



The Eastern *Vibes*

Monthly Newsletter 2025

November 2025, Issue #136

Public Board Meeting



Photo Collage of Public Board Meeting

Transparency and public accountability were the guiding principles behind the Eastern Regional Health Authority's (ERHA) Public Board Meeting which was held on November 18, 2025, at the Morton Memorial Presbyterian Church, Guaico, Sangre Grande. The meeting was

held in compliance with Rule 12, 2nd Schedule of the RHA Act, No. 5 of 1994.

The Board of Directors, Management and staff reaffirmed their commitment to members of the public to deliver quality healthcare services to the communities we serve.

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Public Board Meeting

Dr. Stephan Bhagan, Deputy Chairman, delivered the welcome remarks and reaffirmed the Board's shared commitment to advancing the health and well-being of the people of St. Andrew/St. David and Nariva/Mayaro. He also expressed sincere appreciation for the confidence and support of the public.

The Honourable Wayne Sturge, Minister of Defence and Minister in the Ministry of Homeland Security and MP for Toco/Sangre Grande praised the staff for their warm hospitality and exemplary customer service.

In his address, Dr. Sandeep Maharaj, Chairman of the Board of Directors, commended staff for their hard work and dedication. He reaffirmed the Board's commitment to improving services during the next five years, in alignment with the National Health Sector Policy in Trinidad and Tobago. Infrastructure Development; Modernisation of Facilities; Proper commissioning of Sangre Grande Hospital Campus (SGHC); Strengthened Diagnostic and Upgrades; Workforce reform; More Equitable Distribution of Health Workers and Addressing Specialist Gaps were some of the planned priorities to address.

Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer, gave a comprehensive account of the primary and secondary healthcare services being delivered, expanded and enhanced by the Authority. Particular attention was paid to the new SGHC Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

and Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) services. She also announced an expansion of Specialist clinics within Primary healthcare, along with an increase in outreach programmes to target Non Communicable Diseases, adolescents and Mental Health. Updates were also given on various projects that were completed to upgrade infrastructure and improve resources which included Ward Upgrades; HVAC Installations; Security Enhancements and Plumbing Upgrades. Parking was expanded to 423 spaces across the Campus. One noteworthy achievement was the SGHC Medical Laboratory ISO 15189:2022 Accreditation.

Following the presentations, Director, Ms. Alexia Romero, who moderated the meeting, invited questions and suggestions from the audience. Chairman Kenwyn Clyde Phillip of the Sangre Grande Regional Corporation and Chairman Raymond Cozier of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation, commended the Authority's progress and encouraged increased outreach, particularly in mental health. During the discussion, concerns regarding school-based mental health interventions and delays in urgent referrals were addressed, with assurances given on planned school outreach and ongoing efforts to improve referral processes through digitalization.

Members of the Management Team were present to respond to questions and share information with members of the public.



Thank You

The Board of Directors and Management Team of the Eastern Regional Health Authority thanks you, our valued stakeholders for attending our Public Board Meeting held on November 18, 2025.

We welcome your partnership and your meaningful and insightful contributions which have allowed us to strategically align the needs of the people in our communities to achieve our objectives.

The Eastern Regional Health Authority reaffirms our mission to build healthier communities, empower families and advance equity in every aspect of healthcare delivery.

First Veterans Fitness Classic



Veterans participate in fitness activity

The Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre came alive on November 15, 2025 as the Wellness Centre hosted its first Veterans Fitness Classic, a special event held in recognition of World Diabetes Day. The Fitness Classic was designed specifically for adults **60** years and older but attracted participants from age **51**. The event was also supported by members from the Matura and Manzanilla Wellness Centres and other nearby groups. This demonstrated a sense of unity, collaboration and shared commitment to community wellness.

The programme highlighted the importance of maintaining an active lifestyle, regular health screening and making healthier daily choices, key factors in the prevention and management of diabetes. This diverse group of seasoned adults demonstrated that wellness has no age limit and that staying active is both possible and enjoyable at every stage of life.

The session featured an hour of guided physical

activity, divided into four 15-minute segments. Participants enjoyed a lively dance warm-up, followed by chair exercises which focused on mobility and strength. They then moved into an energetic aerobic/zumba segment and concluded with gentle chair stretching, allowing participants to cool down safely and effectively.

In addition to the fitness activities, attendees benefited from health screenings conducted on-site. Prizes were also awarded in various categories to motivate and to encourage the competitive spirit.

