

CENTRE FOR AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

PRELIMINARY ANNUAL REPORT : 1 JANUARY 1996 - 30 SEPTEMBER 1996

This year was a most significant year for the CAAC as it was the first year that the Honours and MA courses in AAC were conducted. As we are nearing the end of the first year of both these courses, the students seem to be coping well and enjoying these courses.

The outflow of the two-three year research contract between the CAAC/HSRC also culminated in a national research forum on disability which was launched on 8 February 1996 at the University of Pretoria. This research seminar which was organized by the CAAC/HSRC included 27 stakeholders nationally and marked a most significant effort to integrate research efforts. This was the first attempt nationally to form a basis for the coordination of research in disability.

As far as service delivery is concerned, the CAAC acquired a more national character this year with training sessions held in other parts of the country. Apart from Gauteng, sessions were conducted in Namibia and Kwazulu-Natal. These training sessions were highly appreciated but it is clear that this kind of involvement necessitates the development of a more extensive out-reach service for the CAAC.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of this year's CAAC training sessions relates to the focus on getting adult nonspeaking people involved in promoting the issues related to being nonspeaking. This is part of the broader disability movement encouraged by DPSA (Disabled People South Africa) to facilitate the process whereby people with disabilities "speak for themselves". The efforts to get more adult nonspeaking people involved in the advocacy process are seen as a most important developmental stage for the promotion of AAC in the country.

Finally, this year the CAAC team attended the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative's Seventh Biennial conference in Vancouver. Apart from three presentations at the conference, this proved to be a most significant and valuable in-service training opportunity for the whole team. This experience once again emphasized the need for overseas contact and training for CAAC staff as there are very limited training opportunities in the country. As the CAAC team had limited funding for this, the majority of the money for the trip was contributed by the individual members. Most of all, it is this kind of devotion from the staff which makes this project such a successful and innovative project!

OBJECTIVES FOR 1996

A. Training objectives :

- 1.To extend training to different parts of the county to ensure support in AAC intervention for people outside of Gauteng.
- 2.To make more systematic contact with care-groups in rural areas, in particular Morethele.
- 3.To focus on the involvement of nonspeaking adults in training sessions.
- 4.To do preparatory work for community project in Eersterust on employment for young adults with severe disabilities.
- 5.To write 4 more modules for Honours degree in AAC for 1997.

B. Follow-up / training objectives in communities :

- 1.To continue follow-up visits to institutions already trained by the CAAC.
- 2.To improve on the documentation of follow-up visits to provide a more significant data base for the implementation of AAC strategies in the country.

C. Information dissemination of AAC strategies :

- 1.To distribute the CAAC/Interface Newsletter three times a year.
- 2.To have regular Open Days for people to visit the CAAC.
- 3.To develop a pamphlet for the promotion of the MA degree in AAC.

D. Technology objectives :

- 1.To encourage research on the use of specific software programs for children with severe disabilities.
- 2.To have the first formal seminar on communication devices focusing on the implementation issues surrounding technology.

E. Consultations :

- 1.To continue doing consultations with professionals, parents and teachers on individual cases which require more in-depth assessment and intervention.
- 2.To provide follow-up training in intervention strategies for parents and team members on an individual basis.

F. Research :

- 1.To conclude the partnership between the CAAC/HSRC with the organisation of a national research seminar to launch the start of a national research forum on disability.
- 2.To complete a report on the research priorities identified by participants at the research seminar.
- 3.To conduct pilot studies which could be used as a basis for various different research projects on AAC intervention in South Africa. These are preparatory studies which will be used as a basis for the application of further funding for these projects.
- 4.To publish 2 articles on AAC in accredited journals.
- 5.To investigate funding possibilities for a major programme on AAC research in SA.

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF THE CAAC DURING 1997

1.FORMAL DEGREE TRAINING

1.1Honours degree in AAC

Altogether 11 students enrolled for the Honours degree in AAC. Of these students all 11 completed the three assignments and completed the practical module (2 week block course) successfully.

