



The Eastern *Vibes*

Monthly Newsletter 2023

September 2023, Issue #110

Installation of the Executive Committee for the ERHA Sports & Cultural Club



The Executive Committee of the ERHA Sports & Cultural Club

The Executive Committee of the Eastern Regional Health Authority Sports and Cultural Club was officially installed on September 12, 2023. Instrument of Appointments signed by Mr. Ronald Tsoi-a-Fatt,

Chief Executive Officer were presented to the members who will now work together guided by the President-Ms. Astra Edwards-Bennett, to plan and execute our social events.

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Happy Retirement to Ms. Eleanor John-Eccles

Life is a journey in which we all start with a different personal beginning and as we transition from childhood to adulthood we have the pleasure to experience the beginning and ending of several milestones.

On September 8, 2023 colleagues, friends and most importantly family members came together to bid farewell to Ms. Eleanor John-Eccles, General Manager-Nursing (Ag.) after forty years of dedicated service to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

The programme was an outpouring of love and gratitude to a truly amazing woman. It was organised by Ms. Vanessa Bramble-Gabriel, Primary Care Nurse Manager (Ag.), Nariva/Mayaro and a committee comprising members of staff. Ms. Bramble-Gabriel in her special remarks spoke about respect, humility and gratitude, principles that are intertwined biblically that are possessed by the guest of honour.

Her life and her work were chronicled by some of the people she touched. Mrs. Sandra Newton, Senior District Health Visitor spoke about the long friendship and the bond they shared. She also revealed some secrets. Mr. Peter John, her brother was filled with joy and emotions as he shared with the audience the "**Eleanor**" he knew. Mrs. Hazel Tilokee her cherished friend spoke about how they met and the admirable qualities possessed by Ms. John-Eccles that have strengthened their friendship.

Tributes were also delivered by Mr. Neil Ramdath on behalf of Mr. Rushton Paray, Member of Parliament, Mayaro and Mr. Hazarie

Ramdeen, Councillor for Rio Claro North. They both talked about Ms. John-Eccles love for the people in the communities she served, her compassion and dedication.

Mr. Ronald Tsoi-a-Fatt, Chief Executive Officer in his special tribute stated that Ms. John-Eccles touched the hearts of many and extended the boundaries of her household to include the Eastern Regional Health Authority family and her extended family, the members of the communities she so dearly served as she championed the nursing agenda. The seeds she had sowed have begun to blossom and many are reaping the bountiful harvest. He thanked her for her dedication, commitment, love and compassion shown to our clients and for taking the time to teach our nurses the true meaning of service and to demonstrate what "**Caring is the Key**" symbolizes, our very existence as healthcare workers.

In her thank you remarks, Ms. John-Eccles saluted her family especially her mother and sister who were both present. She thanked her colleagues and the members of the community for their support. She then advised nurses to be the change that they want to see in other people. To strive for excellence and don't give up on their dreams. She indicated that we need persons with vision and suggested that they think about where they are now and where they will like to be in the future. Ms. John-Eccles further stated that when we see someone doing well, give them the encouragement to continue. Let everyone shine and do not try to eclipse their moment.

Highlights of Retirement Function of Ms. Eleanor John-Eccles



Men's Health Clinic in Rural Communities



Ms. Sherifa Ali, Health Education Aide interacts with a client at Grande Riviere Outreach Centre

In an effort to improve healthcare and raise awareness about the importance of screenings the staff of Matelot and Grande Riviere Outreach Centres held two Men's Health Clinic on September 8 and September 15, 2023 respectively.

Over 30 men from the communities attended the clinics and accessed services such as Chronic Disease screening, HIV testing and counselling and Medical consultations to improve their health.

Clients welcomed the opportunity to engage in one on one sessions with members of staff from the Health Education, Nutrition and Medical Social Work Departments.

Access to healthcare can help prevent Noncommunicable diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attacks and strokes through early detection and treatment of the disease.

Netball training for youths in Matura



Participants at the Netball Training

Participating in sporting activities can be very beneficial to children as they develop social skills, team-building, they learn to respect others and most importantly, it helps them to stay physically active.

Focusing on the above benefits, the Matura Wellness Committee, in collaboration with the Matura Village Council under the banner of

"Health Through Sport" programme. The programme which was for girls between the ages of 10 – 19 years of age was held at the Matura Secondary School Court for a period of six weeks commencing on September 13, 2023.

It is hoped that the skills acquired from this programme will assist in developing healthy youths in the community.

