



# The Eastern *Vibes*

**Monthly Newsletter 2024**

**November 2024, Issue #124**

## Eastern Regional Health Authority Provides Public Account to Stakeholders



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The Eastern Regional Health Authority under the guidance of Ms. Esme Rawlins Charles, Chairman and members of the Board of Directors provided a public account to all stakeholders on November 14, 2024. The Public

Board Meeting which is held in compliance with Rule 12 of the Second Schedule of the RHA Act, No. 5 of 1994, was held at the Morton Memorial Presbyterian Church in Guaico, Sangre Grande.

## Eastern Regional Health Authority Provides Public Account to Stakeholders (continued)

Invitations were sent to all stakeholders and various groups were represented including the Regional Corporations, Councillors, Alderman, Residents, Business Community among others.

Director Dr. Michelle Trotman presented the Chairman's remarks and informed that it was an eventful year for the Authority which was marked by moments of both celebration and sorrow. Notably the joyous commissioning of the New Sangre Grande Hospital Campus on April 17, 2024 which is a milestone accomplishment in the regions healthcare landscape and the untimely passing of Mr. Ronald Tsoi-a-Fatt our former Chief Executive Officer who made significant contributions to the development of healthcare. Director Trotman also provided insight in the robust management system that is administered by the Board of Directors to ensure accountability and efficiency and to provide enhanced healthcare services. She also highlighted some of the significant achievements of the Authority which include the provision of new and expanded services; Baby Friendly Accreditation; Full Implementation of Public Disposal and Advisory Committee and the Finalist in the American Chamber of Commerce Trinidad and Tobago Annual National Excellence

in HSE Awards. Director Trotman also informed the meeting of the appointment of Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre as the new Chief Executive Officer and commended her for her leadership which was instrumental in operationalising the new Campus.

Mrs. Rampersad-Pierre in her presentation provided a comprehensive overview of the achievements of the Authority and the spending of the budget for Recurrent and Capital Development Expenditure allocations.

The high point of the meeting was the interactive session with the stakeholders which was professionally guided by Ms. Sasha C.A. Darbeau, Deputy Chairman and moderator of the meeting. Those in attendance welcomed the opportunity and came forward to commend the management and staff; offer suggestions to improve services and to seek job opportunities and avenues to expedite appointments. Managers from the respective departments responded to the questions posed and also provided insights on future goals.

In closing Mr. Avind Moonan expressed sincere thanks on behalf of the Board of Directors to those involved in making the meeting a success.





# Annual Review Meeting



The Eastern Regional Health Authority hosted its Annual Review Meeting on November 20, 2024 under the theme, **"Moving Forward Together."** Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer in her address thanked the staff for their dedication and commitment which contributed to the significant achievements of the Authority during the fiscal period 2023/2024. The CEO also stated, that **"As the Authority move forward together, let us begin the process to change our weaknesses into strengths and eliminate the threats we may face to create opportunities to accomplish our strategic objectives."** She then listed some of the key plans that will be implemented for the full operationalization of the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus which included introduction of MRI and ENT services.

Other plans for the Authority that were highlighted are improvement of our health

service delivery with prevention care and treatment of Non-Communicable Diseases in primary care, improvements in mental health and wellness services and health and emergency preparedness and response for the entire Authority.

Ms. Esme Rawlins-Charles, Chairman of the Board of Directors indicated that she and the other members of the Board who were present were very happy they attended the Annual Review Meeting. They appreciated the exercise as it was a good learning experience for all and it really showed the amount of work that was done by the Authority. She thanked the management and staff for their contributions.

All departments/units were represented at the Annual Review Meeting and delivered presentations which provided insightful information that gave a holistic view of the operations of the Authority.



## Tree Lighting Ceremony

It was days before Christmas and the stage was set to begin a new tradition in the Eastern Regional Health Authority for the **"Eastern Lights Aglow"**. Members of staff, family and friends gathered together to witness the first Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus.