1.2Masters degree in AAC

At present there is one student involved in a research masters in AAC. Four additional students are involved in the course work masters in AAC. All these students are expected to finalize studies in 1997.

2.FORMAL TRAINING SESSIONS (Non-degree) :

Table 1 gives a brief outline of the number and nature of training sessions.

Table 1 : Formal training sessions (Non-degree)

Date/Place	Nature of contact	Trainees	Content	Outcome : evaluation
08/02/96 CAAC	Fourth AAC Research Symposium	97 roleplayers in the disability field	Current research trends and priorities in the disability field.	An annual event which is very meaningful to all AAC researchers.
19/04/96 CAAC	Formal seminar	42	Computer-based intervention for people with severe disabilities.	A most meaningful seminar during which different AAC users met.
16/05/96 CAAC	Formal training	38	Symbol systems in particular Blissymbols.	Very helpful: especially the practical workshop.
17/05/96 CAAC	Formal training	40	The use of communication boards	The demonstration of the use of communication boards in different contexts was highly recommended
24/06/96 - 28/06/96 CAAC	AAC Block course	54	A five-day seminar which included theoretical discussions, demonstrations and practical workshops to highlight important issues, related to AAC.	Most successful. Several teachers attended after recommendation of attendants of 1995 Block course: further block courses were requested.
20/09/96 CAAC	Formal training	37	Assistive Communication devices : Critical issues in implementation.	Parents and prospective parents of AAC users as well as users and professionals attended. Very stimulating and enjoyable for all the different attendants to discuss issues with each other.

3.FOLLOW-UP VISITS AND INFORMAL TRAINING AND INTERVENTION :

Table 2 presents the number and nature of follow-up visits done in the communities as well as informal training.

Table 2 : Follow-up visits in the communities

Date / Place	Nature of work	Trainees	Content	Outcome evaluation
Eersterust Care Centre 11/01 ; 18/01 25/01 ; 01/02 08/08 ; 15/02 22/02 ; 29/02 07/03 ; 14/03 28/03 ; 18/04 25/04 ; 02/05 09/05 ; 16/05 23/05 ; 30/05 06/06 ; 13/06 20/06 ; 25/07 01/08 ; 22/08 29/08 ; 05/09 12/09 ; 19/09 26/09	Evaluation and needs analysis. Implementation of AAC strategies and training of teachers. Implementation of a stimulation program. Training and counselling of parents. Development of an appropriate evaluation procedure for teachers.	6 teachers 28 children	Services entail consultation on AAC principles, strategies etc. Training of teachers in a program of stimulation. Training of teachers, parents and grandparents on a continual basis. Follow-up on service delivery.	Teachers, assistants and parents all benefitted from training. Teachers continue with the program during the week. Teachers show enthusiasm and initiative in intervention. Individual children showed progress in gaining communication skills.
Eersterust Training Centre 11/01 ; 18/01 25/01 ; 01/02 08/08 ; 15/02 22/02 ; 29/02 07/03 ; 14/03 28/03 ; 18/04 25/04 ; 02/05 09/05 ; 16/05 23/05 ; 30/05 06/06 ; 13/06 20/06 ; 25/07 01/08 ; 22/08 29/08 ; 05/09 12/09 ; 19/09 26/09	Consultation. Evaluation of workers in terms of work related skills and lifeskills. Training of workshop assistants in the implementation of a lifeskills program. Group intervention: lifeskills program. Individual intervention: lifeskills, implementation of AAC strategies.	2 workshop assistants 25 workers (young men and women)	Evaluation of workers in terms of workskills and lifeskills. Development of an appropriate lifeskills evaluation for workshop assistants. Training of workshop assistants in the implementation of a lifeskills program. Group intervention: lifeskills program: telephone use, reading of time, number recognition, use of money. Individual intervention: lifeskills, implementation of AAC strategies: 2 workers, work preparation of one worker, using the computer for typing services.	New lifeskills assessment battery was implemented with much success and appropriate use by assistants. Workers were grouped according to intervention goals. Lifeskills intervention: treatment goals where met in terms of reading of time, number recognition and the orientation programme. Further implementation is essential. One worker shows progress in the use of manual signs and one in the use of an alphabet board. Environmental adaptations where made for a worker's work environment: AAC and ergonomic adaptation. Worker was trained in the use of the computer, work speed (typing) was improved and advertisements where sent out for his typing service.

