



# The Eastern *Vibes*

**Monthly Newsletter 2024**

**September 2024, Issue #122**

## ERHA'S FAMILY DAY "TOGETHER AS ONE"



**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**



**Photo 3**

**Photo 1** - 1st place winners of the Dance Past, St. Andrew/St. David

**Photo 2** - Winner of the Dance Past Queen, Head Office

**Photo 3** - 1st place winners of the Cook Out Competition, St. Andrew/St. David

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) held a day of fun and games for members of staff and their families on September 14, 2024 at the Valencia Eco Resort, Valencia. The main purpose of the event was to bring staff from all disciplines and

locations **"Together as One"**, to strengthen ties within the ERHA family, improve work life balance and the emotional well being of staff, build camaraderie and encourage socialization.

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# ERHA'S FAMILY DAY

## "TOGETHER AS ONE" (CONTINUED)

The fun filled day was 'epic'. In spite of the inclement weather, over 950 members of staff came out and enjoyed the days' activities which featured a dance past, curry duck, all fours competition, lots of games, prizes, food and entertainment. The children were not forgotten in the Kids Zone as they enjoyed bouncy castle, face painting, novelty games, fishing pond,

cartoon characters among others.

St. Andrew/St. David captured the title of winners for dance past and also emerged as the winners for the Curry Duck Competition and Head Office received first place for dance past queen. Sangre Grande Hospital won the title of best flavour for their duck.



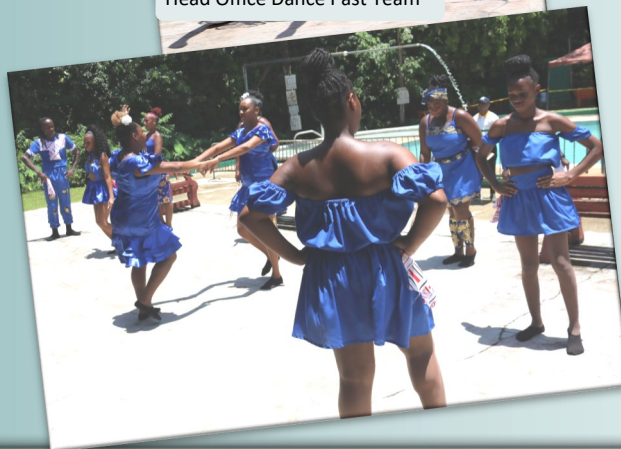
St. Andrew/St. David Dance Past Team



Nariva/ Mayaro Dance Past Team



Head Office Dance Past Team





# Cook Out Highlights





# Fun Activities at the Family Day





# Caribbean Wellness Week at the Eastern Regional Health Authority



Activities at Nariva/Mayaro

**Caribbean Wellness Week (CWW) was established as part of a regional initiative to address the rising burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in the Caribbean. Diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer are now leading causes of death and disability across the region, driven largely by unhealthy lifestyle choices, including poor diet, physical inactivity and the use tobacco and alcohol.**

CWW is designed to engage the public, provide essential health information and inspire positive behavior change. By uniting governments, health organizations and communities, Caribbean Wellness Week aims to foster a culture of health and well-being throughout the Caribbean.

In observance of Caribbean Wellness Week 2024, the ERHA's Health Education Departments hosted a week-long series of activities from September 16 to 20, 2024.

Throughout the week, daily wellness tips and online quizzes were emailed to staff and posted on the Authority's social media platforms to engage the public and raise awareness about healthy lifestyle practices to prevent NCDs.

The Health Education Department, St. Andrew/St. David hosted a Kicks for Health Virtual 5K. The aim of this activity was to raise awareness and promote physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle, to prevent and manage Non-Communicable Diseases and support overall well-being.

The challenge period for the virtual 5k started from September 14 and ended on September 30, 2024. The Caribbean Wellness Day challenge was opened to both staff and the public with a total of 74 persons registered. The challenge was a success and special prizes were awarded.

The Health Education Department held a Mini Health Fair on September 16, 2024 at the Mayaro District Health Facility. This event, focused on educating NCD clients on how to effectively manage chronic diseases at home, both for themselves and their families. Short lectures on Managing NCDs, Mental Health and Healthy Eating were also held at the clinic.

On September 18, 2024 the Health Education Department hosted a Staff Wellness Seminar. The focus was placed on mental health exercises and taking time to relax and listen to soothing music during lunch.