The Wellness Department continues to encourage all members of the community to stay active, do regular health checks and make informed lifestyle choices. This initiative stood out as a reminder that physical wellness is achievable at any age and that collective support plays a powerful role in promoting healthier communities.

Health Education Department Continues Community Outreach in Schools



Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today. Malcolm X

Throughout the month of November, the Health Education Departments continued their mission to empower students with the knowledge and tools needed to lead healthier lives.

The main message that was communicated in these sessions was to inform students about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

During the period November 5-27, 2025 multiple sessions were conducted by the Health Education and Medical Social Work Departments. Over **700** students from Coryal Secondary School; SWAHA Hindu College; Rio Claro West Secondary School and Navet Presbyterian Primary School were all engaged

on this very important topic.

Discussions focused on short-term and long-term health consequences; dangers associated with drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes and marijuana, vaping, opioids and cocaine; and the chemical components of vape liquids. They also discussed factors influencing substance use, such as peer pressure, stress and curiosity. They explored healthier alternatives, practical smoking cessation techniques and support services available to help young people. Participants were also exposed to interactive props and had the opportunity to ask questions. Informative reading material was distributed to help reinforce the key messages from the lecture.

Students were encouraged to keep their lungs clean and to say no to harmful substances.

Blood Donation Drive

According to Dr. Lackram Bodoe, Minister of Health, Voluntary Blood donation is crucial to stabilising national blood reserves and reducing shortages that threaten patient survival. Trinidad Guardian

In an effort to increase supplies, the Sangre Grande Blood Donation Centre held a blood drive on November 28, 2025 at the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus.

32 persons donated blood during the drive. Blood from one person could save up to three lives; it can also save patients who need emergency surgery and improves health outcomes for patients. A person is eligible to be a voluntary blood donor if:

- The person is generally in good health.
- The minimum age limit for donating blood is 17 years, with consent.
- The person must weigh more than 110 pounds.
- Final eligibility is always determined during the screening process conducted by the Blood Bank.
- Contact the Sangre Grande Hospital Campus Blood Donation Centre at **226-9779/9780** for more information on how to become a voluntary donor.

Career Day at Cushe Government Primary School



ERHA staff interacting with children at the career day at Cushe Government Primary School

What would you like to be when you grow up? This is a common question posed to primary school students.

The Eastern Regional Health Authority partnered with the Cushe Government Primary School for their career day at the school on November 7, 2025 to introduce students to a wide range of professionals related to healthcare.

Representatives from the medical and allied health professions including Nursing; Pharmacy;

Medical Social Work; Nutrition and Dental interacted with the students to give them a better understanding of the diverse careers within the healthcare system.

Over **55** students attended the career day and enthusiastically enquired about career opportunities in health and wellness. Events like these ensure that students are not only informed but empowered to make meaningful decisions about their future paths.

A Magical Evening of Christmas Cheer



Staff at Supercare bring in the festive cheer

The Supercare Building came alive with festive cheer as staff gathered to usher in the Christmas spirit on November 28, 2025. The afternoon was filled with exciting activities which brought everyone together. Guided by the Office of the C.E.O, staff showed off their vocal talent during karaoke, spreading laughter and holiday melodies throughout the lobby. Creativity was on full display during the Christmas tree decorating, where teams added ornaments, ribbons and Christmas lights to adorn the tree.

Adding to the fun, a round of '**Trini Christmas themed**' Family Feud, encouraged friendly competition. Staff also took part in a chance auction, where lucky winners walked away with delightful surprises. To put the icing on the cake, tasty Christmas treats and goodies were provided by the Management staff for everyone to enjoy. The celebration concluded with the much-anticipated lighting of the Christmas tree, illuminating the Supercare Building. The event not only kicked off the holiday season but also strengthened the team spirit.

Increased Access to Healthcare Services



Dr. Sanjay Ramnanan, Director, Mr. Nicholas Morris, Member of Parliament for Mayaro, Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer chat with Ms. Zalina Khan, Health Education Aide



Ms. Josane Williams, Health Education Officer and Mr. Ronald Ram-Health Education Aide interacting with members of the public visiting the educational booth at the Health Fair

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) in collaboration with Mr. Nicholas Morris, Member of Parliament for Mayaro and SEWA TT, hosted a Health Fair on November 16, 2025 at the Rio Claro East Secondary School with a view to increase access to healthcare services.

Over **250** persons attended the health fair and benefitted from the wide range of health services offered by the Authority. Attendees accessed free screenings including Blood Pressure; Glucose Testing; Body Mass Index; Medical Consultation and Pap Smears. The health fair also featured information booths to promote health awareness by the Nutrition; Medical Social Work; Pharmacy; Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative; Health Education; Dental; Healthy Hospital Initiative and Mental Health Departments.

