



# The Eastern *Vibes*

**Monthly Newsletter 2025**

**March 2025, Issue #128**

## Strengthening Our Capacity to Respond to Mass Casualty Incidents



Mass Casualty trainees practicing their skills as mock responders in simulation exercise

Disasters whether natural or man made are unpredictable and can occur at any time. Recognising the eastern region's susceptibility to a wide range of hazards due to its geographical location, the Eastern

Regional Health Authority (ERHA) conducted a Mass Casualty Training Programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

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## Strengthening Our Capacity to Respond to Mass Casualty Incidents (Cont'd)

**92** clinical and non-clinical professionals consisting of members of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS), Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS), Global Medical Response Trinidad and Tobago (GMRTT) members of staff of the ERHA and other key agencies committed to strengthen their skills in emergency preparedness and response.

The programme was designed to build the participants capacity in handling mass casualties as well as to promote coordination, team work and communication among key agencies. The training was conducted during the period 17-22

March, 2025 at the National Racquet Sport Centre, Tacarigua. Key topics covered included Principles of Triage; Incident Command System and Psychological First Aid. To reinforce learning and to ensure that the transfer of knowledge was at an optimum standard, a series of simulation exercises as well as pre and post tests were conducted.

The ERHA thanks our partners for their steadfast commitment in building disaster resilience within our health sector.





## Promoting Women's Health in the Communities We Serve

**"Accelerate Action - Her Health, Her Power"** was the theme that guided the International Women's Day celebration 2025 in the Eastern Regional Health Authority. In an effort to bring this theme to life **15** outreach initiatives were held throughout the eastern region with a focus on primary healthcare. The main objective was to increase access and awareness by bringing the services directly to the women to empower them to accelerate their action to maintain and improve their health.

A team of clinical and non-clinical professionals was formulated to provide essential health services. These services included among others basic screening; pap smears and mammograms

antenatal clinics; breastfeeding support; chronic disease; mental health and vaccination.

Display booths were also mounted by Health Education, Nutrition, Medical Social Work Departments; the Healthy Hospital Initiative and School Health Unit.

Over **350** women and girls benefitted from these initiatives which were conducted during the period 8-17 March, 2025.

The Authority thanks SWAHA Hindu College, University of Trinidad and Tobago and S&S Persad Supermarket Mayaro for partnering with us and providing the opportunity for women to **"Accelerate Action."**









## Detect Early, Protect Kidney Health

**Kidneys perform a very important function to keep the body healthy by removing waste and extra fluid from the body.**

Regular screening is important for the early detection of any possible injury to the kidney to prevent kidney failure. With this in mind, the Eastern Regional Health Authority conducted several outreach programmes throughout the region to raise awareness on the importance of kidneys to our overall health. The theme selected was **"Are Your Kidneys Ok? Detect Early, Protect Kidney Health."**

The Sangre Grande Hospital Campus Dialysis Unit in collaboration with Health Education; Nutrition and Dietetics; Medical Social Work

Departments and Healthy Hospital Initiative conducted a sensitisation session on March 12, 2025 at the Campus.

In Nariva/Mayaro, the Satellite Dialysis Unit collaborated with the Health Education Department and the TT Moves Wellness Club to conduct lectures which focused on kidney disease and steps which can be taken to maintain healthy kidneys. The sessions were held at the Biche; Mayaro; Rio Claro West and Rio Claro East Secondary Schools. A poster competition was also held for children between the ages of 14 to 16 years to display their talent and to demonstrate their understanding of the theme for World Kidney Day.

# Congratulations



Chelsea Golcharan receives her prize for first place in the World Kidney Day Poster Competition from Ms. Nirmatee Mohammed, Primary Care Nurse Manager (Ag.)



Makesi Mark receives his prize for second place in the World Kidney Day Poster Competition



