

The Eastern Vibes

Monthly Newsletter 2025

August 2025, Issue #133

Breastfeeding Activities Empowering Mothers, Supporting Families



Breastfeeding activities at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus

According to the World Health Organisation, breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure a baby's health, development and survival in the earliest stages of life.

A strong support system ensures that more mothers can breastfeed successfully, leading to healthier families and communities.

World Breastfeeding Week is

celebrated every year from August 1-7. The theme for this year's breastfeeding week is "Prioritise Breastfeeding: Create Sustainable Support Systems".

In an effort to educate, empower, protect, promote and support breastfeeding, the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) hosted a series of impactful activities throughout August.

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Breastfeeding Activities Empowering Mothers, Supporting Families

As part of the national thrust to increase the awareness of the population, Ms. Chennel Davis-Gentle, Baby-Friendly Coordinator (Aq.) accompanied by Ms. Debra Thomas, Manager-**Bre**astfeeding Coordinating Ministry of Health appeared on the Now Morning Show on TTT on August 6, 2025. Ms. Gentle provided some insight on the benefits of breastfeeding and the various programmes and activities undertaken by the Authority to encourage mothers to breastfeed and for their family to support this initiative.

In-Person Breastfeeding Counselling was also launched at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus (SGHC), North Block. This new service allows for direct client engagement, giving the team the opportunity to promote and educate mothers on the BFHI Policy and practices.

Recognising how challenging it is for new mothers to leave their new born babies, a virtual session was held on August 14, 2025. **37** postnatal clients and their family members within the Giving Every Mother Support (GEMS) Postnatal Support Group participated in the session. The session created an environment for clients to discuss their breastfeeding experiences and challenges. The unit was also able to provide support and guidance on breastfeeding and highlight a portion of maternity benefits and rights for women. A second virtual session entitled, "Conversations" was held on August 25, 2025. This interactive session attracted over **40** antenatal and postnatal clients. They were encouraged to have open dialogue to learn from each other's personal breastfeeding journey, challenges and peer recommendations.

To continue efforts to strengthen maternal and newborn care nationwide a BFHI 21hr Training

was held during the period 18-21 August, 2025 for non-clinical staff. The session focused on sustainable support systems and included topics such as the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding; the importance of respect-privacy and the role of non-clinical staff in contributing to a breastfeeding culture.

Additionally **3** members of staff were among a group of 25 healthcare professionals who received certification as BFHI Trainers, a first in the Caribbean Region marking a significant accomplishment for the health sector.

The BFHI Unit also partnered with the Nutrition and Dietetics Department at the SGHC, to continue our client engagement in other critical areas. A Pop-Up Shop was held on August 15, 2025 and the emphasis was place on the important role nutrition plays in pregnancy, breastfeeding and infant health.

The pop-up format was also used for a *Walk, Learn and Engage* initiative that was held on August 29, 2025.

The main goal of this event was to build awareness and encourage community engagement on breastfeeding support resources and accommodations. Booths were mounted by, BFHI Unit; Nutrition and Health Education Departments, St. Andrew/St. David. External stakeholders including the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Midwives, the Breastfeeding Association of Trinidad and Tobago and Blue Sky Day Care.

As part of a region-wide recognition initiative, each health facility nominated one mother who had successfully exclusively breastfed for six months. These mothers were presented with tokens of appreciation. Clients in the Maternity Ward were also presented.

































Equipping Staff to Attain Financial Stability



Members of staff from ERHA and PEAPSL

Financial literacy is the key that unlocks stability in an uncertain economy. With the right knowledge and habits, individuals can make informed decisions regarding money and build a foundation of security that allows them not only to survive, but to thrive.

Recognising that financial literacy is an essential for economic progress, the tool Human Resources Department arranged a Financial Planning session for staff, which was facilitated by Mr. Keith Wood of PEAPSL Consultancy Limited on August 12, 2025, at the Training Room, Sangre Grande Hospital Campus. multidisciplinary consisting team Managers, Nurses, **Technical** Support, Administrative staff and On-The-Job Trainees attended the workshop.

The session focused on practical strategies for navigating today's challenging economy with

discussions centered around money management, roadmap for recovering from debt and tips on surviving a difficult economy.

Participants actively engaged with Mr. Wood, asking thoughtful questions and sharing personal experiences. The exchange created a dynamic learning environment, with staff offering personal insight about the importance of saving and managing credit cards responsibly. Staff also discussed investment opportunities such as annuity plans, various savings accounts, investing in credit unions and Unit Trust Corporation.

This session was an eye opener to most participants. They were thankful for the foundational knowledge that was provided to empower them, to identify some of the practices to avoid debt and to be able to navigate financial complexities and achieve their financial goals.

Triplets delivered at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus





The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) welcomed the birth of the first set of triplets at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus.