<p>Mamelodi Association for Physically Disabled People 23/01 ; 06/02 20/02 ; 05/03 17/03 ; 30/04 14/05 ; 28/05 18/06 ; 30/07 20/08 ; 03/09 17/09</p>	<p>Consultation Evaluation of children Implementation of a programme Training of caregiver in stimulation of children</p>	<p>14 children: Mental retardation with profound or moderate physical disabilities 1 caregiver 1 social worker</p>	<p>Observation and screening of children. Discussion and support to social worker and caregiver. Implementation of day programme discussed with social worker and caregiver. A church contributed funds to centre: CAAC was consulted on the appropriate use of funds: appropriate exercise books where made, introduced and the teacher was trained in the use of the exercise books. Evaluation of children's abilities Training was done in the class: with the teacher, children and equipment. Continued use of communication board with one nonspeaking student</p>	<p>Appropriate placing of new admissions and help on referring to professionals for medical advice was given. Continued training on the use of the daily programme, childrens' names and birth dates and days of the week and equipment. The teacher shows more enthusiasm and initiative in the appropriate stimulation of the children. She developed themes for the year, which she follows. One student shows remarkable alertness, more participation and less self - injurious behaviour. In general, all children are more involved in class activities.</p>
<p>Morethele 30/01 ; 13/02 27/02 ; 12/03 23/03 ; 07/05 21/05 ; 04/06 23/07 ; 20/08 03/09 ; 1</p>	<p>Training of CBR workers. Training on the philosophy of CBR. Use of communication boards and daily schedule. Language and functional assessment of children. Visit to other centres.</p>	<p>4 care-givers 4 CAAC staff 18 children</p>	<p>Introduced child-to child programme. Health theme was discussed. Children encouraged to be involved. Guidance in the classroom on presenting a group activity in teaching maths for non-readers. Mothers helped in applying for state funds for childrens nutrition and gardening project.</p>	<p>The staff is presently concerned about lack of funds from the state. There was a request for being recognised by the government and to launch a local branch of DICAG.</p>
<p>Phelang Special School 23/01 ; 06/02 20/02 ; 05/03 17/03 ; 30/04 14/05 ; 28/05 18/06 ; 30/07 27/08 ; 10/09</p>	<p>Evaluation of children. Group and individual therapy using AAC techniques.</p>	<p>8 teachers 4 UP students 23 children 1 CAAC staff</p>	<p>Use CAAC Assessment Schedule for assessment as other tests are not applicable. Group therapy with emphasis on non-verbal children in the group. Introduction of communication boards and training therewith. Use themes such as shapes, colour and body parts. Auditory perception and language stimulation. Literacy for the older children.</p>	<p>Generally the children were motivated. Great improvement was shown in all areas. Teachers showed openness and trust in the CAAC team and asked for more guidance regarding the implementation strategies.</p>

3.FOLLOW-UP VISITS AND INFORMAL TRAINING AND INTERVENTION (Continued) :

Table 3 gives a brief outline of the number and nature of informal training sessions that was conducted at the CAAC.

Table 3 : Follow-up visits at the CAAC.

Date	Delegates/trainees	Nature of training	Outcome of evaluation
12/02	3 Family members 1 Therapist	The use of gestures in communication intervention.	Implementation at home and in therapy.
29/05	5 Family members 2 Therapists	Basic communication intervention: the use of a time schedule	Positive feedback from family and therapists.
22/10	4 Family group 1 Therapist	The use of PCS and the MaCaw digital speaker	Parents are positive and therapist started with implementation.

4.IN-SITU TRAINING SESSIONS AT SPECIFIC SCHOOLS/INSTITUTIONS

Table 4 gives a brief outline of formal in-situ training sessions.