# World Kidney Day Photos







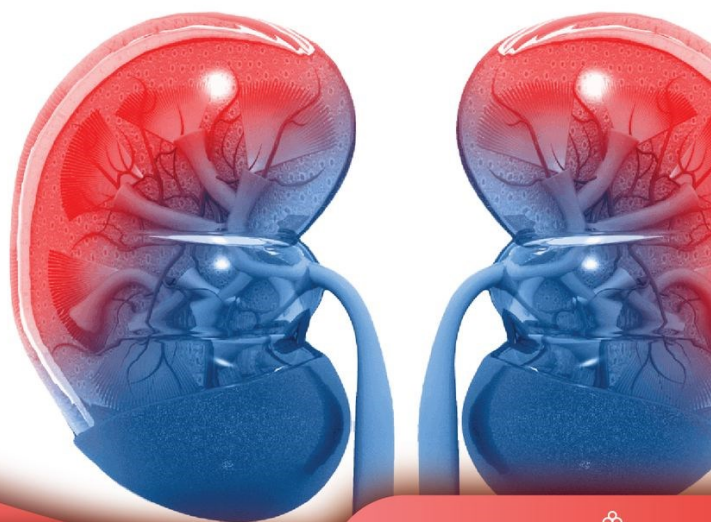
# World Kidney Day

***“Are Your Kidneys OK?  
Detect early, protect kidney health”***

**Persons who have Chronic Kidney Disease, often show no signs of kidney disease until it is too late. It is therefore imperative that regular screening is done to detect any injury to the kidneys early to prevent Kidney Failure.**

**What can you do to maintain healthy kidneys?**

- **Keep fit and maintain an active lifestyle**
- **Eat a healthy, well balanced diet**
- **Regular checks of you blood pressure and blood sugar**
- **Sufficient fluid intake**
- **Cessation of Smoking and Alcohol consumption**
- **Avoiding abuse of NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs)**
- **Regular checks/screening if you have one or more of the risk factors:**
  - **Diabetes**
  - **Hypertension**
  - **Obesity**
  - **Family History of Kidney Disease**



***“Caring is the Key”***



# World Social Work Day



**World Social Work Day is celebrated globally on the third Tuesday of March, to acknowledge the invaluable role social workers play to improve the wellbeing of both individuals and communities.**

The Medical Social Work Department Nariva/ Mayaro hosted a workshop to commemorate World Social Work Day at the County Health Administration, Narine Ramrattan Building, Rio Claro on March 18, 2025, under the theme, ***"Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing."***

Lectures were delivered to increase awareness on healthy eating, the importance of preventing

non-communicable chronic diseases through lifestyles and dietary modifications and caring as a shared responsibility within families.

Information was also presented on the history of the Medical Social Work Department and its vital services emphasising the important role social workers play.

Attendees were also introduced to the concept of self-sufficiency with discussions on agriculture with the Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries and financial planning by Pan - American Life Insurance Company. The Nutrition and Nursing Departments also contributed to the success of the workshop.



## Increasing Access to Health Information



Ms. Allison Julian, Food Demonstrator interacts with a client

On March 17, 2025 outreach programmes were conducted at UTT Tamana Campus and Matelot Outreach Centre to increase access to health services.

At UTT, Health Education; Nutrition; Medical Social Work and Nursing Departments provided health screening, immunization and HIV testing. They also shared information on Chronic Diseases, hydration; wellness and the dangers of smoking, vaping and alcohol use.

The Outreach in Matelot was designed specifically for persons in the Chronic Disease programme. Information was shared on ways to control diabetes and depression and how to develop coping skills.

Recognising the importance of this programme, it was also facilitated at the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre, Manzanilla and Valencia Outreach Centres.

## Health Education Department collaborates with Nature Seekers to Increase Awareness on Health Issues



Mr. Isaac John, Health Education Aide interacts with students

The Eastern Regional Health Authority is committed to empowering persons to make informed decisions to maintain and improve their health. With this in mind, the Health Education Department collaborated with the Nature Seekers Organisation to increase access to health information during their annual beach clean up at Orosco Bay, Matura on March 9, 2025.

Over 100 persons interacted with the team who shared information on women's health; men's health; chronic diseases; dangers of smoking; vaping; alcohol use; hydration and wellness.

## Encouraging students to adopt Healthy Habits



Ms. Sherifa Ali, Health Education Aide interacts with students

**People are more likely to lead a healthy lifestyle when they form positive habits at an early age.**

Over **200** students of the Matura Government Primary School from infants to standard five participated in a health fair on March 12, 2025, that was specially designed for them. Staff from the Health Education; Nutrition; Nursing and Medical Social Work Departments utilized interactive games and props to simplify their messages on the dangers of smoking and vaping. The students were encouraged to adopt healthy habits and were provided with material to take home to their families.

