

International Day of Older Persons Campaign
“THE ELDERLY HAS TALENT”



On October 1, the United Nations and global communities celebrated the 20th anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons. This special event recognises and affirms the contributions of older persons, and provides a platform to raise awareness, examine issues and invite dialogue and action on promoting well-being among the elderly. The event is also directed at encouraging the development of policies that integrate older persons in all aspects of national life. Older persons play an invaluable role as leaders, caregivers and volunteers, and are unfortunately also vulnerable to discrimination, abuse, neglect and violence.

To commemorate this day, the Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Safety and Peace Promotion Research Unit (SAPPRU) hosted an event with the elderly from Nomzamo and Broadlands Park at the Bethesda Centre in the Strand, Western Cape. The programme began with a universal prayer conducted by Pastor Van Wyk, followed by talks on Positive Old Age by Dr. Sandra Marias (SAPPRU), and Money Management by Ms. Masiza from the Strand Post Office. Additionally, Ms. Williams, a physiotherapy student from the Department of Sport, Recreation and Exercise Science (SRES) at the University of the Western Cape, demonstrated

exercise techniques to keep fit and strengthen muscles to prevent falling. Mr. Tommy Julius, one of the guests at the event, entertained the elderly with songs while Mr. Hilton Donson, Director of Ceremonies, kept the elderly amused with his charm and humour. A sumptuous breakfast was served, while behind the scenes the *Department of Health* provided a space for the elderly to get tested for HIV/AIDS.

Finally, some of the elderly shared their pearls of wisdom on life. This was followed by *The Elderly Has Talent Competition*". Ms. Mariette Smith from the SAPPRU invited the elderly to participate and showcase their talents through song and dance. Ms. Katrina from Broadlands Park, and Ms. Abigail from Nomzamo danced and sang their way to win the competition.

In closing, Ms. Taryn Amos of the SAPPRU honoured the elderly, and gave a vote of thanks. Food and fruit parcels sponsored by SAPPRU, and gifts from the Strand Post Office were graciously handed out to the elderly. In total 96 people attended the event.

Taryn Amos – Coordinator (SAPPRU)

Tel: 021 938 0535

Email: Taryn.Amos@mrc.ac.za