, whenever possible, work collaboratively and co-operatively with other service providers, with Government, with our communities and with the Church for the betterment of our clients.

Our stewardship of resources will be focused on ensuring our mission to care can be sustainability implemented but will also allow us to step out in faith.

## **Service delivery and evangelism**

As an organisation that self identifies as Christian, we believe that people should have the opportunity to become all that they can be, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We believe that every person can grow and develop, even in the face of frailty and mortality. Christ centred spirituality will therefore be integrated into our services through our values, our actions and our words. As an organisation we are comfortable with direct discussion of Christ centred spirituality, subject to the needs of the client, the service and the laws under which we operate.

We recognise that amongst our clients and our staff are people of all creeds and none, and that all can contribute to the well being of those they meet within our services. We respect people's individual belief systems and will never require any client or staff member to become a Christian, nor make it a requirement for entry to services or employment or discriminate positive or negatively on the basis of faith. We respect freedom of religion, human rights and employment law.

We will ask all staff to respect the Christian heritage and motivation of our organisation and to live out our organisational values in their day-to-day work.

*Thanks to Iosis for the Theological Policy Statement and Mike Riddell for "Creed of Compassion" – both documents informed this statement.*