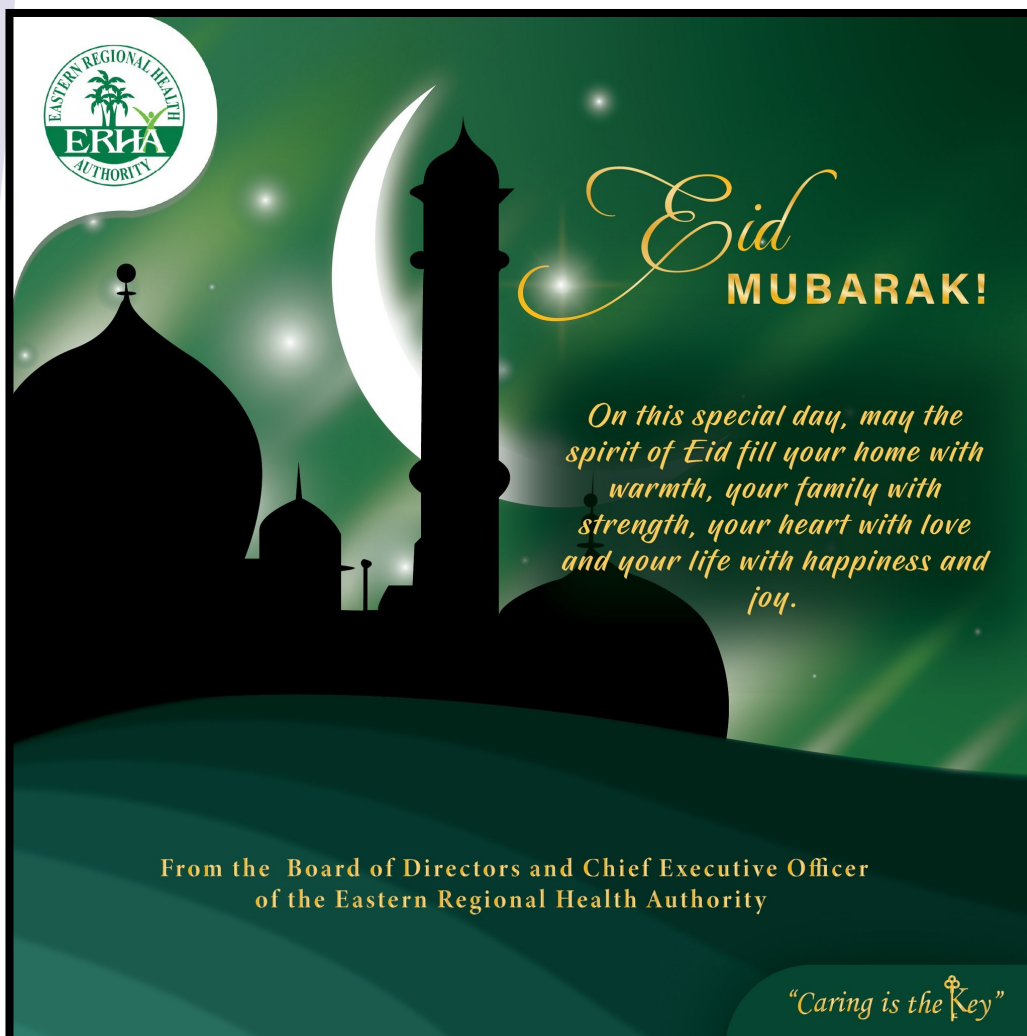


# ERHA Staff Rock their Socks for World Down Syndrome Day





# Happy Holidays





# Situational Analysis

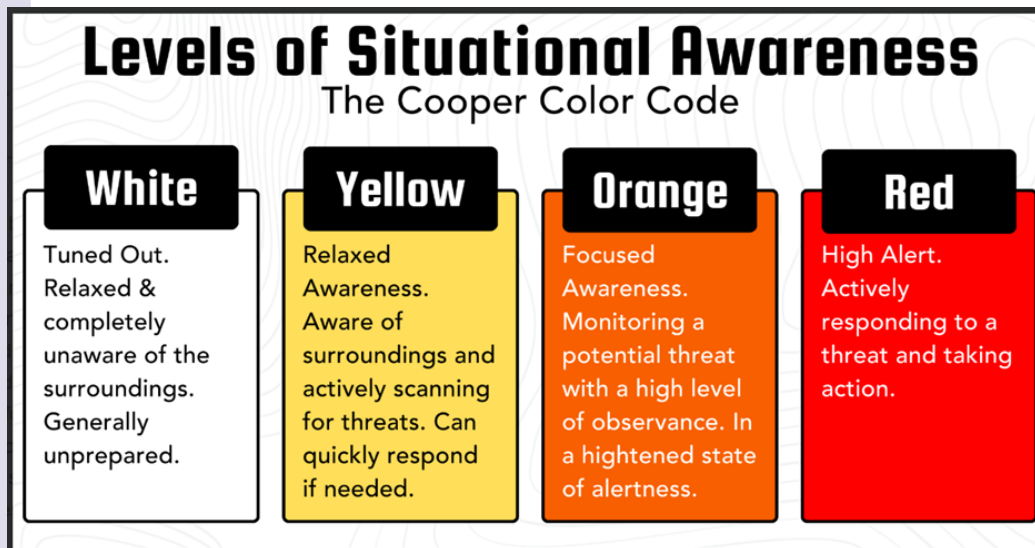
## What does situational awareness mean?