Guided through the programme by our talented hosts, Registered Nurses Mr. Vishal Lutchmansingh and Ms. Kathy-Ann Graham greetings and best wishes were brought by Ms. Winnifred Vambe, Nursing Administrator I and Dr. Rajiv Bhagaloo, Medical Director. Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer reminded persons of the significant milestone that was accomplished by the Authority with the opening of the new facility. She further stated, that *"this has allowed us to*

*re-engineer our systems and processes, increase staff complement, improve our efficiency and enhance our capacity for better patient outcome"*. She thanked the staff for their dedication and commitment and indicated that it would not have been possible without them. The CEO then shared some of the new services that the Authority was poised to offer in the next phase. As she focused on the magnificent Christmas Tree, she likened the characteristics of the tree to that of the staff, highlighting strength, growth, uprightness and all parts uniting to form one.

After the formalities the audience enjoyed some Christmas selections performed by Los Sonidos, Ms. Luann Millington-Guppy, Nursing Supervisor Ag. and Mr. Adeel Flanders before the lighting of the spectacular Christmas Tree.





## ERHA Top 7 Finalist at the American Chamber of Commerce Awards



From l to r (front) Mr. Avind Moonan, Director; Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer; Ms. Sasha C.A. Darbeau, Director; Ms. Farah Mohammed, Manager-Occupational Safety (back) Mr. Duane Nimblette, Mr. Kendall Drakes OSH Officers and Ms. Lisa Ali-Khan Health, Health and Safety Technician.

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) was amongst the top seven finalists in the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) Annual National Excellence in Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Awards held on November 11, 2024 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The event celebrates and honors companies of all sizes and sectors for their achievements in HSE excellence within their operations. This year the ERHA entered the HSE Evolution award category with a submission of its HSE Manage-

ment System in alignment with the International Standard (ISO) 45001. This category recognises changes that fundamentally enhance the health system and environmental system performance of the organisation in a transformational manner.

The Authority was proud to be recognized amongst the top 7 finalist from the 33 companies that entered. Congratulations to our OSH Team led by Ms. Farah Mohammed, Manager-Occupational Safety and Health.

# Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative Unit Cancer Awareness and Pap Smear Outreach Programme



As the Eastern Regional Health Authority continues to highlight the importance of screening for various health concerns to detect diseases early and provide timely intervention for the best outcomes, the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative Unit hosted a Cancer Awareness and Pap Smear Outreach Programme.

The initiative took place on November 2, 2024 at the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre under the theme **"Paint Me Pink"**. The aim was to increase awareness to women in the community by focusing on the importance of early detection of ovarian and breast cancer.

**52** clients from Sangre Grande and environs benefited from lectures on topics such as self breast examination; the importance of pap smears and how breastfeeding can lower risk for Breast Cancer.

Health services at the outreach programme included breast examination; pap smears; HIV testing and counselling; health education; nutrition and a pamper station.

Clients knowledge on the topics covered was tested during a Question and Answer segment and prizes were awarded.

## Sans Souci Outreach



Residents from the village of Sans Souci participated in an outreach programme to increase their awareness on how to improve and preserve their health. The Health Fair was hosted by the Sans Souci SDA Church on November 3, 2024. Health education services were

provided by Ms. Dionne Buffong, R.N. Health Education Officer (Ag.) STAD. She engaged members of the public and provided educational material on NCD's, smoking cessation, men's and women's health.



# Increasing Awareness on Diabetes through Health Education

World Diabetes Day which was established in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation and World Health Organization is celebrated annually on November 14<sup>th</sup> to raise awareness about the impact of diabetes and to highlight opportunities to strengthen prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

In observance of this day, the Health Education Departments collaborated with stakeholders and hosted various outreach activities throughout the Eastern Region. Over 100 persons participated in outreach programmes which were held at the Morton Memorial Presbyterian Church, Rio Claro Public Library and the County Health Administration office. These programmes were which held on November 13, 14 and 19 were designed specifically for persons to

recognise the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle to offset the risk of developing diabetes. Lectures were conducted by the Pharmacy, Nursing, Nutrition and Medical Social Work Departments on Diabetes and Mental Health; Diabetes and Alzheimer's Disease; Insulin Resistance; Medication Management; the benefits of regular Physical Activity and Stress Management. Blood Sugar testing was also conducted.