Ms. Ameilia Neisha Preddie gave birth on August 10, 2025 to baby Ariel, who weighed 1,735 grams, baby boy Tyron, who weighed 1,970 grams and baby girl Ariana, who weighed 1,750 grams at birth.

The mother of the three healthy babies received comprehensive care from a multidisciplinary clinical team who managed her delivery.

The team comprised Dr. Chukwuma Akibor, Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Dr. K. Mendes, Senior Medical Officer; Dr. A. Permberton, Head of Department Paediatric; Dr. K. Thomas, Neonatologist; Dr. Sasha Maharaj, Head of Department Anesthetic; members of Nursing, Midwifery and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

In recognition of this milestone, Ms. Preddie was presented with a special hamper. Members of the care team were also thanked for dedication and commitment to service.

The Public Procurement & Disposal Of Public Property Act, 2015

The *Public Procurement & Disposal of Public Property Act, 2015,* (PP&DPPA, 2015)

was amended and fully proclaimed on April 26,
2023. The Office of Procurement Regulations

(OPR) was also established to provide oversight on procurement activities of all public bodies.

The stated purpose of the Act is to provide a guide for public procurement and for the retention and disposal of public property, in accordance with the principles of good governance, namely accountability, integrity transparency and value for money.

The OPR website has included 36 manuals, as well as legislative guidelines, regulatory frameworks and the procurement depository for information. These documents and processes guide the procurement function to ensure

compliance.

Ultimately, the Act seeks to create a uniformed process for the procurement and disposal of public assets across all Government Ministries and State Agencies in accordance with section 5 (2) of the Act. The Act stipulates that public bodies have a duty to ensure that procurement and disposal of public property is done in a way that ensures accountability, transparency and public confidence.

The proclamation of the Act meant that the Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) would have made numerous changes to ensure compliance and achievements of the objects of the Act as per Section 5 (1).

Some of the *changes* are as follows:

Financial Policies	PP&DPA, 2015
Tenders Committee Review and recommendation of transactions over \$100,000.00	Procurement Disposal & Advisory Committee (PDAC) • Review and recommendation of transactions over \$1,000,000.00, all PSIPs, contracts or as delegated by the Accounting Officer;
Board of Directors Approval of all transactions over \$100,000.00 as recommended by the Tenders Committee	 Accounting Officer (Chief Executive Officer) Approval of all transactions up to \$1,000,000.00 without review and recommendation by PDAC; Approval of all transactions over \$1,000,000.00 with review and recommendation by PDAC;
	Establishment of a Named Procurement Officer who shall provide oversight on all procurement transactions;

The Public Procurement & Disposal Of Public Property Act, 2015 Cont'd

Some of the key benefits of the PP&DPPA, 2015 are:

• Enhanced Accountability and Transparency:

The Act establishes a framework for public procurement that promotes greater accountability and transparency in the use of public funds.

Fair and Equitable Processes:

The Act ensures fairness, equity and equal opportunity for all bidders in the procurement process.

• Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness:

The Act promotes efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of government policies by adhering to best procurement practices.

• Promotion of Local Industry:

The Act supports the growth of local industries by providing opportunities for local businesses to participate in public procurement.

• Sustainable Development:

The Act encourages sustainable procurement practices that consider environmental, social and economic factors.

Public Confidence:

The Act aims to build public confidence in the way government conducts business, particularly in the acquisition of property and services.

• Promotion of Ethical Conduct:

The Act encourages ethical conduct in the procurement process, fostering trust and respect between all parties involved.

• Legal Framework for Procurement:

The Act provides a legal framework for public procurement, ensuring that all procurement activities are conducted in accordance with the law.

The structure of the Central Purchasing Unit (CPU) was amended and renamed as Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU). This department is responsible for the procurement of all goods and services for the Authority with approximately 95% of the staff enrolled in or have completed the CIPS qualification for the position in which they are appointed. The SCMU is managed by Ms. Nalisha Boodram-Bhagaloo, General Manager-Supply Chain Management and Ms. Latoya Phillips, Acting Manager-Procurement & Contracts.

Importantly, the sensitisation of the PP&DPPA, 2015 commenced with the Management Executive Team, Management Team, Stores & Inventory, Primary Healthcare Services Administrative Officers, Procurement & Contracts and most recently Administrative Assistants and Junior Administrative Assistants.

All questions, queries and concerns relating to PP&DPPA, 2015 and functions/processes of Supply Chain Management can be sent to aas.scm@erha.co.tt/jaa.cpu@erha.co.tt or by contacting 226-9056/8435.

SARI Sentinel Site Meeting



Meeting at Sangre Grande Hospital Campus

On August 4, 2025 a meeting was held with key stakeholders at the Sangre Grande Hospital (SGH) Campus to discuss the way forward for (Severe Acute Respiratory Infection) SARI Surveillance database at the SGH Campus.