## Caribbean Wellness Week at the Eastern Regional Health Authority (continued)

Lectures on Mental Health Wellness, Employee Well-being, Stress Management and Conflict Management and Resolution were also conducted to provide tools to assist in managing workplace stress and improve their overall well-being. Tips were also provided on how to

start a workplace wellness program, how to manage and address stressors both in the personal and professional domain and how to access the employee assistance programme services.

### *Winners of Virtual 5K*



**First place male - Mr. Shawn Charles**

**Funkiest shoes female - Ms. Samantha Sirju**

**Oldest male - Mr. Antonio Cabigao**

**Youngest male - Mr. Shawn Charles**

**First place female - Ms. Clair Fortune**

**Largest crew - Ms. Christine Hypolite,  
Ms. Simaya Tidd and  
Mr. Simeon Tidd**

**Youngest female - Ms. Jean Ragunanan**

**Oldest female - Ms. Kerry Maharaj**

## Fitt Fest 2024



Students at Biche Secondary School during the Aerobics Burnout Competition

FITFEST 2024 is an exciting event aimed at promoting a healthier lifestyle through physical activities for students.

Over 80 students and staff at the Biche Secondary School on September 20, 2024 participated in an aerobics burnout competition led by Ms. Chrissy Gualbance.

The aerobics session started with a warm-up and increased in intensity. All participants were

awarded a token and the top three participants were awarded special prizes from the Health Education Department.

The students and staff were also provided with basic health screenings and given information about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and staying active from a young age and its relation to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) prevention.



# Virtual 5K Participants





## Health Initiative for Essential Workers



**According to the Ministry of Health, Non Communicable Diseases (NCD's) have become one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in Trinidad and Tobago and without action, this can become a burden to our society.**

Staff at County Nariva/Mayaro hosted an Outreach programme on September 20, 2024 at the Mayaro Police Station to raise awareness

and increase access to screening among essential workers to combat the prevalence of NCD's.

Employees at the station were able to benefit from Blood Pressure, Blood Glucose and HIV Testing. They were also able to access Prostate –Specific Antigen testing (PSA), Medical Consultation and Influenza Vaccination.

## NICU Awareness Month

September is dedicated to raise awareness and support for our tiniest patients and their families. Our dedicated staff in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) provides critical care on a 24-7 basis to newborns who are preterm or medically fragile, to give their special clients the best chance at a healthy start in life.

In an effort to increase awareness and to

educate persons on how we can all make a difference in the lives of these precious infants and their families, the NICU conducted an online quiz for staff.

Thank you to our team and let us continue being a beacon of hope for the smallest members of our community and their families.



# Health Education Department Nariva/Mayaro Hosts Kitchen Garden Workshops for Chronic Disease Support Groups



Mr. Ronald Ram, Health Education Officer, demonstrates how to care for plants



Ms. Shelly Ann Charles-Rawlins, Food Demonstrator, discuss the value of home grown herbs

In an effort to empower individuals to take steps toward a more active, health-conscious lifestyle, the Health Education Department, with assistance from the Nutrition Department, Nariva/Mayaro held two informative workshops on September 3 and 5, 2024 at the Guayaguayare Community Centre and the Rio Claro Health Centre Wellness Room respectively.

The workshops were specifically designed for members of the Mayaro/Guayaguayare and Rio Claro/Brothers Road Chronic Disease Support Groups. The main goal of this initiative was to educate participants on the many benefits of planting their own foods, promote wellness and increase physical activities.

Mr. Ronald Ram, Health Education Aide, led the first session and guided participants through the steps to start their own kitchen gardens and highlighted the health benefits of consuming home-grown produce. A hands-on demonstration on proper techniques for

transplanting seedlings and how to care for plants to ensure healthy growth was done. This practical segment proved to be a highlight, as attendees expressed their excitement to apply the skills learned to their own gardens.

The group also learned from Ms. Shelly Ann Charles-Rawlins, Food Demonstrator the value of incorporating home-grown, fresh herbs and vegetables into daily meals. She also discussed healthy meal options and how to reduce reliance on processed herbs and spices, underscoring the importance of fresh, nutrient-rich ingredients for overall well-being.

To encourage participants to put what they learned into practice, the Health Education Department distributed garden starter kits, which included pots, soil, seedlings and fertilizer. It is hoped that these kits will help the group to begin their own kitchen gardens and to foster a healthier lifestyle using home-grown produce.