ERHA Employees Kicks For Health



Staff participate in Aerobic Exercise

Caribbean Wellness Day is celebrated each year on the second Saturday in September to address the threat posed by noncommunicable chronic diseases (NCDs). The day was originally conceived by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and is an integral part of the Port of Spain Declaration where the region united to fight the epidemic of NCDs. The event aims to increase awareness and promote activities to address non-communicable diseases including mental health issues. The overall theme is the **"Power Through Collective Action"** and the focus this year is **"The Care We Need: At Work | At School | At Home."**

The Health Education Department of St. Andrew/St. David observed Caribbean Wellness

Day with a fun fitness event for staff entitled **"Kicks for Health,"** at the Sangre Grande Hospital on September 28, 2023. The goal of the initiative was to encourage regular physical activity, to prevent and manage NCDs, promote team spirit and a healthy lifestyle culture within the Eastern Regional Health Authority.

Staff were encouraged to wear sneakers and participate in various exercises of different intensities in support of an active lifestyle such as aerobics, cardio kickboxing, zumba and yoga.

Prizes were given for the brightest coloured sneakers, most energetic and fittest male and female.

Exposing 5 Weight Loss Myths You Will Not Have to Wonder Again!

In the age of social media and the internet, the sky is certainly not the limit when it comes to finding out information. Whether the information is true or simply a '*Nancy Story*', it is left to be decided.

Each month, there are an estimated **88 billion Google searches**, of which millions relate specifically to losing weight. Especially, "**how to lose weight**" and "**how to lose weight fast**", according to a report by Business Insider.

Why the obsession? Does weight alone determine whether we are healthy or not? Body Mass Index (BMI), which considers your height and weight, is frequently used to determine if someone is at a healthy weight. For most adults, a BMI of:

- 18.5 to 24.9 - **healthy weight**
- 25 to 29.9 - **overweight**
- 30 to 39.9 - **obesity**
- 40 or above - **severe obesity**

However, this alone is a very rough estimation of your weight status and weight alone will also not predict how healthy you are. There are other factors to take into consideration such as your gender; race; body composition; age; genetics; income; education; social support and where you live, work and play. The NHS BMI calculator is one tool that can be used to check your BMI.

In a world of quick fixes, weight loss is not excluded. However, to really improve your health, you are better off not obsessing and stressing about weight, but rather focusing on changing unhealthy habits to healthy habits and making it enjoyable despite no weight change. In the long-run this will eventually reap good results and lead to improved health and wellness. So, let us bust the files on some so-called weight loss quick fixes!

Myth #1

Drinking water helps you lose weight.

Facts: There is no science behind just drinking water alone to help you to lose weight. However water together with a healthy diet, can replace high calorie sugary and alcoholic drinks which contributes to weight gain.

Myth #2

Weight loss is simply a matter of will power.

Facts: Even though our bodies can naturally regulate our weight, many things can affect eating too much or moving too little. For example, hormones; genetics; environment; socioeconomic status and more.

Myth # 3

Juice cleanses, detox potions, and supplements trigger quick weight loss.

Facts: It is very tempting but there is no magic pill to lose weight. Our bodies are designed to detox itself on its own. Using juice cleanses and detoxes may help with weight loss in the short-term, as they are low calorie. In the long-run, you end up losing muscle and fluid weight, as opposed to fat. Less lean muscle mass means your body will take a longer time to burn and lose fat.

Many quick weight loss potions and/or supplements are not proven safe to consume by Food Drug Agencies, therefore it is important for you to do your own research.

The following websites may be used to check the safety of products.

[Dietary Supplement Ingredient Directory | FDA, Search criteria - Drug Product Database online query \(canada.ca\) and Chemistry, Food And Drugs Division | Ministry of Health Trinidad and Tobago.](#)

Exposing 5 Weight Loss Myths You Will Not Have to Wonder Again! (continued)

Myth #4

All calories are equal

A calorie is a unit of energy which describes how much energy you can get from foods and drinks. Calorie needs are not the same for everyone, it is dependent on your age, sex, height, weight, and physical activity levels. If you eat more calories than your body needs, the extra is stored as fat.

Choosing nutrient-dense foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds provide you with more balanced nutrition and healthy sources of calories. Whereas consuming sugary drinks, sodas, fast foods, snacks high in fat, salt and sugar (chips, biscuits, cakes, chocolates etc.), are usually higher in calories and nutrient poor and easier to digest. As these high calorie nutrient poor foods are easier to digest, it means your body burns fewer calories when you eat them. Digestion alone burns around 10% of the total calories you burn each day.