Director Dr. Sanjay Ramnanan, Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer and

Dr. Cindy-Ann Badaloo, General Manager-Primary Healthcare Services (Ag.) were also in attendance to support the initiative and to encourage persons to take charge of their health.

Outreach activities continued on November 22, 2025 with the participation of staff at a health fair hosted by the Guaico Football Club at the San Louis Recreation Facility, Guaico.

The ERHA team provided basic health screening; HIV Testing and Vaccination as well as general information on health and wellness.

The ERHA remains dedicated to strengthening community health through outreach initiatives as a way to empower individuals with the knowledge and services needed to lead healthier lives.

World Diabetes Day

According to the World Health Organization, "Diabetes is a chronic, metabolic disease characterized by elevated levels of blood glucose (or blood sugar), which leads over time to serious damage to the heart, blood vessels, eyes, kidneys and nerves."

The Health Education Departments hosted several health promotion activities and a staff webinar during the month of November, in observance of World Diabetes Day during the period November 11 - 26, 2025. Interactive lectures were delivered by Health Education Officers and Aides at the Brothers Road, Guayaguayare and Biche Outreach Centres and at Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre and Manzanilla Secondary School. Participants were informed on proper insulin administration technique and proper diabetic foot care. They were also encouraged to engage in a light

exercise session and were provided with diabetic-friendly recipes. Samples of a variety of light snacks suitable for individuals living with diabetes were also distributed.

The department also hosted a Mini Health Fair, Diabetes Well-being Workshop and Staff Diabetes Webinar as part of their ongoing efforts to inform persons about diabetes risk and how to manage conditions associated with diabetes. The health fair offered participants free blood pressure and blood glucose tests while the Diabetes Well-being Workshop provided activities aimed at improving brain function, building team spirit and promoting physical activity. At the Staff Diabetes Webinar, participants were sensitised on cost effective recipes, understanding the body's response to increased insulin levels and had a question and answer segment at the end.

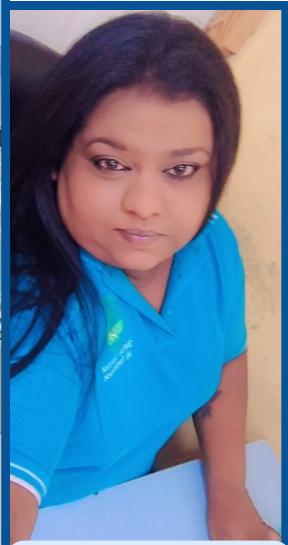
Staff Support World Diabetes Day



Ms. Tameika Mungo, Primary Health Care Services Administrative Officer - Nariva/Mayaro



Staff at Cumuto Outreach Centre



Ms. Sharon Rambharack, Sterilizer Operator - Sangre Grande Hospital Campus

World Diabetes Day Photo Collage





Commendations to Staff

Maria Vera Lezama

ERHA Trinidad & Tobago come to the front of the class.

2 hrs. at the Enhance Health Center this morning (well they were working from the outpatient section at the old hospital as work was being done at the health center.)

The medication I expected to have purchase which is expensive YOU HAD IT. When I opened that brown paper bag and saw it I was shocked and gave God thanks.

**Sent via Facebook by Maria Vera Lezama
November 02, 2025**

Maura Cooseelal

The time has come for me to express my deepest appreciation and heartfelt praise for the Oncology Clinic at the Sangre Grande Hospital.

From the very beginning, every member of the various Staffs has shown themselves to be hardworking, dedicated, compassionate and genuinely concerned about their patients. They consistently go ABOVE and BEYOND to ensure that we are comfortable in every possible way. As patients, we are made to feel like family.

The team-Doctors, Nurses, Nursing Assistants, Patient Care Assistants, Ward Attendants and Clerical Staff - treats us with true humanity and kindness. I can honestly say that they feel our pain, our distress, and our struggles and they meet us with empathy every step of the way. Many patients I've spoken with consider them to be nothing short of EARTH'S ANGELS.

For the past six years, I have attended this clinic and I can truly say that my experience has been both comforting and uplifting.

So, on behalf of all the patients, I want to extend our heartfelt THANKS to the entire team — Medical, Nursing, Clerical and Ancillary—for their love, care, concern dedication and compassion.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

**Sent via Facebook by Maura Cooseelal
November 27, 2025**

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



Commendations to Staff

Zali Stephens

A Different Story—ERHA's Approach

Still in severe pain and desperate for relief, I decided to visit the Sangre Grande Hospital A&E on Tuesday morning, again under the ERHA.