SARI cases are defined as patients with an acute respiratory infection who have a history of fever, or measured fever of \geq 38 C°, cough and onset within the last ten days and who require hospitalisation.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) in collaboration with PAHO (Pan American Health Organisation) has intensified its monitoring of respiratory illnesses and ILI (Influenza-like Illness) in the public in the aftermath of the COVID19 Pandemic. As part of this initiative the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus was designated as the national sentinel site for piloting the SARI Surveillance system in Trinidad.

The meeting was led by Dr. Artee Bridgelal-Gonzales, Primary Care Physician II, Public Health Observatory and the ERHA liaison for MOH/PAHO. At the meeting Dr. Bridgelal-Gonzales provided an overview of the Standard Operating Procedure for Sentinel Surveillance of Respiratory Viruses and the Guidelines for Integrated Sentinel Surveillance of Respiratory Viruses Trinidad and Tobago 2024.

She coordinated the way forward with a multidisciplinary team consisting of Managers, Nurses, Clinical and Administrative staff. Together, they outlined the transition from paper-based to electronic monitoring of SARI, emphasising the importance of real time reporting. The team also addressed the specific needs of each department to effectively meet the goals and targets set by both the MoH and PAHO.

Creating a Culture of Preparedness





The Eastern Regional Health Authority is empowering individuals to act confidently in emergencies by creating a culture of preparedness. **27** members of the Mayaro Community participated in a First Aid and CPR training session held at the Mayaro Civic Centre on August 21, 2025.

The First Aid and CPR training was led by Dr. Sarita Bootoor and a team of doctors from the Accident and Emergency Department. Participants were taught the proper technique to perform hands-only chest compressions for both adults and infants, as well as how to assist someone who is choking.

Attendees were able to gain valuable knowledge to address emergency situations relating to bites or stings from poisonous animals. This session was delivered by Mr. Kerwin Stephens, Pharmacist III, in his lecture on poison control, he also covered types of poisons.

Attendees expressed appreciation for the interactive and hands-on approach of the training, which enhanced their understanding and confidence in responding to real-life emergencies.

The training was organised by the Health Education Department as part of their thrust to build safer and healthier communities.

Promoting Oral Health at the SOBIN Community Outreach



Did you know that poor oral health can impact more than just your smile? It can affect a person's ability to eat, speak and socialise, impacting their quality of life.

The Dental Department, St. Andrew/St. David participated in the SOBIN Community Outreach Activity on August 17, 2025 at the Monte

Christo Park in Sangre Grande.

Members of the Dental team led by Dr. Nalini Mungal, Dentist, conducted oral assessments for clients and offered personalised advice to address dental concerns.

Demonstrations were performed to show clients proper brushing and flossing techniques and information was also provided to improve oral health. Areas covered include the stages of tooth decay and the impact of smoking on oral health; the causes and prevention of bleeding gums and understanding Periodontal disease.

The team hosted fun activities like crossword puzzles to keep the younger attendees engaged and distributed educational materials and sample products to encourage healthy dental habits at home.

Foot Care and Diabetes Management



"Diabetes and diabetic foot disease are preventable with early detection, monitoring and education." (wно)

On August 12 2025, the Guayaguayare Outreach Centre hosted a Diabetes and Wellness session, for clients of the Chronic Disease Clinic, placing special emphasis on Foot Assessment and Foot Care.

The session featured engaging presentations from the Nutrition, Pharmacy and Nursing staff.

They highlighted the critical link between nutrition and foot health, the diabetic plate method, practical lifestyle changes to manage or prevent diabetes, the role of medications and the serious risks associated with uncontrolled diabetes.

To bring this information to life, Registered Nurse Hagley-Ellis conducted a live foot care demonstration showing participants how to properly examine their feet daily to prevent complications and recognise when to seek medical attention.

The session concluded with an interactive questions and answers segment during which clients were rewarded with tokens for their participation. Overall, the event provided participants with knowledge and practical tools to better manage their diabetes and protect their foot health.

Promoting Healthy Eating within the Community



Food demonstration at the Toco Health Centre

In an effort to promote healthy eating and improve personal knowledge to prepare nutritious meals, the Health Education Department in collaboration with the Nutrition Department, hosted a food demonstration on August 12, 2025 at the Toco Health Centre.

The outreach was specially organised for members of the Cumana, Toco, Grande Riviere

and Sans Souci support groups as well as staff and clients at the Toco Health Centre's Chronic Disease Clinic.

Over **30** participants viewed the creation of green fig and tuna fritters, a meal rich in fiber and protein. Interns from the University of the West Indies led the cooking demonstration, creatively combining green bananas, tuna, oats, eggs, green seasoning and other nutritious ingredients. The fritters were served with a sauce made from dates.

In addition to the cooking segment, participants were guided on how to read nutrition labels and they received information on exercise routines tailored for persons with chronic diseases. The session concluded with a preview of activities planned for the upcoming Wellness Month which will be observed in September.

