

# JOURNEY

## *To Excellence*



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**"Wherever the art of  
medicine is loved, there is  
also a love of humanity."**

*Hippocrates*

## NCRHA Launches First FLOW CYTOMETER



Health Minister Honourable Mr. Terrance Deyalsingh, Professor Rao and Gretchen Camacho-Mohammed join hands at the hand over ceremony for the Flow Cytometer. Looking on is Dr. Curt Bodkyn, Chief Operations Officer RBC Financial Darryl White and MCOS - EWMSC Dr. Malachy Ojuro

Hundreds of children are expected to benefit annually from early treatment and diagnosis of blood related diseases with the launch of this country's first Flow Cytometer at the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex last month. Flow cytometry is routinely used in the diagnosis of health disorders such as blood cancers – particularly in children. It is also used in clinical practice, clinical trials and basic research. Flow cytometry is a technique used to detect and measure physical and chemical characteristics of a population of cells or particles. Health Minister Terrence Deyalsingh said the new equipment which was

donated by RBC Bank, will expand the NCRHA's capability, and has contributed to the Ministry's push to adopt the latest technology in response to a growing need for specialized care and diagnosis.

He said the Flow Cytometer is the only one of its kind in the country and access to the new equipment will allow for a faster turnaround in diagnosis and care for patients. He noted that in the case of cancer time is of the essence.

He said unlike many cancers facing adults that are lifestyle related, blood cancer issues usually turn up in children and are mainly related to genetics.

*(read more inside)*



# Flow Cytometer



(cont'd from Page 1) Access to the Flow Cytometer will help doctors to quickly determine the cause of the ailment so the appropriate treatment can begin early before the cancer becomes inoperable. The Ministry of Health

and the NCRHA is deeply grateful that RBC Bank has come forward to fund our acquisition of this new equipment as it provides an opportunity to expand our knowledge and capability, as well as expand the range of services we can provide for our patients. In the past access to Flow Cytometry services had been expensive and time consuming, as the samples had to be specially prepared and packaged for analysis abroad. In addition, the range of tests available was limited, as we did not have control of the equipment and analytical methodology said Professor Rao, Head of Laboratory Services. Special recognition must be made of Dr Curt Bodkyn who has championed the acquisition of this equipment since the proposal was submitted, and the

commitment of RBC Bank for expanding its Corporate Social Responsibility Program to include this project. Access to the diagnostic and research capabilities of the new Flow Cytometer will make a tremendous difference in the lives of many of our patients - particularly children, in the future.



# Press Pause and De-Stress at the NCRHA



NCRHA's Vice Chairman Elvin Edwards cuts the ribbon to open the new Stress Relief Centre in Chaguanas. Looking on are Ms. Renee Pilgrim - Facility Manager, Ms. Ashavin Nath - Manager - Mental Health Services, Yvonne Bullen-Smith - Board Member, Ms. Stacy Thomas Lewis - Chief Operations Officer and other staff members of the centre.

The NCRHA's new Stress Relief Centre in Chaguanas has been expanded to include support for our staff, as the Authority now considers the Centre to be part of our expanded Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The new Centre, which has been providing unmatched support for our patients since it was launched in May 2018, will be available to our staff to ensure they can also enjoy the benefits of the professional service currently available to the public. Walk-In visits for staff are accommodated on Tuesdays and Fridays from 8am to 2pm. The initiative was established to focus on persons having issues coping with relationships, work stress, sexuality, school, abuse and other traumatic experiences and to provide them with a

comfortable space where they can receive specialist consultation and care. Up to April 2019 the team of psychologists and psychiatrists have received more than 571 visits from the public, and walk in consultations are now being offered to our NCRHA staff members. The Centre, headed by Professor Gerard Hutchinson is supported by three psychiatrist, two psychologists, medical records personnel and ancillary staff. Initially, due to space constraints

constraints, the clinic was held every other Friday. However, since the launch of the new facility on Friday September 28, 2018 services are now available every weekday from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm.

The correlation between mental/emotional health and physical health is well documented. Apart from the effects on mental and emotional state of being, stress can have significant effects on the human body, contributing to a variety of health complications.

The Center, equipped with qualified and highly trained courteous staff, specializes in holistic stress management and traumatic stress disorders in order to effectively treat issues such as obsessive compulsive spectrum, depression, anxiety, phobias, fertility and other medically related stress conditions.

The newly reconstructed space, located obliquely opposite the Ankavilla Building is fully air-conditioned, with spacious consultation rooms, a visitor waiting area, staff facilities, parking and easy access for commuters.

With the new facility and its full complement of staff, the NCRHA's Stress Relief Centre accommodates Walk-In Service, appointments and referrals. Plans are also being finalized to include Group Therapy Sessions and other approaches that have proven successful in helping our patients deal with stress and other issues impacting on their everyday life.