Myth #5

Eating salads everyday will lead to weight loss.

Eating only salads, may cause you to feel deprived of foods you enjoy eating and lead to junk food cravings. A more useful approach will be to maintain a long-term balanced healthy eating style most of the times, allowing yourself to indulge sometimes.

If you are interested in starting the HEARTS for Healthy Lifestyle Nutrition programme. Please follow the link below to indicate your interest.

<https://forms.gle/JfWLLcQKuDQRTcr69>

Article written by: Ms. Sydelle Gibson-Mahabir, Nutritionist, Nariva/Mayaro

References:

<https://www.anytimefitness.com/ccc/ask-a-coach/common-weight-loss-myths-busted/>

A healthier you, shifting the focus from weight to health. Northern Health. HealthLink BC

<https://www.weightwatchers.com/us/blog/weight-loss/10-weight-loss-myths-you-need-stop-believing>

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Awareness Month

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) provides around-the-clock care to sick or preterm (a baby born before 37 weeks of pregnancy) babies. Some of the most common conditions treated in the NICU is breathing trouble, Pneumonia, Bacterial infections, Jaundice and other health conditions.

NICU Awareness month is celebrated annually in the month of September. It is used to honour the families and the individuals who care and nurture neonates.

An online quiz was also held to raise awareness of NICU and to test the knowledge of staff at the Eastern Regional Health Authority.

Poison Control Lecture



Mr. Kerwin Stephens, Pharmacist III educate viewers on poison control

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) Poison Information Centre was established in 2006 through collaboration with the University of the West Indies. The Centre is led by pharmacists who provide poison management assistance to physicians, organizations and clients across the country through a 24-hour hotline.

The ERHA provides services for rural communities that enjoy activities such as camping, hiking and hunting while these are enjoyable activities it comes with risks. One such risk is that of poisonous plants, insects and snakes. As such, the Pharmacy and Health Education Departments of County Nariva/Mayaro embarked on a Poison Information lecture series from April to September of this year.

Lectures were conducted by Mr. Kerwin Stephens, Pharmacist III, for over 200 persons representing of government organisations and community groups from Rio Claro, Brother's Road, Biche, Guayaguayare, Kernaham Village, and Mayaro.

The interactive sessions educated participants on how to identify poisonous plants and

venomous animals encountered in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the short onset signs of envenomation (exposure to a poison or toxin). Guidelines on how to perform first-aid management for stings and bites were also discussed. Special tips were also shared which include:

Keep calm! - Panicking can increase the delivery of venom throughout your body as it will cause a rise in your blood pressure.

Know your status - Ensure persons in your group know of any existing health conditions and allergies, as this can affect treatment.

Prepare for your trip - Know the area and location of the nearest health facility to your camping site or hiking trail. Also check your immunization card to ensure you have received tetanus vaccine within the last 10 years.

Carry a first aid kit - Your kit should have an ice pack, pain killers, allergy medications and any other medication you require.

Get help! - Don't try to treat any sting or bite if you are not trained in first aid. Call the Poison Information Centre at **877-2PIC (2742)** or the Sangre Grande Hospital, Pharmacy Department **226-9762**



Happy Republic Day

"I will strive in everything I do to work together with my fellowmen of every creed and race for the greater happiness of all and the honour and glory of my country."

Extract from the National Pledge

*From the Chairman, Board of Directors and the
Chief Executive Officer of the Eastern Regional Health Authority*

"Caring is the Key"

Good News-September



Good News



Sharina Gerald

Good afternoon, I would like to express my satisfaction with the quality of service I received at the Sangre Grande Hospital Accident and Emergency Unit about two weeks ago. On Saturday 3rd September, 2023 at approximately 6:00 p.m. I visited the unit for an injury which I sustained due to swallowing a sharp piece of bone from chicken which I was eating. When I realised there was a piece of bone in my food it was too late and a swallowing motion caused it to be lodged to the back of my mouth of the left and then eventually I swallowed causing my throat to be scraped. It felt as though it was still there and I brought up some blood. It was an uncomfortable feeling but the staff at the Unit made it much easier for me. Everyone I interacted with was pleasant and knowledgeable; from the screening straight up until the end. I was seen by Dr. Thompson and she assured me that all was well. Please extend my thanks to everyone. I didn't get the names of the radiographer, the two nurses who saw me (one of them had to test my urine before I could do an x-ray), or the security officers. Also Mr. Dillon Suepaul was very helpful in providing me with directions to the radiology unit. I healed well within about four days.