Table 4 : In-situ training sessions

Date & Place	Trainees	Content	Outcome of evaluation
Children with disabilities in Namibia 19/02 - 21/02	38 teachers, class aids, therapists (speech, occupational and physiotherapy) and parents	This two day workshop consisted of information related to feeding children with severe disabilities to the implementation of AAC strategies in the home and school environments.	This two day workshop was greeted with much enthusiasm. AAC is a new concepts in Namibia, and all are eager to start implementing. Parents found information on feeding invaluable.
Sunfields School 24/03 - 25/03	34 teachers and parents	This two day workshop focused on handling challenging behaviour as well as the implementation of AAC strategies and devices in the classroom.	Teachers gave positive feedback on classroom implementation. The CAAC also received positive correspondence from school.
Browns School 26/03 - 27/03	37 teachers, therapists, parents	This two day workshop focused on aspects related to assessment and engineering the classroom environment to facilitate communication.	Teachers proved enthusiastic and willing to implement AAC strategies. Positive feedback on implementation. Referrals for assessments at CAAC.
Nokathula Centre	12 teachers 2 therapists	Needs assessment was conducted after a request from	The staff was enthusiastic and willing to learn AAC.

17/07 - 18/07	1 social worker	the school. A two day workshop followed. Training was based on introduction of AAC. Classroom implementation using multi-modal communication. Daily schedule and orientation. Literacy and story telling. Follow-up visits were also be conducted.	They were cooperative and tried their best when asked to practice. The first follow up visit emphasised on stimulating the basic skills in the proudly disabled class. The school has formed an AAC core group and meet regularly to evaluate their progress and problems.
Casa Carritas 26/09	15 house mothers and parents	Communication intervention: Stimulation program	Implementation in school. Parent support staff at school. Purchase recommended equipment.

5. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION ON THE USE OF AAC STRATEGIES : VISITS TO THE CAAC

Table 5 presents the number of people that visited the CAAC during the past year, and explains the nature of the visits.

Table 5 :Visits to the CAAC related to information dissemination

Date	Nature of contact	Trainees	Outcome
26/01 23/02 29/03 26/04 31/05 26/07 30/08 27/09	<i>Open Days</i> : During Open Days trainees were exposed to the latest available high and low technology devices and systems.	Well attended by parents, therapists (Speech, Physio and OT), teachers and engineers. 83 Trainees.	More referrals from parents, teachers and therapists to the CAAC for evaluations and workshops after attending the Open Day. Prospective Honours students attended Opendays for more information. As AAC is a field that develops rapidly and no cost is involved in attending Opendays, it provides an excellent opportunity to keep up to date with latest advances.
22/02	Visit to CAAC	Teachers and therapists of Prinshof School	Provide information on AAC strategies that can be used with visually impaired children. Teachers were interested and enthusiastic.
26/02	Visit to CAAC and Discussion	Hillary Johnson, Spastic Society of Victoria, Australia	Provide information on training in developing countries and discussed possibilities of CAAC providing support in Zambia.
27/03	Seminar on the use of dedicated and non-dedicated communication devices.	28 Fourth year Communication Pathology Students	Students found information very interesting and enlightening and feel empowered to provide intervention with non-speaking people. They also feel less threatened by technology solutions.
16/04 - 19/04	Visit to CAAC and information dissemination	Dr Annalu Waller - University of Dundee,	Dr Waller was surprised at the quality of AAC services that were delivered at the CAAC regarding information

		Scotland	distribution, consultations and training. She requested continued liaison with the CAAC and requested to be put on the mailing list.
06/05	Seminar on Assessment of people with severe disabilities	28 Fourth year Communication Pathology Students.	Use of the assessment schedule during observation session during the year. Students found this seminar very practical and useful.
13/05	Seminar on Blissymbolics	28 Fourth Year Communication Pathology students	Students overcame their fear that Blissymbols are too complex to use and that they don't understand the basis on which it works. The further realized the opportunities Blissymbols can provide to non-speaking children.
19/07	Visit & discussion on rocking plate switch and other light technology devices.	6 Third year Rehabilitation Engineering students	Provide information on clients who could benefit from an rocking plate switch. Features that should be considered in the development of switches and devices for non-speaking people were discussed.