Health Fair at Freedom Village



The Health Education Department hosted a health education booth at Emancipation celebrations on August 1, 2025 at the North Eastern Sporting Complex, Ojoe Road, Sangre Grande.

The team provided materials on health topics,

including Chronic diseases; Men's and Women's health; Dangers of smoking, Vaping and Alcohol.

Visitors also had the opportunity to interact with health educators and ask questions related to their personal experience.

ERHA Staff Attend USNS Comfort Tour at NAPA



L to R: Ms. Michele Bassanoo-Jones, Nursing Administrator I (Ag.), a member of staff from the US Navy, Ms. Sherma Alexander-Campbell, National Administrator, Nursing Services, MOH and Ms. Jassodra Boodlal-Samaroo, Head Nurse, Accident & Emergency, Rio Claro Health Centre.

Trinidad and Tobago was one of the stops of the U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet's during their Continuing Promise 2025 Mission.

The Ministry of Health collaborated with medical teams from the USNS Comfort to provide a range of medical services from 5-11 August, 2025. These include adult and pediatric medical services, dental care, optometry, dermatology and physical therapy.

Our colleagues Ms. Michele Bassanoo-Jones, Nursing Administrator I (Ag.) and Ms. Jassodra Boodlal-Samaroo, Head Nurse, Accident & Emergency, Rio Claro Health Centre had the opportunity to visit the designated site with Ms. Sherma Alexander-Campbell, National Administrator, Nursing Services, Ministry of Health on August 6, 2025.

Health Education Lectures in St. Andrew/St. David



Knowledge is power, information is liberating, education is the premise of progress in every society and in every family. Kofi Annan.

Health education plays a vital role in empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their well-being. By understanding the importance of a proper diet, exercise, good hygiene and risky behaviors, individuals are better equipped to manage their health.

In an effort to increase awareness, the Health Education Department conducted a series of lectures across the St. Andrew/St. David County.

The first lecture was held on August 5, 2025 at the Guaico Youth FC and focused on the Dangers of Smoking and Vaping.

27 children and adults were sensitized on the negative effects of tobacco use and practical strategies to abstain. Attendees also engaged with the Health Education team with the use of interactive smoking cessation props and educational reading materials.

Over **325** clients were apprise on mosquito borne-diseases during outreach programmes conducted at the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre, Valencia and Manzanilla Outreach Centre. The topics discussed included: Mosquito -borne diseases; Modes of transmission; Symptoms and treatment of mosquito-borne illness; Breeding grounds elimination techniques and legal responsibilities regarding mosquito control.

Persons were also encouraged to maintain clean surroundings and were advised to contact the Regional Corporation for proper disposal of bulk waste. They were also urged to report mosquito breeding sites to the Public Health Department.



I am a proud Neonatal Paediatric Nurse, presently furthering my studies in Public Health. My passion is caring for children of all ages. Although I have only two, I love caring for and socializing with children as well as their families. I take great interest in providing comfort to parents. It is a pleasure to work alongside my co-workers. It's as though I never worked a day in my life. Apart from my job, music and family time give me great joy.

What inspired me to become a nurse?

Honestly, my grandmother, God rest her soul. She suggested it and was my inspiration. Nursing was not a childhood dream as we often hear, I wanted to be a Flight Attendant, followed by an Accountant. Nursing provided me with the knowledge and opportunity to take great care of her. God's decision was the best. I am happy in this field.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about nursing?

There are a few things, not just one. The ability to care for my family. Caring for children at the hospital is not just medication and procedures, but communication with children, getting into their minds. Understanding their logic is quite fascinating. Last but not least, having the opportunity to observe improvements in their health and returning them to their families is most rewarding. They return to visit, they don't pass me by.

What advice will you give to a junior nurse who has just been hired?

As I always do, my advice is always to put yourself in a position to learn, you must seek your own interest. Treat others as though they're your family or you, lying on the bed. In that case, you will provide the care that you will like to receive. Take time to listen to your patients.

What changes or improvements will you like to see in the nursing profession?

The change that I will like to see first is love and respect among us. We must understand, that for most of the time in our lives, we are among each other in the workplace. That nurses be recognised and their voice and opinion be taken into consideration, as we are the core, the ground troops of healthcare delivery. Just as health should be in all policies, nurses should be at every level of decision-making for their own.

How do nurses contribute to the success of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

Nurses contribute to BFHI by providing holistic care for mothers and their babies especially through the accomplishment of successful breastfeeding. Nurses contribute by assisting and educating junior nurses, staff and parents about the importance and the procedure of breastfeeding. The nurse ensures that a discharged mother leaves with sound information, confidence in her breastfeeding skills and with a contact to refer to in cases of concern. The nurse also keeps herself updated with BFHI policies.