The Chronic Disease Groups from Sangre Grande, Manzanilla; Valencia; Cumana; Toco; Sans Souci and Grande Riviere participated in a walk on November 19, 2024 to raise awareness on diabetes. The walk began at the Toco Health Centre and ended at the Toco Regional Complex.



## The Emergency Department hosts a Moment of Thanksgiving

On November 28, 2024, the Eastern Regional Health Authority, Emergency Department at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus held a touching interfaith service that brought persons together to give thanks for patients and staff.

Representatives from various religions such as Christianity; Islam; Hinduism and other spiritual leaders, conducted prayers, readings and reflections focused on themes of healing, compassion and resilience.

In his opening statements, Dr. Darren Dookeeram, Head of the Emergency Department, stated ***"Today, we unite as a cohesive community, transcending our differences to offer prayers and blessings for everyone"***. He stressed the importance of coming together to show appreciation for the many blessings received as a team, underscoring the role of faith in encouraging cooperation and support among colleagues. The service provided an opportunity for contemplation, offering comfort and support

to individuals engaged in the healthcare journey. It additionally reaffirmed the ERHA's commitment to fostering not just physical health but also mental and spiritual wellness during difficult times.

As the service came to an end with a shared moment of silence, a deep feeling of togetherness and hope filled the air. This triggered personal connections reminding that we all belong to a larger community, working together with empathy to improve patient care and building a cohesive Emergency Multi disciplinary team. Staff felt privileged to celebrate this event alongside Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Rajiv Bhagaloo, Medical Director, Ms. Winnifred Vambe, Hospital Nursing Administrator I and other distinguished guests. The essence of the message resonated profoundly within the verses of this poem.

***Together, we stand. Together, we pray,  
In faith, in peace, we find our way.***







# Eastern Regional Health Authority *celebrates* **WORLD RADIOGRAPHY DAY**

Every year on November 8th, the world comes together to celebrate World Radiography Day. The International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists (ISRRT) has declared the theme for 2024 **"Promoting the Profession"**. This special day commemorates the discovery of X-rays by Wilhelm Roentgen in 1895 while he was conducting experiments in his lab. This groundbreaking moment in history led to the revolutionising of the medical world by creating the fields of Radiography and Radiology.



Radiography is the profession of medical imaging utilising diagnostic and therapeutic imaging technology. These images act as the doctor's eyes, allowing them to see inside your body to help them diagnose and treat a wide range of medical conditions from broken bones to cancer. Radiography utilises multiple imaging techniques including fluoroscopy, positron emission tomography (PET), computed tomography (CT), ultrasound, X-ray radiography and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).



Staff of the Radiology Department

Radiographers are highly skilled healthcare professionals who operate the machinery and take medical images while ensuring patient safety. Radiographers, sometimes referred to as Radiologic Technologists, are licensed to use radiation to take medical images. They are not doctors or nurses.

## **World Radiography Day gives us an opportunity to:**

- Recognize the contributions of radiographers
- Promote public awareness of the field of Medical Imaging
- Inspire future generations to consider pursuing a career in Radiography

## Water Wednesday

***Water is important to bring nutrients to cells, get rid of waste, protect joints, aid organs and to maintain body temperature.***

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health hosted the Water Wednesday initiative under the TTMoves banner to encourage members of the public to increase their consumption of water as opposed to sugar sweetened beverages. The Outreach Programme was held on November

27, 2024 at Persads D' Food King Car Park, Rio Claro and attracted over 190 persons from different age groups.

The ERHA team engaged persons and demonstrated the importance of drinking water for a healthy lifestyle and provided screening services such as blood pressure testing and blood sugar testing. Information was also provided on health education, nutrition and water safety and conservation.





## ERHA Career Drive and Health Lectures

The Health Education Department Nariva/ Mayaro hosted outreach programmes in schools within the area to inform students on different career paths available within the Eastern Regional Health Authority.