6. CONSULTATIONS

During 1996, 64 formal evaluation by a team of therapists were done at the CAAC. This comprised **8 Adults** and **56 children**. In 100% of these consultations one or more team members (parents, speech, occupational and physiotherapists, caregivers, teachers, nurses) were present. This year 4 training sessions were held for specific teams on how to start and conduct intervention with a particular individual. Although consultations are time-consuming, these sessions proved highly significant.

7. EXHIBITIONS

1. *Interface Open Day* : 16 March 1996

Alant, E., Bornman, J., Boshoff, J., Wium, A.M. & INTERFACE Committee

2. *Dit is Tuks Uitstalling* : 23 May 1996

Bornman, J. & Joubert Z.

3. *CHASA in Action Conference* : 21-24 July 1996

Bornman, J., Wium, A.M.

4. *National Symposium on Autism* : 6-7 September 1996

Boshoff, J.

8. PUBLIC APPEARANCES/INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY-MAKING PROCESSES

Personnel	Date	Nature of Involvement	Organization	Venue
Alant, E.	January - July 1996	During this period, Prof Alant was selected as representative for AAC and Sign Language on the sub-committee: Special Needs on LANGTAG	Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology: Language Task group (LANGTAG)	CSIR, Pretoria.

Alant, E. & Bornman, J.	23/04	The use of AAC strategies with children with limited speech : The importance of literacy.	Seminar for teachers and therapists at Meerhof School	Hartebeespoort
Bornman, J.	24/02	Communication strategies for children who have limited communication functions.	Talk to parents of the Cornelia De Lange Syndrome Support Group	Johannesburg
Bornman, J.	04/03	Blissimbole : Algemene beginsels.	Seminar for teachers and therapists at the West Rand School	Krugersdorp
Wium, A.M. & Mophosho, M.	23/05	AAC : New developments and trends.	Seminar for Speech therapists (SASHLA-Gauteng branch.)	Johannesburg

9. PUBLICATIONS

1. **Alant, E.** (1996). AAC in developing countries: the challenge of the future. **Augmentative and Alternative Communication**, 12, 1-12.
2. **Alant, E.** . The incidence of nonspeaking children in schools for children with severe disabilities. (Submitted for publication in the **CHASA Journal**).
3. **Alant, E.** (1996). Research Issues in disability. **Unpublished report HSRC/CAAC**: Pretoria.
4. **Alant, E. & Bornman, J.** (eds) (1996) **Quarterly Newsletter : Interface/CAAC**.
5. **Bornman, J & Alant, E.** (1996) A School-based demographic survey of non-speaking children's communication and functional literacy skills. Accepted for publication in the **Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Opvoedkunde**.
6. **Bornman, J.** (1996). Nonspeaking children in schools for children with mental disabilities in South Africa : Implications for speech language pathologists. (Submitted for publication in the **South African Journal of Communication Disorders**).
7. **Bornman, J. & Boshoff J.** (1996) Augmentative and alternative ways of communication : The use of a voice-output device to facilitate story-telling in the classroom. (Submitted for publication in the **SAALD Conference Proceedings**).
8. **Wium, A.M. & Alant, E.** (1996). The Development of an AAC Screening Schedule for use of Teachers of Children with Severe Disabilities. (Submitted for publication in the **South African Journal of Communication Disorders**).

10. PAPERS

1. **Alant, E.** AAC Research in South Africa : Where are we going? **AAC Research Seminar**, 8 February 1996.
2. **Alant, E.** Nonspeaking children in special schools. **Conference: Health Promotion in Schools**, January 1997, UWC, Cape Town.