Break feeding Week 1st - 1th



Natasha Prince

Registered Nurse/Head Nurse attached to Ward 1

I am Natasha Prince a dedicated and compassionate Registered Nurse and Head Nurse, bringing a wealth of experience and a caring touch to my profession. My commitment extends beyond the hospital walls as I actively contribute to the nursing community, serving as the Chairperson of the Eastern Branch of the Trinidad and Tobago National Nurses Association (TTNNA). Furthermore, I lend my expertise to the financial well-being of my colleagues as the Secretary of the Board of Directors for the National Nurses Credit Union.

Adding to my multifaceted life, I am also a driven business owner, skilfully balancing my professional endeavours with my roles as a loving wife and mother. Known for my fairness and honesty, I approached all aspects of my life with integrity and a genuine desire to make a positive impact.

What inspired you to become a Nurse?

I enjoy caring for others.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about nursing?

The patients, knowing that each patient/client that comes to the facility is vulnerable, sometimes scared and expects us to give the best care, safely. I just really enjoy making others feel better, seeing persons leave our care better than how they came to us.

What advice will you give to a junior nurse who has just been hired?

Stay the course, daily the experience will get better, keep an open mind, be willing to learn, practice what was learnt at school, continuing your education is very important and finally always give your very best.

What changes or improvements will you like to see in the nursing profession?

- a. Recognition as a Profession.
- b. Nurses regain the respect we once enjoyed.
- c. Prioritising the nurse's well-being (care for the carers).
- d. Increased opportunities for Professional Development and Nurse Specialisation
- e. Competitive salaries and remuneration
- f. Safe nurse-to-patient ratio

In your view, how do nurses contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

Nurses deliver care to patients 24hours daily. We are present at birth when breastfeeding begins and during the course of the lifespan to deliver care to all in need. Nurses have a pivotal role in BFHI, including antenatal care and counselling; postnatal support and counselling; facilitating early initiation of skin-to-skin contact; providing support to mothers and babies and in maintaining standards and Policies of BFHI in the healthcare environment.





Break feeding Week 1st - 1th

> "Prioritize Breastfeeding; Create Sustainable Support"

Anneliza Mendez

Enrolled Nursing Assistant attached to Mayaro District Health Facility -Community Department

Growing up in Mayaro around my mother and her nursing colleagues in the hospital, my curiosity grew for nursing. I have ventured into nursing, giving 16+ years in the ERHA as an Enrolled Nursing Assistant- administering passionate professional care to clients and patients. I received training and certification for Nursing at the Ministry of Health and at the University of the West Indies, I achieved my certificate in Psychology. Then I went on to Ensafe and received a certificate in Phlebotomy and Childcare. I have maintained a love for nursing care, applying all I learnt with compassion. When I'm not working, I am still giving care and support to my family, caring for my loving mother who has now retired from the field of nursing under the ERHA and is at an unregrettable stage of life at the age of 85 years. As I continue to pursue my love for nursing, I will keep doing so with patience and a smile to warm each unwell patient's heart.

What inspired you to become an Enrolled Nursing Assistant?

My grandmother, who passed at the age of 100. I assisted her in delivering home care and support. Also, my mother was a Nursing Assistant and is my biggest inspiration.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about nursing?

My love, care and devotion towards clients and staff. The ability to give of myself without prejudice and ensure by my actions that I make a good difference in healthcare, whether I am on or off duty.

What advice will you give to a junior Enrolled Nursing Assistant who has just been hired? Always put yourself in that client's/patient's position and give nursing care to all. Show love, compassion and understanding, give a listening ear and a gentle, safe touch that shows your support. Be humble and have patience.

What changes or improvements will you like to see in the nursing profession? Nurses truly act as advocates for their patients and become selfless.

In your view, how do nurses contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

They contribute through support, giving of their time and self, sensitisation initiatives such as BFHI training, meetings, field visits to health centres and homes, having phone call connections for both staff, pregnant mothers, mothers and grandmothers.



Break Jeecking Week 1st - 1th

> "Prioritize Breastfeeding: Create Sustainable Support"

Keisha Fergus-Joseph

Enrolled Nursing Assistant attached to Maternity Ward 4

What inspired you to become an Enrolled Nursing Assistant?

I have always had a natural passion for nurturing and caring for others, which led to my initial lunge into healthcare through geriatric care programmes. I would later advance to completing the Enrolled Nursing Assistant Programme (2007). Since then, I have dedicated 14 years to the Maternity Unit, where I proudly support mothers and newborns with empathy and skill.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about nursing?

My hidden talent is poetry. Writing is my emotional outlet and a way to reconnect with myself amidst the job demands. Writing is my motivator, it is a reminder of my passion for delivering care, serving others and making a positive impact in healthcare service delivery in my capacity although the job can be challenging at times.

What advice will you give to a junior Enrolled Nursing Assistant who has just been hired?