# Commendation for the Professional Development Team



Professional Development Team

**Showing appreciation to employees is crucial for fostering a positive work environment and enhancing employee engagement.**

With this in mind, the Eastern Regional Health Authority extended heartfelt appreciation to members of staff of the Professional Development Team (PDT) at the Sangre Grande Hospital which comprises three Nursing Supervisors and four Head Nurses.

The PDT has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and a deep commitment to improving healthcare standards. Their dedication to professional development has significantly contributed to the success of the Authority. Each year they go beyond the call of

duty to organise and deliver a comprehensive two-day programme that not only enhance the skills and knowledge of the nursing staff but also to ensure the highest level of care and safety for our patients.

Topics covered at the training include Child Protection; Domestic Violence; Elderly Abuse; Basic Life Support (BLS) Professionalism; Fire Safety; Active Shooter Response among others.

The Authority commends the team for their dedication, hard work, outstanding contributions and unwavering commitment to excellence. Their efforts are instrumental in maintaining the high standards of care that our institution is known for and we are incredibly grateful.



# Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARI) Workshop



Dr. Avery Hinds, Technical Director, Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health during his presentation at the New Sangre Grande Hospital Campus

**According to the World Health Organization, respiratory infectious diseases pose a substantial risk for humans because of their extremely high potential to spread from person to person.**

Monitoring occurrences that could endanger the health of a community requires surveillance. It is of significant importance for countries such as Trinidad and Tobago to standardise the way data is collected, as this can assist in assessing a possible outbreak.

Recognising the benefits that can be achieved, the Ministry of Health and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) held a Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARI) Workshop at the Hilton Hotel on September 17 and 18, 2024.

The two-day workshop was attended by Dr. Artee Bridgelal-Gonzales, Primary Care Physician (PCP) II-Public Health Observatory (PHO) and other members of staff from the

Eastern Regional Health Authority. Discussions at the workshops focused on the findings and the recommendations from the baseline assessment conducted; the pathway toward integrated sentinel respiratory surveillance; the selection and operationalisation of sentinel sites, including algorithms for data and specimen flow; the proposed roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

On September 19, 2024 a cohort of persons attached to PAHO, Trinidad Public Health Laboratory (TPHL) and the Ministry of Health visited the New Sangre Grande Hospital Campus and met with ERHA representatives consisting a multidisciplinary team to discuss SARI and Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) and the reporting process at the ERHA. The team also conducted a site visit at this location which will be used as a pilot site for developing a database for SARI cases in Trinidad.





## Good News



### **Charlene Su-Ann Seow**

I would like to commend the Wound Care Unit at Sangre Grande Hospital for their exceptional care of my mother. The nurses' dedication and genuine concern for patients have restored my faith in our healthcare system. Their proactive approach, including following up on missed

appointments, has made a significant difference in my mother's recovery, preventing the need for amputation. I am deeply grateful for their outstanding service. Thank you and may you continue to be a blessing to all your patients.

***Posted on Facebook by Charlene Su-Ann Seow***

***September 11, 2024***



### **Candi Pierre-Sooklal**

These are my oncology angels... doctors, nurses, attendants, wardsmaids, clerks.

A lot of people had a lot to say when some of them did the chow challenge.. Playing dead, telling them to do their wuk etc..

I know all of them personally and they have been caring for ME.. A patient for almost 10 years now and I could tell you they are the most hard working, caring and compassionate bunch of healthcare workers I know. Their patients are not just file numbers.... They literally know all our names.

I remembered my very 1st chemo session.. I was scared and tears in my eyes but I soon felt at ease when they started to talk to me.. I was comforted.. checking in from time to time to make sure you're ok..

Now... you may say that's what they're trained

to do and YES!!! I agree with you but how many healthcare workers actually practice what they learn???

I know for a fact that my oncology angels do it and the care and concern they have for ALL their patients is real because close relationships are created... I've seen them cry because a patient passed. They even attend funerals.

I know my opinion may not matter but I for one was happy to see that they're having a lil fun in the midst of working... I could almost be sure they shared that chow with patients too ..... And I could attest that before they did that challenge, all patients were attended to and taken care of...I salute the Oncology department of ERHA Trinidad and Tobago. Keep up the spectacular work that you all are doing.