3. **Alant, E. & Bornman, J.** Non-speaking Children in South Africa : A Survey of Communication and Education Needs. **The 7th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication.** 8 August 1996.
4. **Alant, E., Wium, A.M & Bornman, J.** Training teachers in AAC Implementation : Critical Issues. **The 7th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication.** 10 August 1996.
5. **Bornman, J. & Boshoff, J.** Augmentative and Alternative ways of communication. Storytelling with non-verbal children in the classroom. **SAALD Conference.** 1 April 1996.
6. **Mophosho, M., Boshoff, J., Alant, E.** Communication for people with severe disabilities in South Africa: A community-base approach. **The 7th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication.** 9 August 1996.
7. **Wium, A.M. & Bornman, J.** Communication intervention for children with severe disabilities : Training teachers and parents. **CHASA in Action Conference,** 24 July 1996.

11. CONFERENCES/SEMINARS ATTENDED :

Personnel	Date	Name of Conference	Venue
Alant, E.	16/01-18/01	Health Promotion in schools	University of the Western Cape, CT.
Alant, E., ; Bornman, J., Boshoff, J., ; Mophosho, M. & Wium, A.M.	08/02	Research Issues in Disability, (HSRC/CAAC)	University of Pretoria
Bornman, J. ; Boshoff, J. Mophosho, M. ; Wium, A.M.	08/03 - 09/03	Assessment and Intervention strategies for at-risk infants and toddlers: Prof L. Rossetti.	Pretoria
Bornman, J. Wium, A.M.	24/07	CHASA In Action Conference	Sun City
Alant, E., ; Bornman, J., Boshoff, J., ; Mophosho, M. Wium, A.M.	06/08 - 10/08	The 7th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC)	Vancouver, Canada
Boshoff, J.	06/09 - 07/09	National Symposium on Autism	Pretoria
Boshoff, J.	11/09	Occupational Therapy and the New Labour Relations Act	Pretoria
Boshoff, J.	18/09	Openday: Association of Physical Disabilities: Opening of new workshop	Mamelodi

12. CAAC STAFF

**12.1 Employed by the CAAC
January - September 1996 :**

- CAAC coordinator: (Mrs J Bornman): 36 hours per week (speech pathologist)
- Chief trainer: (Mrs A Wium): 25 hours per week (speech pathologist)
- Occupational therapist: (Mrs K Boshoff): 25 hours per week (occupational therapist)
- AAC trainer: (Mrs D. Nel): 5 hours per week (speech pathologist)
- Technical assistant: (Mr R Möller): 5 hours per week (engineering student)
- Research assistant: (Ms D Radebe): 5 hours per week (January - April)

12.2 Employed by the Department of Communication Pathology

-Mrs Munyane Mophosho: 40 hours per week. This post is a secondment from the department to the CAAC. This is the first year of three years in which Munyane is seconded to the Kellogg Foundation for 25% of her time as she was selected as a Kellogg fellow in the Kellogg Leadership Program.

-5/8 Lecturing position for Honours course:

External lecturers involved in Honours course in AAC

- Ms Kitty Uys: Department of Occupational Therapy

- Mrs Tania Buys: Private/ Part-time: Department of Occupational Therapy

- Mrs Alta Kritzinger: Centre for Early Intervention in Communication Pathology, Department of Communication Pathology.

12.3 Volunteers

-Ms Kitty Uys: Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria.

-Mrs Cheryl van der Westhuizen: Department of Physiotherapy, University of Pretoria.

-Prof Pierre Cilliers: Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, University of Pretoria

EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES FOR 1996

A. Training objectives :

All the training objectives for 1996 were met.

1. National training: The CAAC conducted three training sessions nationally (outside of Gauteng) which proved to be most successful. Contact with these contexts is maintained through phone calls, faxes and trainees who attend further training workshops at the CAAC.
2. Rural training: More systematic contact was also maintained this year with the Morethele Care groups in particular those in Morethele and Maubane. This increased contact became possible through M. Mophosho's involvement with the Kellogg Foundation who also funds the salaries of two community workers active in these two contexts.
3. Involvement of nonspeaking adults: The CAAC/ Interface affiliation was also most effective in starting the process of involving nonspeaking adults in training sessions. It is clear that their involvement is most meaningful, but that acquisition of voice-output devices for these people are essential to facilitate their participation. Interface is currently investigating funding for this purpose.
4. Employment project in Eersterust: This project has progressed well as a community-based committee for this project was established and significant groundwork was completed in which an occupational therapist, Mrs Buys and Mrs Boshoff were involved. It is indicated that this project will start in April-May 1997.
5. Four modules planned for 1997 were written and finalized. These modules include: Intervention in AAC, Early Intervention, Employment of People with severe disabilities and Play and Positioning for children with severe disabilities. The fifth module on legal issues will be completed in 1997.