Welcome to the team! I want you to remember that every patient, every shift and every challenge is part of your learning field. Treat each experience as a chapter in your journey, whether good or bad and make the best of it.

Most importantly, never forget that we are our patients' advocates. Be the calm in their storm and the strength when they cannot speak. You have the power to make a real difference. The sky is the limit; never stop learning.

What changes or improvements will you like to see in the nursing profession?

I look forward to seeing more advancement opportunities for Enrolled Nursing Assistants, particularly in Midwifery, a dream I continue to hold close!

In your view, how do nurses contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

I am a strong advocate for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI). I believe that nurses can aid in actively educating both staff and patients on Baby-Friendly practices. Drawing from my own experience as a mother of a twin, I believe that nurses can contribute to maintaining a successful Baby-Friendly environment by helping mothers to navigate their antenatal, childbirth, bonding and breastfeeding journey with hands-on care. I love utilising a "mama breast" approach, as I believe it brings warmth and comfort to clients.





My name is Christy Orosco–Meloney. I am a Registered Nurse assigned to the Rio Claro Accident and Emergency department. I am a dedicated nurse who enjoy providing holistic care to patients. My aim in this profession is to provide care for people directly and compassionately. As a nurse, I believe we are given the opportunity to make a positive difference in a person's life. I am truly blessed to be on this path, a profession that is highly rewarding and meaningful.

What inspired you to become a nurse?

My inspiration to become a Registered Nurse stemmed from personal experiences and the desire to help others, to provide care, comfort and support during their most vulnerable times. To be informed and the ability to educate others to improve their quality of life.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about nursing?

The ability to provide comfort, solace and to have a positive impact on the life of patients and by extension the community. Additionally, the opportunity to help patients recover and regain health keeps me motivated.

What advice will you give to a junior nurse who has just been hired?

My advice to a junior nurse will be to continuously elevate and improve your practice so that you can provide the best possible care for your patients and advance your career as a nurse. To stay focused and always remember to treat each patient as we will like to be treated with compassion and integrity.

What changes or improvements will you like to see in the nursing profession?

The field of nursing is constantly evolving therefore, the changes or improvements I will like to see is expanding access to advanced education and training programmes. This improvement can help nurses develop their skills and advance their careers, ultimately leading to better outcomes for patients and a better work environment for nurses.

In your view, how do nurses contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

In my view the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative's promotes change in the way that infants are cared for immediately after delivery and after discharge. This initiative allows mothers to make an informed decision in caring for their infant providing a positive maternal experience to all mothers and families.





I Meleka Bannister, Patient Care Assistant on ward 4 Maternity have had the pleasure of working as a PCA for the past 10 years. Within that time frame I did a few certificate courses including Peri Operative Surgical Technology level 3 in 2016. I also received a certificate of Participation from the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative Unit which I was thankful to be a part of.

I am a very humble, hardworking self-motivated individual who strive for excellence and I am always willing to offer words of encouragement to those around me when needed.

What inspired you to become a Patient Care Assistant?

Working as a caregiver at a nursing home inspired me to become a Patient Care Assistant. I also have a desire to help others and make a positive difference in their lives.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about your job?

My family keeps me motivated and passionate about my job. My father-in-law had non-Hodgkin lymphoma and I was able to advise him on what to do. I was also able to take care of him at home with guidance from some of the nurses until he took his last breath.

What advice will you give to a Junior Patient Care Assistant who has just been hired?

I will advise upcoming Patient Care Assistants to first be open minded. Be a team player, always think positive and do your work to the best of your ability and with confidence. Always push to be better than the person you were yesterday. The sky is the limit, reach for it and don't stay stagnant.

What opportunities or experiences will you like to see afforded to Patient Care Assistants?

I will like to see PCAs granted the opportunity to participate in house training programmes so that we can assist more on the wards especially when we are short staff. We can all work as a team to get the job done.

In your view, how do Patient Care Assistants contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

Patient Care Assistants contribute to the success of the BFHI by being educated on the importance of breastfeeding and it's benefits so that we can confidently teach patients and in extension people in our community about the importance and benefits of breastfeeding. We can also assist patients with breastfeeding both at work and our friends, families and our community.





Break feeding Week 1st - th

> "Prioritize Breastfeeding; Create Sustainable Support"

Farisha Soobratte Chotai

Patient Care Assistant attached to Mayaro District Health Facility -Community Department

I Farisha Chotai went to Mayaro Secondary School where I received an education. I worked as a Vet Assistant for some years. Later in my life I followed my dreams of working in the hospital. I did a Patient Care Assistant course and other health courses to become the person I am today. I have worked for many years in the health department and have done exceptionally well.

What inspired you to become a Patient Care Assistant?

The desire to help others and having cared for a sick family member motivated me to enter the healthcare system.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about your job?

Meaningful connections: Building relationships with patients and seeing the difference I make in someone's daily life. Seeing the patients' happy facial expressions means a lot.