Situational awareness is most accurately defined as the ability to perceive and understand the environment around you, including the people, objects and occurring events. Some situational awareness examples include, being mindful of your surroundings, anticipating potential risks, and taking appropriate actions to stay safe. It is a crucial skill that can benefit anyone, regardless of their profession or daily activities.

## Why is situational awareness important?

In short, being situationally aware can help you:

- ◆ Avoid accidents
- ◆ Respond quickly to emergencies
- ◆ Identify potential threats
- ◆ Make informed decisions
- ◆ Reduce the likelihood of accidents and incidents in daily life



The four levels of situational awareness, as outlined by the Cooper colour code, are white, yellow, orange and red. These levels represent a continuum of awareness levels that ranges from being completely unaware of one's surroundings to being acutely aware and prepared to take action. The model has been praised for its simplicity and effectiveness in training people to be more situationally aware in various contexts, from everyday life to high-stress situations. The black/comatose level is not an official level of situational awareness. It refers to a complete shutdown where a person cannot respond to their environment. This state can occur due to a lack of situational awareness or overwhelming stress or trauma. If at all possible, you should avoid this level of awareness as it can lead to, potentially dangerous situations.

## Six tips on how to become situationally aware

### #1 Use all your senses

Using all your senses is a critical aspect of developing situational awareness. While sight and hearing are the most commonly used senses, smell, touch and taste can also provide important information about your surroundings.

### #2 Pay attention to body language

Body language can provide valuable insights into a person's intentions and emotions. You can better understand the situation and anticipate potential risks by paying attention to nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, posture, and gestures.



## Situational Analysis (Cont'd)

### #3 Trust your instincts

Trusting your instincts is another important aspect of situational awareness. If something feels off or out of place, it's essential to trust your gut and take appropriate action. Our subconscious mind is excellent at picking up on subtle cues that our conscious mind may miss, and trusting your instincts can help you avoid potentially dangerous situations. So, to ensure your gut is leading you in the right direction, you should, at the minimum, pause for a few seconds and observe your environment with full attention.

### #4 Using your peripheral vision

This is a valuable technique for improving situational awareness. Peripheral vision is the ability to see objects and movements outside the direct line of sight. Our eyes have a limited field of view but by using our peripheral vision, we can expand our awareness of our surroundings. This technique can be particularly useful in crowded or busy environments with many potential risks or hazards. Practicing peripheral vision exercises can help improve this skill over time, allowing you to better protect yourself and others.

### #5 Continuously assess the situation

Situations are constantly changing and it's essential to assess the situation and adjust your actions. For example, if you're walking down the street and notice a group of people acting aggressively, cross the street or take a different route. If you're in a crowded area and suddenly feel uncomfortable, moving to a less crowded area may be best. By continuously assessing the situation, you can avoid potential risks and keep yourself safe.

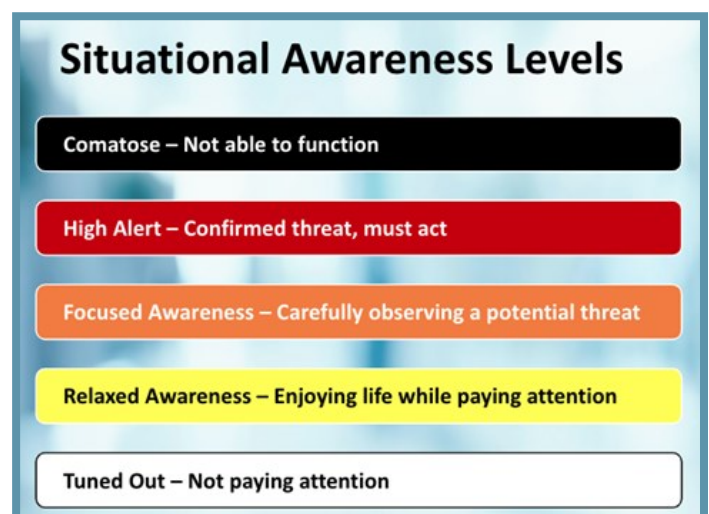
### #6 Train your situational awareness

Finally, like any other skill, situational awareness can be trained and improved. Taking a self-defence or first aid course can provide valuable situational awareness training and will help you develop the skills necessary to keep yourself and others safe. Additionally, practicing mindfulness and regularly challenging yourself to assess your surroundings can help you develop this skill and make it a natural part of your daily routine.