The new service has been taking advantage of linkages with other outreach programs hosted by the NCRHA by sensitizing visitors and communities about the risks of stress, exercises to reduce stress and how to identify triggers and situations that add to individual stress levels. Stress Relief is now an important part of the NCRHA's Outreach programs such as Walk-The-Talk, The Men's Wellness Clinic, the Pap Smear Initiative and our Industrial Medicals Program.

"Press Pause and DE-stress," the slogan for the Stress Relief Centre is quickly becoming a household topic in the community, as the Clinic books an average of sixty (60) new cases every month.



# Mental Health Awareness

“Young people and mental health in a changing world,” was the theme of this year’s mental health awareness program, as the staff from the NCRHA’s Psychiatric Ward at the EWMSC worked at reaching out and addressing the unfair stigma associated with mental health issues.

The awareness effort included wearing green on World Mental Health Day (October 10). The staff also made presentations to the public during a Mental Health Awareness Campaign on the Brian Lara Promenade as well as in various locations in Mt Hope and across the North Central Region. Outreach Campaigns were hosted at the Arima, Chaguanas and St. Joseph Health Centers. During Mental Health Awareness Week, lectures were held on managing stress, anxieties and how to adopt healthy habits that promote mental wellness. The team also hosted a Flea Market Sale at the EWMSC where recovering patients were offered a platform to sell and showcase craft and other works of art developed as part of their recovery program.



Marina Small (RMN) shows off one of the craft items with a former patient at The Open House.



Admin staff wearing green to raise awareness of Mental Health on October 10th.

# Paediatrics Celebrate Nurses



On Friday 10 th May, 219, in celebration of International Nurses Week, the Paediatric Emergency Department (PED) honoured two (2) of the finest (and fiercest) matriarchs of the department, Head Nurse Ms Althea Davis and Head Nurse Cheryl Harper, for their role in establishing the foundational principles of the PED. Well-known for their dedication, commitment, passion, keen sense of ethics and



sound clinical judgement, these two (2) Nurses were treated to a small program as we launched our ‘PED Cares’ logo and presented them with a ‘PED Cares’ pin with their names engraved on it as a token of our everlasting appreciation. May they always be blessed for their sterling contribution to the uplifting of the PED, NCRHA and the children of Trinidad and Tobago.



World Health Day celebrations at the NCRHA was a bustle of activates on Friday the 5th April 2019. Forty (40) booths representing a wide cross-section of medical sub-specialties, as well as supporting units were on site to educate and in some cases demonstrate good health practices. The program themed “Living in Good Health Today” (LIGHT) is an extension of the Ministry of Health TTMoves campaign which promotes healthy diet and exercise. Patrons were allowed the opportunity to experience some practical and innovative

educational approaches at the various stations. There was even a low impact exercise session for sitting patients in the waiting area. No one was excluded. Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Davlin Thomas expressed his appreciation to Dr. Koomatie Ramsaroop, who championed the Educational Exhibition. He added that it encapsulated the ideals of the North Central Regional Health Authority and by extension the Ministry of Health, as the program promoted both preventative and restorative health education.



# Patient Testimonials

**Lee Ann** via Facebook:

*"Great service at Tacarigua Health Centre. I took my daughter there and saw a (very friendly) male Nurse and Doctor in less than 5 minutes. The Clerk was also very nice. Dr. Ramcharan didn't just prescribe medicine. He explained everything as he went along and he was very informative. (I felt like a medical student). He gave the medication and also did a follow up after an hour. It was a good experience. Thanks."*



## Event Committee's UPCOMING EVENTS

**CRICKET GAME I SEMI FINALS**  
held at the FRENCH VILLAGE FIELD @ 2:00 PM

**29**  
May

**29**  
June

**FUN AND FAMILY DAY**  
held at the COLPOSCOPY WOMEN'S CENTRE CAR PARK 7:00 am - 6:00 PM

## HEALTH OBSERVANCES

**INT'L DAY OF ACTION FOR  
WOMEN'S HEALTH**

**28**  
May

**WORLD NO TOBACCO  
DAY**

**31**  
May



# Mount Hope Women's Marketeers Donate

The Mount Hope Women's Marketeers gifted twenty (20) hampers to the Social Work Department of the North Central Regional Health Authority (NCRHA) to distribute to social case patients currently at the AED & PED wards of the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex. The initiative forms part of the MHHW Marketeers team's customary practice of donating to the wards during the course of the year to assist families in need. Special commendations go out to the team for their continued labor of love and sacrifice!



The NCRHA's "Walk The Talk" project continued this weekend at the Latchu Memorial Presbyterian Church in Bamboo Settlement #1. Among services offered were: basic screenings (blood, sugar & pressure testing), nutrition and dietetics counselling, as well as social work services.

Should you or any community-based organization be interested in having our team of medical professionals visit to provide preventative medical services at their establishment, please feel free to contact the Office of the Primary Health Care Services via the following: Tel/Fax: 662-4206 | PBX: 645-3232 ext. 2097/2098.

Corporate Communications Department  
Building #2, Ground Floor  
Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex (EWMSC)  
Contact: 224-4039 Ext. 2569