The visits by the team were conducted on 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 at the Rio Claro West Secondary School, Cushe Government Primary School, Asia Primary

School, Mayaro Government Primary School and the NESC Technical Institute respectively.

The team members comprised Mr. Davion Rooplal, Health Education Officer and representatives from the Medical Social Work, Nursing and Pharmacy Departments. They also conducted lectures on puberty, mental health and ways to adopt a healthy lifestyle and manage stressful situations.



# 5th Annual National Health Research Conference

The 5th Annual National Health Research Conference was held on November 22, 2024 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel under the theme **"Digital Health Transformation: Leveraging Technology for Better Care"**. The Conference focused on the impact of technology in healthcare and provided a forum for researchers in various field of health human, animal and social sciences to present their respective studies and findings.

The opening address was delivered by Mr. Marcelo D'Agostino, Chief of Information Systems and Digital Health, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The Honourable Terrance Deyalsingh, Minister of Health

provided information on the Electronic Health Record System which will reform healthcare as we know it, as citizens will have a digital record which will be accessible anywhere in the country.

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) was amongst the finalist in this year's conference and was represented by Dr. Artee Bridgelal-Gonzales, Primary Care Physician II who submitted a summary of her presentation **"A Cross-Sectional study: Understanding the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice of Health Care Personnel and Patients on Digitalization of Health Care Services"**.



Mr. Daniel Geelalsingh, Research Officer Ag. answers questions as attendees observe the ERHA poster



Staff of the Public Health Observatory Department

## Share Love-Donate Blood



Giving blood saves lives. Everyday blood donors help patients of all ages with their generous gifts.

On November 8, 2024, **20** persons with a spirit of selflessness, became Non-Remunerated Blood Donors to help those in need.

As a community, we can come together to share love by donating blood. Contact the Sangre Grande

Hospital Blood Donation centre at 226-9779/9780 to make an appointment.

Under the True Voluntary Blood Donation (TVBD) System patients requiring blood will be able to access blood from the Blood Bank without a chit or a blood donation being made on their behalf.



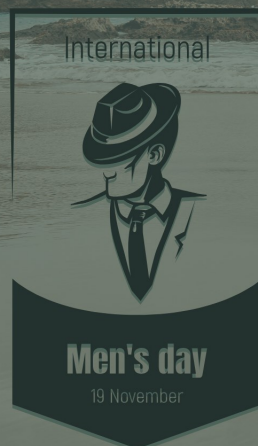
# WORLD ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE AWARENESS WEEK

**18-24 NOVEMBER**



## INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

### TIPS SELF-CARE FOR MEN



- ✓ Prioritize and engage in regular exercise.
- ✓ Eat a balanced diet and keep hydrated.
- ✓ Get enough sleep.
- ✓ Practicing mental wellness - meditation, journaling, outdoor activities.
- ✓ Invest in hobbies and/or pursue passion projects.
- ✓ Get regular check-ups and screenings.
- ✓ Plan a vacation for yourself.
- ✓ Practice regular personal grooming.
- ✓ Practice financial management - budgeting, savings plan & investing in yourself.
- ✓ Set boundaries - be assertive in communicating your needs & limits.

# Research Made Easy Summary - Lecture 9

## Enhancing Casual Inference in Observational Studies

### What is an Observational Study?

An observational study is a type of study where inferences are drawn from a sample population. Not every association that is found in an observational study represents Cause-Effect (real association).

There are four other general explanations for an association between a predictor and an outcome in an observational study:

1. **Chance-Spurious (not real) Associations** due to chance occur when two (2) variables appear to be correlated without any actual causal relationship often arising from random variation or coincidental patterns
2. **Bias-Spurious Associations** due to bias occurs when the relationship between variables appear significant but are misleading, often resulting from confounding factors or biases in data collection
3. **Effect Cause** this is where the outcome cause the predictor. This refers to the phenomenon where the observed relations between two variables may suggest that an effect is causing a perceived cause rather than the other way around.