### How to Improve Situational Awareness

Developing situational awareness habits can help you develop this skill as a natural part of your daily routine. For example, when entering a new environment, take a few moments to scan your surroundings and mentally note potential exits, hiding spots and any other potential risks. When walking down the street, periodically look over your shoulder to assess your surroundings and ensure that you are not being followed.

The most effective way to improve situational awareness is to practice regularly. Make a conscious effort to remain alert and observant in your daily life. Over time, situational awareness will become a natural part of your routine and will eventually become a reflexive response helping you stay safe in any situation.







# Mass Casualty Management

## What is Mass Casualty Management?

Mass Casualty Management (MCM) describe the process of attending to the victims of a mass casualty incident, with the aim of minimising morbidity and mortality (PAHO).

It includes:

- Triage of victims at the scene
- Establishment of Advanced Medical Posts (AMPs)
- Coordination of multi-agency response
- Efficient use of limited resources
- Minimising morbidity and mortality

## Why is Mass Casualty Management important?

- 1. Resource Overload Mitigation:** Mass Casualty Incidences often overwhelm local emergency resources. MCM ensures prioritisation of care based on severity.
- 2. Rapid and Coordinated Response:** It facilitates quick organisation of multi-agency responders such as police, fire, EMS, military and NGOs to reduce chaos.
- 3. Saves Lives:** With effective triage and early field interventions, MCM significantly reduces preventable deaths and complications.
- 4. Prevents Hospital Overcrowding:** Through field stabilisation and triage, hospitals are better prepared to receive patients in manageable waves.
- 5. Preparedness for the Unexpected:** Disasters are unpredictable; MCM trains responders for diverse threats (natural, technological, man-made)

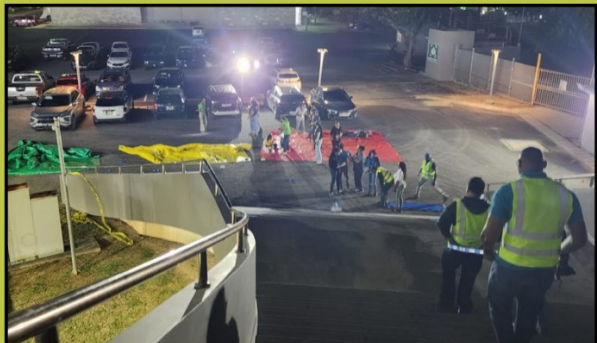
## Misconceptions about Mass Casualty Management:

Misconceptions	Reality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mass casualty events are rare and only happen in war zones or major cities.</li><li>• More resources always solve the problem.</li><li>• Everyone injured should be treated immediately.</li><li>• Each agency should operate independently within its specialty.</li><li>• Hospital care starts only when victims arrive at the ER.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mass casualty incidents can happen <b>anywhere</b>, including rural or small island communities, especially after hurricanes, industrial accidents, or bus crashes.</li><li>• <b>Organisation and coordination</b> are more critical than just having more personnel or equipment. A disorganized response can cause more harm.</li><li>• <b>Triage is essential.</b> Not all patients are treated at the same time. Care is prioritised to maximise survival based on severity and survivability.</li><li>• <b>MCM requires multi-sectoral coordination</b> under a unified incident command to avoid duplication and confusion.</li><li>• Medical care begins in the field. Early triage, stabilisation, and even treatment at AMPs are vital components of MCM.</li></ul>



## ERHA's MASS CASUALTY MANAGEMENT 2025

In collaboration with the Pan-American Health Organization, the Eastern Regional Health Authority conducted its fourth Mass Casualty Management Training. This comprehensive six-day course was held at the National Racquet Sports Centre from March 17 to 22, 2025. The training was a resounding success, garnering positive feedback from all participants.



**In case of an Emergency, you can contact the following numbers:**  
**Fire: 990    Ambulance: 811    Police: 999    ODPM: 511    T&TEC: 800-8832**





**March 2025**

**Sangre Grande Hospital Campus**

Ojoe Road, Sangre Grande  
Tel: 228-3742/226-4744/668-2273  
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: 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**

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



**ERHA Trinidad & Tobago**



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