What advice will you give to a junior Patient Care Assistant who has just been hired?

The advice I will give to a Junior Patient Care Assistant is to watch how the experienced staff handle situations and don't hesitate to learn from them.

What opportunities or experiences will you like to see afforded to patient care assistants?

Career advancement paths: Specialized training opportunities to gain skills in various areas. Recognition and appreciation to all staff and programmes which highlight outstanding work and boost morale.

In your view, how do Patient Care Assistants contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

Patient Care Assistants contribute to the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) by supporting breastfeeding mothers, reinforcing breastfeeding education. Creating a calm environment by assisting with hygiene and ensuring comfort. Encouraging skin-to-skin contact and all key Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative practices.





I am Elenor Munroe, an Enrolled Nursing Assistant (ENA) and I have been in this profession for more than 19 years. My journey began with the North Central Regional Health Authority, after which I transferred to the Eastern Regional Health Authority. I am very strong-willed and passionate about my job. I wear my uniform with pride and try to do my best wherever I am stationed, never backing away from work, because I know there is no I in team. Only teamwork wins.

What inspired you to become an Enrolled Nursing Assistant?

I was inspired and guided by my late grandmother to join the nursing profession. You can say I am honouring her.

What keeps you motivated and passionate about nursing?

My motivation and passion for nursing comes from my patients, both children and adults. Just knowing you make a difference by assisting a patient with carrying out their daily tasks, doing vital signs, giving some health tips even lending a listening ear makes a difference. The smiles, thanks and blessings you receive are just priceless.

What advice will you give to a junior enrolled nursing assistant who has just been hired? My advice will be to have a willing spirit to work and learn, observe what is being taught, and always remember that change is good.

What changes or improvements will you like to see in the nursing profession?

Enrolled Nursing Assistants desirous of upgrading to a Registered Nurse, once meeting the requirements, shouldn't have to endure an additional four years of training, after completing two years of basic patient care training. In my view, only two years additional training is required for medication administration & management, adding up to the same four years.

In your view, how do nurses contribute to the success of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)?

In my view, nurses contribute to the success of the BFHI by promoting mother-infant bonding with skin-to-skin touch, providing support and counselling to mothers and families about the benefits and economic value of breastfeeding.



Staff Emancipation Run Way



Emancipation Day Message from the Chairman and Board of Directors of the ERHA



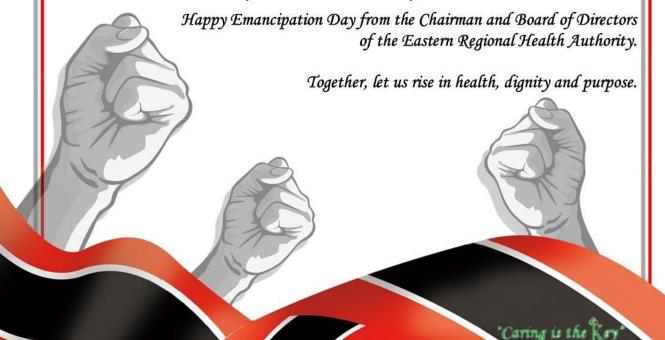
On this Emancipation Day, we honour the indomitable spirit of our African ancestors whose strength, vision and sacrifice forged the path to freedom. Their resilience lives on in every heartbeat of this nation, reminding us that the story of emancipation is not only about breaking chains, but about building futures.

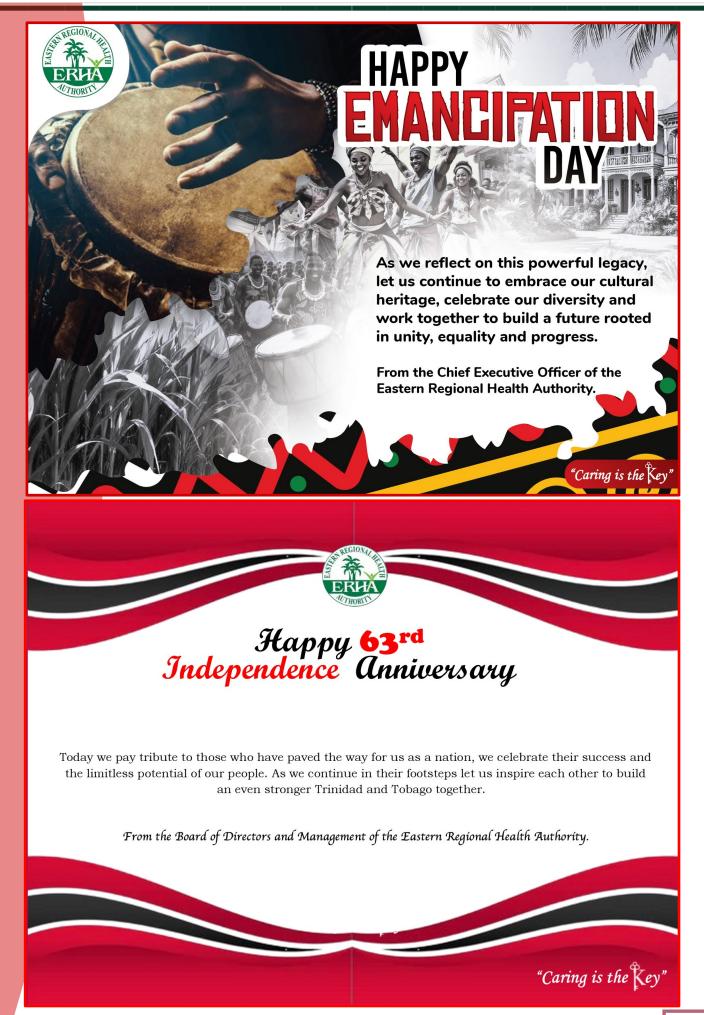
Health and wellness are powerful forms of liberation. As we reflect on our collective journey, we also celebrate the extraordinary contributions of Afro-Trinidadians who have shaped our health system with excellence, compassion and vision.

