

Experience and arrangements made during the pandemic by Daughters of Charity

1- A house in France

[As a movement, as an association, as an institution, how have we lived through these months of crisis, of lock-down?](#)

As an Association, it is worth noting its presence as a support for the management and its team.

As an establishment: the employees who were not affected by the disease, exercised solidarity and fraternity to the full (sometimes with a touch of humour).

External professionals came to provide support: home hospitalisation, the palliative care network, the health reserve with doctors, nurses and nursing students, the hospital's "hygiene" network for logistical support and advice.

Many people, volunteers from the home or not, were mobilised to make: overalls, masks, visors for professionals and residents. Others offered flowers to decorate the dining rooms and pastries to comfort the staff.

To maintain the link with the families, the hospital foundation donated tablets, the Region, a telephone, the Rotary Club hundreds of tulips and other donations.

On the occasion of Easter, 150 young people were mobilised to send a little note of friendship accompanied by chocolate to all the residents.

Twice also a sibling group of five musical brothers and sisters came to play music under the windows of the residents, a concert they gave several times around the house so that everyone could enjoy it, even the neighbours.

On the spiritual level, some resident priests celebrated mass individually in residents' private rooms. Many residents benefited from KTO, especially for the Eucharist and the rosary. The establishment's chapel, which was closed during lock-down, reopened as soon as it was permitted and welcomes a limited number of people each day for Mass, according to the sanitary rules.

[2 How did the elderly people with whom and for whom we work experience this time? Difficulties, positive aspects? What are the challenges?](#)

For the elderly, the most difficult period was that of confinement in rooms.

It was mainly during this period that communication tools helped to restore their joy and courage.

Masked and respecting the distances, outings in the park of the house in small groups or individually could be organised thanks to the presence of the civil reserve.

[3 What are we doing, what are we planning to do to help older people to find and implement a project that gives flavour and meaning to life?](#)

It seems important to continue the various workshops and spiritual activities, adapting them to the possibilities and wishes of each resident. Everyone is invited to take part. Some come spontaneously.

2- AIC in Greece

- Our home for the elderly (35 beds) is located in Greece, on a small island in the Syros Cyclades, 4 hours by boat from Athens.

The Greek authorities decreed a general lock-down very early on 23rd March 2020.

At that time (March 2020) we chose to stop family visits to the elderly, allowing only the comings and goings of the staff of the home.

The spread of the virus being controlled on our island, we chose to open for visits during 1 week in June, July and September but with temporary and limited opening conditions. We made this choice in the face of the great distress of the elderly people in our establishment. We live on a small island and most of the residents have their families nearby, and therefore benefit from very regular visits, so the breaking of this link and the absence of the usual comings and goings were very badly experienced by all. Feelings of sadness, incomprehension and loneliness were perceptible among all our elderly people.

All of us were marked by the joy of meeting each other during visits, faces opened and eyes shone...The care staff try to take care to reassure everyone during the proposed activities (manual work, outings on the terrace, soft gym), as well as the telephone, written or new means of communication (video) having been favoured, however this does not replace the direct interactions so important to the elderly person.

We have experienced a slipping of morale, with a loss of energy, a sad mood and a reduction in daily interaction. Families are also affected, as they also suffer from this situation and are aware of the consequences for their elderly relatives.

We are doing everything possible to limit the risks of contagion while trying to continue to stimulate our elderly people and maintain in one way or another the link with their entourage.

2- Community of the Daughters of Charity. PEACE HOSPITAL - ISTANBUL / TURKEY

In Istanbul, at the Peace Hospital we have experienced the shut-down with a curfew every weekend and a ban on going out for those over 65 years old, of which we are a part. The garden allowed us to get some fresh air and the daily mass could be followed on KTO.

We felt the pain of not being able to get close to the sick to do the usual few services in the hospital nor to be able to go and serve food to the refugees on Wednesdays. This service has not reopened since March!

The psycho-geriatric patients have been particularly affected by the lack of family visits and for some of them, not being able to go out shopping in the neighbourhood and not being able to go to the hairdresser. For some, this has provoked aggression. The staff were involved in intervening.

We are seeing an increase in the number of patients in acute psychiatry.

Positive aspects: Many gestures of solidarity to help the most underprivileged. Distribution of food by churches and mosques

These are patients with psychiatric disorders. We can only love them, but we do have the language barrier. Our visits always make them happy and it is the language of the heart, the smile, the look, which makes them and us feel good.

4- Servant Sister of the Community of Providence. F 42120 LE COTEAU

Our Community of 32 Sisters, 27 of whom are housed in EHPAD and cared for by lay personnel, were confined from 15 March to 20 June. The 5 Sisters living "in annex" within the establishment continued to care for them and to provide them with some services.

- Main difficulties: no community meetings (meals, activities, prayer and especially the deprivation of Mass and sacramental communion).

Death of 3 Sisters (not due to Covid) and the impossibility of celebrating a funeral in the chapel.

- Some strong points: A very attentive and devoted staff; TV sets in the rooms, with in particular the KTO channel which allows you to follow religious programmes.

Note: The EHPAD has a Lay Direction, (and the time is past "when we were working!") in this House founded and directed by the Daughters of Charity since 1841.

Our visits to the other services where the 130 residents were also confined were not possible, nor were visits from families for long weeks.

The teams made every effort to maintain links through audio-visual techniques.

As a multidisciplinary team, they continue to care for and accompany the residents and their families. La Providence remains a much appreciated "place to live" in the region.

Our participation (from 80 to 104 years old) is above all prayer and offering.