4. **Confounding** occurs when a third factor is a real cause of the outcome and the predictor of interest is associated with, but not a cause of, this third factor

### One way to cope with confounders in the Design Phase?

Use Specification-design inclusion criteria that specify a value of the potential confounding variable and exclude everyone with a different value. For example, the investigator studying coffee and MI could specify that only nonsmokers be included in the study. If an association were then observed between coffee and MI, it obviously could not be due to smoking.

**Causal Inferences** can be defined as a process of determining whether an observed association between variables reflects a true cause and effect relationship. This can be enhanced by positive evidence such as: consistent results in studies and strength (stronger association).







### Why is Air Quality Important?

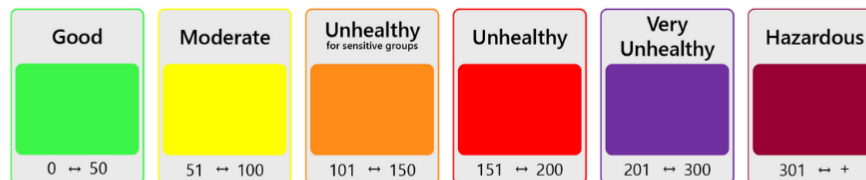
Clean air is important for everyone's health! It is important to understand the air quality in your area so that you are prepared to take action to protect you and your loved one's health.

Unhealthy air quality affects everyone, but those in the sensitive groups (such as those with heart or lung disease, outdoor workers, older adults and children) may be especially at risk.

### How Can You Measure Air Quality?

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a number used by government agencies to communicate to the public how polluted the air currently is or how polluted it is forecast to become. As the AQI increases, an increasingly large percentage of the population is likely to experience increasingly severe adverse health effects.

#### Air Quality Index



### Protecting Your Loved Ones:

Air pollution can cause serious health effects such as heart attacks, stroke and asthma attacks. Some symptoms of unhealthy air include:

- Chest Tightness Pain
- Shortness of breath
- Palpitations
- Numbness
- Unusual Fatigue
- Trouble seeing/walking

### How To Reduce Unhealthy Air Exposure:

- Keep windows and doors closed.
- Reduce time spent outdoors
- Reduce vehicle emissions - carpool, combine errands
- Avoid activities that create pollution indoors such as frying foods, vacuuming, and sweeping
- Run a portable air cleaner, DIY air cleaner, or your HVAC system

### What To Do When Air Quality is Bad?

If a wildfire or other air quality emergency occur, you can protect yourself by using the following tips:

- Wear an N95 or P100 respirator mask to provide protection from smoke and ash
- Stock up on medicine and keep in a waterproof container
- Consider purchasing, or renting, a portable air cleaner
- Use an air filter and adjust the air conditioning or heating system to re-circulate air instead of drawing air from the outside.

In case of an Emergency, you can contact the following numbers:

Fire: 990    Ambulance: 811    Police: 999    ODPM: 511

To measure the air quality in your area visit: <https://www.ema.co.tt/our-environment/air/>



**November 2024**

**Sangre Grande Hospital Campus**

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

**Brothers Road Outreach Centre**

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

**Cumuto Outreach Centre**

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

**Manzanilla Outreach Centre**

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

**Rio Claro Health Centre**

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

**Rio Claro Accident and Emergency**  
Tel: 226-9230

**Toco Health Centre**

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

**Toco Accident and Emergency**  
Tel: 226-9428

**Mayaro District Health Facility**

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

**Coryal Outreach Centre**

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

**Grande Riviere Outreach Centre**

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

**Matelot Outreach Centre**

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

**Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre**

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

**Valencia Outreach Centre**

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

**Biche Outreach Centre**

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

**Cumana Outreach Centre**

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

**Guayaguayare Outreach Centre**

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

**Matura Outreach Centre**

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

**Sans Souci Outreach Centre**

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

**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](mailto:corpcomm@erha.co.tt)**

**Website : [www.erha.co.tt](http://www.erha.co.tt)**



**ERHA Trinidad & Tobago**



**@erhatrinidad**