***Posted on Facebook by Candi Pierre-Sooklal***

***September 21, 2024***

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





SANGRE GRANDE HOSPITAL CAMPUS



# Happy Republic Day

*Let us reflect on the rich heritage of our country and take pride in providing quality service to the people of our great nation.*

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

*"Caring is the Key"*



# Happy Retirement!



*Ms. Lucy Charles*

Lucy Charles has worked at the Sangre Grande Hospital as a Food Service Worker since 2009. This article serves to highlight her dedication and service on her retirement in September 2024. If anyone has ever interacted with her over the years, I am confident they can attest to her character. She led with a positive attitude, caring spirit and overall friendly vibe. Each ward she would enter would always be followed by, "Good morning, everyone!" without fail. She valued being polite to everyone regardless of position or status. Above all else, she valued the patients. She would say time and time again that the patients are the reason we have a job so we must always treat them with the utmost respect and cater to their needs as best as we can. Regardless of what department you work in, I believe that this message should ring through to everyone who works in the healthcare system.

Lucy embodied what it means to provide service with a smile. Delivering food to the ward was a joy for her. Interacting with patients and members of staff is what she looked forward to each work day. She was encouraged on several occasions to take up the position of Cook but ultimately did not because she did not think it was a good fit for her.

Reason being she would be confined to the Kitchen and would lose one of the aspects of her job she cherished the most, that is interacting with others.

I can say confidently that those who knew her well will indeed miss her presence. Throughout her 15 years of service, she continued to personify the core values of Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) from the beginning to the very end. The ERHA's motto is '**Caring is the Key**' and she exemplified this. She showed through her actions what a difference it could make when you love what you do and when you truly care about who you do it for.

I felt very inspired to write this article to show gratitude to someone who has the purest heart of anyone I know and I am proud to call her my mother. I am grateful for the unique experience of seeing my mother at work on a day-to-day basis and observing her impact on others first-hand.

Congratulations on your retirement! I hope in your absence your incredible work ethic, commitment to service and vibrant energy will continue to shine through those who were blessed enough to soak in some of your light.

**Written by: Sherise Charles**



# Research Made Easy Summary - Lecture 7

## Section II- Study Designs, Designing Cross-Sectional and Cohort Studies

### Cross-Sectional Study

In a cross-sectional study, the variables are all measured at a single point in time, with no structural distinction between predictors and outcomes. Cross-sectional studies yield weaker evidence for causality than cohort studies because the predictor variable is not shown to precede the outcome.

Cross-sectional studies are valuable for providing descriptive information about prevalence and have the advantage of avoiding the time, expense and dropout problems of a follow-up design. They are often useful as the first step of a cohort study or experiment and can be linked in independently sampled serial surveys to reveal population changes over time.

Cross-sectional studies require a large sample size when studying uncommon diseases and variables in the general population, but can be useful in a case series of an uncommon disease.

### Cohort Studies

In cohort studies, a group of subjects identified at the outset is followed over time to describe the incidence or natural history of a condition and to discover predictors (risk factors) for various outcomes. The ability to measure the predictor before the outcome occurs establishes the sequence of events and controls bias in that measurement.

Prospective cohort studies begin at the outset of follow-up and may require large numbers of subjects followed for long periods of time. The latter disadvantage can sometimes be overcome by identifying a retrospective cohort in which measurements of predictor variables have already occurred.

The multiple-cohort design, which compares the incidence of outcomes in cohorts that differ in the level of a predictor variable ("the exposure"), is useful for studying the effects of rare and occupational exposures.

Risks, odds and rates are three ways to estimate the frequency of a dichotomous outcome during follow-up; among these, incidence rates, which take into account person-time of participants who remain alive and event-free in the study, are the basis for modern approaches to calculating multivariate hazard ratios using Cox proportional hazard models.

Inferences about cause and effect are strengthened by measuring and adjusting for all conceivable potential confounding variables. Bias in the assessment of outcomes is prevented by standardizing the measurements and blinding those assessing the outcome to the predictor variable values.



# Research Made Easy Summary - Lecture 7

## Section II- Study Designs, Designing Cross-Sectional and Cohort Studies

### Cohort Studies

The strengths of a cohort design can be undermined by incomplete follow-up of subjects. Losses can be minimized by excluding subjects at the outset who may not be available for follow-up, by collecting baseline information that

facilitates tracking, and by staying in touch with all subjects regularly.