Afro-Trinidadians have made a profound and lasting impact in the field of medicine-advancing public health, pioneering medical research, and leading with integrity and dedication. Their contributions remind us that from the deep roots of struggle, generations have risen to shape a future defined by brilliance, resilience and purpose.

At the Eastern Regional Health Authority, we reaffirm our mission to build healthier communities, empower families, and advance equity in every aspect of healthcare delivery. This Emancipation Day, we invite you to take pride in your health as a form of self-respect and generational strength.

Let us celebrate freedom by honouring our past, investing in our well-being and shaping a future where every life is valued and every voice is heard.





Good News



Commendations to Staff

Narandai Singh

Good evening everyone. I have never posted on the group, but I want on behalf of my brother and sisters to express heartfelt thank you to the entire staff at the Sangre Grande Hospital (doctors, nurses, security and everyone who works at this establishment). We are grateful for your excellent services. The hospitality extended was exceptional. May the blessings of God almighty continue to be your guide and protect you all from the negativities of this world. Just to clear people's thoughts. We do not have any relatives in the health department.

JUST SHOWING GRATITIUDE AS IT'S DUE **

Sent via Facebook by Narandai Singh August 16, 2025

Natalia Vincent

As we highlight the bad we have to also highlight the good.... I wish to extend my gratitude to the **ERHA Trinidad & Tobago** quality control dept specifically Mr. Ali. Although my experience at the facility was horrible, I appreciate the accountability shown by the facility post experience. Hopefully as the negative experiences continue to be highlighted a long term plan will be implemented to mitigate some of the awful experiences endured by some. Improvement may not happen overnight but empathetic customer service is a great place to start.

Sent via Facebook by Natalia Vincent August 25, 2025

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



WHAT TO DO

BEFORE

If you are inside of a building, stay inside; don't leave your home until it is officially safe to do so. AFTER
Stay away from the landslide

Create a plan that involves evacuation routes including for your pets.

Ensure each family member is aware of evacuation procedures & designated shelters, if lost.

Stay informed of weather conditions and advisories in your area.

Assemble an emergency preparedness kit.

If outdoors, get to the nearest high ground that leads away

from the landslide.

If you are caught in a landslide with no option to evacuate to safety, curl in a tight ball and protect your head and neck.

If driving, look out for collapsed pavements, mud and fallen rocks.

area until it is confirmed safe by authorities.

Flooding may occur, be prepared to evacuate again if necessary.

Check your property for any structural damage.

Report any broken utility lines or water mains to the relevant company's such as T&TEC and WASA.







WARNING SIGNS!:

- · New cracks appear in plaster, tile, brick, or foundations.
- Outside walls, walks, or stairs begin pulling away from the building.
- Slowly developing, widening cracks appear on the ground or on paved areas such as streets or driveways.
- Bulging ground appears at the base of a slope.

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

Emergency: 911 Ambulance: 811 Police: 999 Fire: 990 ODPM: 511

WASA: 800-4H20 (800-4420/6) T&TEC: 800-TTEC (8832)



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

Website: www.erha.co.tt

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

Cumana Outreach Centre

Biche Outreach Centre

Tel: 280-9781/668-9053

Toco Main Road

Canque Village

Biche

Cumana Village, Cumana

Tel: 226-1134/670-8250

Grande Riviere Outreach Centre

Hosang Street Grand Riviere

Tel: 670-8264/385-5421

Guayaguayare Outreach Centre

Guayaguayare Road,

Guayaguayare

Tel: 226-4090/630-8777

Matelot Outreach Centre

Main Road Matelot

Tel: 670-2428/354-0052

Matura Outreach Centre

Toco Main Road Matura

Tel: 226-1261/668-6276

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

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