Posted on Facebook by Sharina Gerald

September 17, 2023

Let us never cease to provide quality service with compassion and dignity as we demonstrate that, "Caring is the Key."

World Suicide Prevention Day



World Suicide Prevention Day 2023

'Creating Hope Through Action'



For assistance visit: <https://health.gov.tt/mental-health-resources> or contact the
Trinidad and Tobago Suicide Hotline: 800-5588, 220-3636, 645-2800

f Erha Trinidad & Tobago

www.erha.co.tt

"Caring is the Key"

Staffing Updates



The Management and Staff of the Eastern Regional Health Authority honour Ms. Marlene Charles- Singh for her service

Thank you for your Service

Ms. Marlene Charles-Singh

Ms. Charles Singh worked at the Eastern Regional Health Authority for nine years. She assumed duties on September 15, 2014 as a **Patient Care Assistant**. Ms. Charles-Singh retired on **September 10, 2023**.

"Caring is the Key"



**The Eastern Regional Health Authority
Celebrates the Lives of**

Dr. Rondla Sricharan Reddy & Mr. Junior Donald

The management and staff of the Eastern Regional Health Authority extend condolences to the friends, family and co-workers of Dr. Rondla Sricharan Reddy and Mr. Junior Donald.

Dr. Reddy first assumed duties with the Eastern Regional Health Authority in the position of **Registrar** on October 13, 2014 and was last attached to the County Health Administration Nariva/Mayaro. Dr. Reddy passed on September 24, 2023.

Mr. Donald assumed duties in the position of **Motor Vehicle Driver** on March 16, 2006. He was last attached to Head Office. Mr. Donald passed on September 26, 2023.

HEAT WAVES

In light of the current weather conditions being experienced in Trinidad and Tobago (Hot Spell Warning #1- Yellow Level) the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Department invites you to take note of the information below provided by the Met Office of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service is warning of extremely hot conditions predominantly over Trinidad and Tobago from the 15-29 of September, 2023. There is a high (80%) probability that temperatures near 34.0 °C or greater are expected to continue roughly over the next two weeks. In cities, urban and built-up areas, the maximum temperatures are expected to be high (near to or greater than 34.0°C) and feel-like temperatures particularly


when the winds are calm to light will likely to range between 34.0 °C and 44.0 °C. The hottest time of the day is between 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. High temperatures can be hazardous to one's health, especially to the elderly, sick adults and young children.

Therefore, a proactive approach to lessen the effects of hot spell conditions should be adopted.

Trinidad and Tobago is in its heat season, which runs from May to October. Persons are advised to wear appropriate clothing, stay hydrated at all times, and keep out of direct sunlight to avoid sunburn. Open appropriate windows, vents and doors in your homes to ventilate at times.

The above information was taken from
https://www.metoffice.gov.tt/early_warning

Heat Stroke and Heat Exhaustion

Heat Stroke	vs	Heat Exhaustion
According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, heat stroke is one of the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature: the body's temperature rises rapidly; the sweating mechanism fails and the body is unable to cool down. When heat stroke occurs, the body temperature can rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause permanent disability or death if the person does not receive emergency treatment.		Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through excessive sweating. Heat exhaustion is most likely to affect elderly, people with high blood pressure and those working in a hot environment. 

Heat Stroke and Heat Exhaustion (continued)

Symptoms of Heat Stroke	vs	Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion
Symptoms of heat stroke include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusion, altered mental status, slurred speech• Loss of consciousness (coma)• Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating• Seizures• Very high body temperature• Fatal if treatment is delayed		Symptoms of heat exhaustion include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headache• Nausea• Dizziness• Weakness• Irritability• Thirst• Heavy sweating• Elevated body temperature• Decreased urine output

Take the following steps to treat a worker with heat stroke or heat exhaustion:

- Call 811 for emergency medical care
- Stay with the worker until emergency medical services arrive
- Move the worker to a shaded, cool area and remove outer clothing
- Cool the worker quickly, using the following methods:
 - ♦ A cold water or ice bath, if possible
 - ♦ Wet the skin
 - ♦ Place cold wet cloths on the skin
 - ♦ Soak clothing with cool water
- Circulate the air around the worker to speed cooling
- Place cold wet cloths or ice on the head, neck, armpits and groin; or soak the clothing with cool water



The above information was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/heatrel illness.html>

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) was started by the United Nations General Assembly on October 13, 1989 and is celebrated annually. The theme for this year is "**Fighting Inequality for a Resilient Future**".