Table 1 below shows how to calculate the statistics for expressing diseases frequency in observational studies

**Table 1**

| TYPE OF STUDY   | STATISTIC      | DEFINITION   |
|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Cross-sectional | Prevalence     | $\frac{\text{Number of people who have a disease or condition at a given point in time}}{\text{Number of people at risk}}$         |
| Cohort          | Incidence rate | $\frac{\text{Number of people who get a disease or condition}}{\text{Number of people at risk} \times \text{time period at risk}}$ |

## Equalize: Everything One Stop Market Day



Ms. Sherifa Ali and Ms. Reyanna Boodoo, Health Education Aides chat with clients



Group photo at the Toco Regional Complex

On September 27, 2024 the Health Education Department of County St. Andrew/St. David assisted the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services by facilitating a health education, pop-up booth at the Toco Regional Complex, Toco.

26 people accessed health screenings for blood pressure and glucose testing. They also obtained educational information on Non-Communicable Diseases; Sexual Health; Healthy Eating; Dangers of Alcohol Use; Smoking and Vaping.



# Hot Spell vs Drought

## DEFINITION

A Hot Spell is a period of unusually hot weather, often characterized by high temperatures and low humidity.



A Drought is a period of time when an area or region experiences below-normal precipitation. The lack of adequate precipitation, either rain or snow, can cause reduced soil moisture or groundwater, diminished stream flow, crop damage, and a general water shortage.



## DIFFERENCES

While both Hot Spells and Droughts can have severe impacts on ecosystems and human societies, they are distinct phenomena with different characteristics:

- **Duration:** Typically shorter than droughts, lasting days or weeks.
- **Precipitation:** Can be accompanied by rain or thunderstorms, but often the precipitation is insufficient to offset the high temperatures.
- **Impacts:** Can lead to heat-related illnesses, wildfires, crop damage, and energy shortages.
- **Duration:** Can last for months or even years.
- **Precipitation:** Significantly below average precipitation.
- **Impacts:** Can cause water shortages, crop failures, reduced agricultural productivity, and ecosystem degradation.

## TIPS

- Stay Hydrated.
- Wear light breathable clothing.
- Limit outdoor activities. Stay indoors or in cool temperatures.
- Use fans or air conditioning.



- Take shorter showers.
- Turn off water while washing hands, shaving or brushing your teeth.
- Report leaks and running water.
- Only wash full loads of laundry.



**In case of an Emergency, you can contact the following numbers:  
Fire: 990/Ambulance: 811/Police: 999/ODPM: 511**

## OUR VISION

The ERHA is a dynamic organisation focused on promoting wellness in collaboration with our communities. We commit to providing value driven, technologically appropriate quality healthcare services, through our highly motivated and developed human resource within the guidelines of national policy.

## OUR MISSION

The ERHA is the pioneer and preferred provider of quality health and wellness services in Trinidad and Tobago. We influence and set measurable standards of care through excellence in leadership and an enabling environment that presents and safe haven for all.

## OUR CORE VALUES

### **Respect for Human Dignity**

We treat our work, colleagues, clients, suppliers, and the community with dignity and respect. We embrace the diversity of people & perspective and encourage open and courteous communication and the sharing of different views.

### **Integrity**

We act with honesty, respect and transparency that will encourage and sustain a high level of trust and reliability in the organisation.

### **Shared Ownership**

Providers and clients of the organisation have a responsibility in guiding and regulating the quality, efficiency, customer satisfaction and planning of the Authority.

### **Commitment to Excellence**

We foster a spirit of service, build character and ethics, and promote and encourage a commitment to service to achieve the highest possible level of efficiency, effectiveness, professionalism and quality of care. Motivated people guide the organisation through deliberate change while promoting service, employee, environmental and financial excellence.

### **Partnership**

Effective partnership with relevant stakeholders including individual, communities, NGOs and other sectors are encouraged.

Universal access, affordability and equity

We subscribe to the ideal of accessible, affordable and equitable service for all.

### **Quality Care**

We are conscious that our vision will only be realized if our clients receive the highest possible quality care to which they deserve.

### **Innovation**

We are focused on utilizing and developing innovative ideas and techniques in conjunction with the technology of the day to enhance the outcomes and experiences of our clients, staff and key stakeholders.





**September 2024**

**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**