B. Follow-up / training objectives in communities:

1. Various follow-up visits were conducted to contexts previously trained by the CAAC. These visits prove to be most important in encouraging people in sustainable implementation.
2. The form for the documentation of these follow-up visits was also revised and applied. These forms will be used to document intervention progress in the various schools or training contexts.

C. Information dissemination of AAC strategies :

1. Like in the past the CAAC/Interface Newsletter appeared three times this year. The present distribution list includes 280 people/associations. This Newsletter proves to be a most important vehicle for the distribution of information on available material for intervention.
2. As in the past regular Open Days were held for people to visit the CAAC. These Open Days are very well attended and should continue.
3. A pamphlet was developed for the promotion of the MA degree in AAC. This pamphlet will be distributed in the beginning of 1997.

D. Technology objectives :

1. One pre-graduate research study (B Communication Pathology) was conducted on the use of specific software programs for children with severe disabilities. This was an important beginning in the promotion of the use of the computer with children with severe disabilities.
2. The first formal seminar on communication devices was held in which various voice-output devices were demonstrated by users. This constituted a most important phase in the promotion of AAC devices in our country.

E. Consultations :

1. There is a steady increase in the number of consultations done in the CAAC. This is particularly important as this also provides a most meaningful training context for pre-graduate speech/language pathology students who observe most of these consultations.
2. This year more individual follow-up training after consultations were provided to parents and professionals. These sessions seem most meaningful, although time-consuming and demanding as individual programs need to be

developed. Although meaningful, this part of intervention need to be well contained to not over-burden staff.

F. Research :

- 1 & 2. The research seminar jointly organized by the CAAC/HSRC was most successful in achieving the general goal of launching a research forum for the coordination of research in disability in the country. A report on the research priorities in disabilities identified by participants was also completed and circulated to all stakeholders.
- 3 & 5. Various pilot studies were completed by pre-graduate students specifically with a view on providing a basis for further studies to start in 1997. These include a study on employment for young adults with severe disabilities, the use of specific computer programs with children who are severely disabled, and the analysis of non-symbolic communication in multiply handicapped children. Application for funding for these and other projects was submitted to the HSRC.
4. Two articles were published in accredited journals during 1996. One in an International AAC Journal, and one in the local Journal of Education.

Conclusive comments on objectives for 1996

This year once again proved to be a most successful year in the CAAC in that all of the set objectives were met. Although there are various challenges ahead particularly in relation to the development of a better infrastructure for training in other parts of the country, the challenges are approached in a realistic and systematic manner. The writing of practical modules to facilitate the implementation of AAC strategies should however receive attention during 1997.

14.FOCUS FOR 1996

1. The development of a more significant infrastructure for training in other parts of the country.
2. To work with Kellogg Foundation in ensuring systematic contact with care-groups in Morethele.
3. To work with Interface in involving more AAC users in the promotion of AAC in South Africa.
4. The writing of practical manuals to facilitate the implementation of AAC strategies in communities.
5. To start a project on community employment for young adults with severe disabilities.
6. The refinement of modules for the MA degree in AAC.

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**THE LIBERTY LIFE FOUNDATION
THE STANDARD BANK FOUNDATION
D.G. MURRAY TRUST
ITHUBA
BP**

Great appreciation is also expressed towards the Department of Communication Pathology and the University of Pretoria for continued support. The contributions of the Department of Occupational Therapy, Department of Electronic Engineering, Department of Technical Services at the University of Pretoria are also greatly appreciated. Finally the support of the Advice Committee as well as the CAAC staff is warmly acknowledged.