The IDDRR's key goals are:

- To advocate for a global disaster risk reduction culture.
- To recognise advancements made worldwide in disaster risk prevention, reduction and disaster losses.

This year the reciprocal relationship between catastrophes and inequality will be examined by IDDRR. According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Disaster vulnerability and inequality are two sides of the same coin, therefore:

- The most vulnerable individuals are exposed to the risk of disasters due to unequal access to financial and insurance services.

- Impacts from disasters worsen inequality and drive the most vulnerable people deeper into poverty.

KEY MESSAGES

- Growing disaster risk is a result of and caused by poverty, inequality and discrimination.
- Inequality is exacerbated by disasters because they disproportionately affect the most vulnerable and underprivileged people.
- According to current climate predictions, there will be 560 disasters worldwide annually by 2030. Due to the effects of climate change and natural disasters, an additional estimated 37.6 million people will be living in conditions of severe poverty.
- Through thoughtful and coordinated planning that is intended to decrease people's exposure to danger and vulnerability to injury, we can lessen the destructive force of hazards or, to put it another way, prevent them from becoming catastrophes.





Let's Move Our Wellness Journey Together

WELLNESS IN THE EAST

Health Walk & Health Festival

Health Services *for Every Member of the Family*

SCREENING

Blood Pressure, Blood Glucose Testing, Body Mass Index
Pap Smear
Prostate Screening
Breast exam & Mammogram referrals
Foot Screening

VACCINATION

MEDICAL CONSULTATION

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING

MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK

(Intimate Partner Violence & Counselling)

HIV SCREENING & COUNSELLING

HEALTH EDUCATION BOOTHS

OPTOMETRY

(Screening & Education)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES TO GET MOVING

KIDS ZONE

GIVE AWAYS & MORE

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

PARANG, CALYPSO, SPOKEN WORD, ETC

SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCE

DATE

28 SATURDAY

OCTOBER 2023

TIME

9:00A.M.-2:00P.M.

VENUE

BLISS PLAZA CAR PARK,
EASTERN MAIN ROAD,
SANGRE GRANDE

HEALTH WALK STARTS AT 6:00A.M.
AT BLISS PLAZA CAR PARK

FREE! FREE!

Connect with Us



SCAN ME

"Caring is the Key"



September 2023

Sangre Grande Hospital

Ojoe Road, Sangre Grande
Tel: 226-4744/668-2273
Fax: 668-4368

Mayaro District Health Facility

Pierreville, Mayaro
Tel: 226-1575/630-1258/9
Tel/Fax: 630-1257

Biche Outreach Centre

Canque Village
Biche
Tel: 280-9781/668-9053

Brothers Road Outreach Centre

Brothers Road
Tabaquite
Tel: 656-2547/340-6895

Coryal Outreach Centre

Balata Hill Road and Cumuto Main Road
Coryal
Tel: 484-1368/668-8066

Cumana Outreach Centre

Toco Main Road
Cumana Village, Cumana
Tel: 226-1134/670-8250

Cumuto Outreach Centre

Main Road
Cumuto
Tel: 226-1106/643-9075

Grande Riviere Outreach Centre

Hosang Street
Grand Riviere
Tel: 670-8264/385-5421

Guayaguayare Outreach Centre

Guayaguayare Road,
Guayaguayare
Tel: 226-4090/630-8777

Manzanilla Outreach Centre

Eastern Main Road
Manzanilla
Tel: 226-1111/668-2063

Matelot Outreach Centre

Main Road
Matelot
Tel: 670-2428/354-0052

Matura Outreach Centre

Toco Main Road
Matura
Tel: 226-1261/668-6276

Rio Claro Health Centre

De Verteuil and Dougdeen Street,
Rio Claro
Tel: 226-1104/644-2236/644-0181

Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre

Ojoe Road
Sangre Grande
Tel: 226-1102/668-2509

Sans Souci Outreach Centre

Main Road
San Souci
Tel: 670-2382/280-8694

Toco Health Centre

Paria Main Road, Toco
Tel: 226-1576/670-8277

Valencia Outreach Centre

Alexander Street
Valencia
Tel: 226-1260/667-8197

Satellite Dialysis Unit,
Narine Ramrattan Building
Naparima/Mayaro Road,
Rio Claro
Tel: 226-9353

**Submit Articles / Pictures for the ERHA's Newsletter by the 20th of each month to
corpcomm@erha.co.tt**