From the moment I entered, the experience was like night and day. I was pleasantly greeted by a Customer Relations Officer (CRO), who asked what I was there for and kindly directed me to have a seat. While waiting, the CROs were actively on the floor engaging with patients, explaining:

The expected wait times;

The acceptable nurse-to-patient and doctor-to-patient ratios and what currently exists at the SGH A&E;

The different levels of emergency, noting that while everyone in the emergency room is a priority, some cases are higher priorities than others;

Their role and function as CROs—serving as a liaison between patients and medical professionals; and

That if any patient had a concern or issue, they could approach them directly for assistance.

That level of communication transparency and professionalism was impressive and reassuring especially when you're sitting in pain, unsure of what's happening next.

When I met with the doctor, he thoroughly reviewed my x-ray and explained that there is indeed an issue with my spinal column—a narrowing of the space between my L5 and sacrum bones, which requires physiotherapy. He prescribed two pain medications and a steroid to help alleviate the inflammation that might be contributing to the pain and administered two injections to provide immediate relief, as I was visibly in distress.

That experience restored my faith in what public healthcare can be when staff are engaged, compassionate and proactive.

Relection

It is unfortunate that within the same public health system, under two different RHA's the contrast in quality of care could be so stark. One experience left me feeling dismissed and helpless; the other, supported and respected.

The difference wasn't in the resources—it was in the attitude, empathy and accountability of the healthcare team. Patients deserve to be treated with dignity, to have their pain acknowledged and to receive care guided not by convenience, but by compassion.

**Sent via Facebook by Zali Stephens
November 5, 2025**

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



World Radiography Day



World Radiography Day is celebrated each year on **November 8th** to commemorate the remarkable discovery of X-rays by German physicist Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen.

During his experiments with cathode rays Roentgen observed that a fluorescent screen began to glow even though it was covered by thick material. This led to the discovery of a new, invisible form of energy capable of passing through objects and revealing images of bones and internal structures. His groundbreaking finding forever changed the course of medicine and earned him the first Nobel Prize in Physics in 1901.

This discovery gave rise to the field of Radiography. This is a branch of medical science that uses radiation to produce images of the inside of the human body. Over the years, Radiography has developed into an essential part of healthcare, helping doctors detect diseases, diagnose conditions, and plan treatments with precision. It blends scientific understanding, technical skill, and compassionate care, making it one of the most trusted areas of modern medicine.

Advancements in Radiography have expanded beyond traditional X-rays. Different modalities such as Computed Tomography (CT) allow for detailed, three-dimensional imaging, while Digital Radiography provides X-rays that can be viewed digitally with improved image quality and lower radiation doses. Radiography advanced to Medical Imaging where powerful imaging systems that do not rely on radiation, such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Ultrasound, use magnetic fields and sound waves. Additionally, Nuclear Medicine has advanced imaging even further by allowing visualization of body functions and early disease detection.

Today, Radiographers, Radiologists and Medical Physicist work side by side to ensure accurate imaging, patient safety, and effective diagnosis. World Radiography Day celebrates their unwavering dedication, innovation, and compassion. Their work continues to illuminate the path to healing, improving the quality of life for countless people around the world.



WORLD TSUNAMI AWARENESS DAY 2025

Today we observe World Tsunami Awareness Day 2025 under the theme ***“Be Tsunami Ready: Invest in Tsunami Preparedness”***. This theme underscores a critical truth. While tsunamis are rare, their impact can be devastating and the most effective protection comes from proactive investment in preparedness rather than reactive response.

Preparedness means more than early warning systems. It includes public awareness, staff training, resilient infrastructure and coordinated emergency planning. Each of these actions transforms uncertainty into readiness, reducing the human and financial cost of disasters.

Although Trinidad and Tobago is not in a high-risk tsunami zone, the lessons of this theme are universal. The principles of investing in preparedness whether through drills, hazard assessments, reliable communications or strong infrastructure apply across all hazards we face in our health system.

On this day, let us recommit ourselves to advancing a culture of preparedness within the Eastern Regional Health Authority. By investing in readiness today, we ensure that our health facilities, staff and communities are stronger and safer tomorrow.



November 2025

Sangre Grande Hospital Campus

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

Rio Claro Accident and Emergency

Tel: 226-9230

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

Toco Accident and Emergency

Tel: 226-9428

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



ERHA Trinidad & Tobago



@ erhatrinidad

Website : www.erha.co.tt