

# HEALTH Record

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# HEALTH Record

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# President Ali commissions \$6.6B Enmore Regional Hospital

His Excellency Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana, has officially commissioned the \$6.6B state-of-the-art Enmore Regional Hospital, East Coast Demerara, a facility designed to deliver world-class healthcare services to thousands of Guyanese residents. The ceremony was held on July 4.

Built to meet international healthcare standards, the hospital reflects the Government's ongoing commitment to modernising Guyana's healthcare system and expanding equitable access to quality medical care for all citizens.

The hospital, located along the rapidly developing East Coast Demerara corridor, features 75 beds, 24-hour emergency and laboratory services, state-of-the-art imaging technologies, including computed tomography (CT) scans, digital X-rays, and ultrasound, and three surgical theatres.

It also houses specialised care units such as an Intensive Care Unit (ICU), a High Dependency Unit (HDU), neonatal care, and outpatient clinics for internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics, paediatrics, ophthalmology, audiology and dentistry.



# Guyana launches nine-valent HPV vaccine for cervical cancer prevention



In a significant step toward the elimination of cervical cancer, the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), has officially launched the nine-valent Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine nationwide.

This initiative represents a critical milestone in Guyana's ongoing efforts to strengthen prevention, screening, and treatment for HPV-related diseases.

Speaking at the launching ceremony held at the Diamond Regional Hospital, East Bank Demerara on July 24, Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, underscored the importance of the vaccine in the national cancer prevention strategy.

"This scientific achievement is safe, effective, long-lasting, and now accessible to our population," said Dr Anthony. "The introduction of the nine-valent HPV vaccine marks a historic day for Guyana as we intensify efforts to protect future generations from HPV-related cancers," he said.

HPV vaccination coverage in Guyana has seen significant improvement in

recent years, rising from just 17 percent in 2020 to 71 percent as of 2024. The Ministry now aims to meet the WHO's recommended coverage target of 90 percent among children aged nine to 15.

The newly introduced nine-valent HPV vaccine offers protection against nine HPV strains, including those most commonly linked to cervical and other HPV-related cancers.

Under the national immunisation programme, the vaccine is now available at no cost to children aged nine to 15 (administered in two doses) and to women and men aged 16 to 45 (administered in three doses).

With support from PAHO's Strategic Fund and a partnership with vaccine manufacturer US-based Merck, the Government of Guyana was able to procure the vaccines at a reduced cost, well below the market price.

Dr Anthony explained that the average cost of the vaccine in the US is US\$369 per dose, but the Guyana was able to obtain it for just US\$15 per dose, saving approximately US\$17 million in the process.

Minister Anthony explained that a nine-valent vaccine protects against nine of the common HPV strains that cause cervical cancer and is 90 percent effective. The vaccine previously administered was the quadrivalent. The new and enhanced version of the vaccine offers more protection to patients.

PAHO Director, Dr Jarbas Barbosa,

who attended the launch, praised Guyana's leadership and commitment to public health. "Guyana is among the first countries in the region to introduce the nine-valent HPV vaccine, a clear testament to its proactive approach in safeguarding the health of its citizens," said Dr Barbosa. "We commend the Ministry of Health, Minister Anthony, and all healthcare professionals for their steadfast dedication to improving health outcomes for every Guyanese."

Cervical cancer remains the second most common cancer affecting women in Guyana, with approximately 129 new cases diagnosed annually. HPV is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections in the world and is responsible for a range of diseases including cervical, anal, vaginal and penile cancers.

Across the Americas, an estimated 44,000 women die from cervical cancer each year -- deaths that are largely preventable through comprehensive vaccination, regular screening and timely medical intervention.



# Region Five celebrates landmark achievement with opening of Bath Regional Hospital

In a transformative move for healthcare in Guyana, Region Five (Mahaica-Berbice) marked a historic milestone on July 29 with the official commissioning of the Bath Regional Hospital, the first state-of-the-art medical facility of its kind in the area.

The \$6.6 billion hospital was formally opened by His Excellency President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali during a ceremony that underscored Government's commitment to strengthening healthcare delivery and accessibility across all regions.

Strategically located in Bath, the hospital is fully equipped to deliver comprehensive and advanced medical services to residents in Region Five and beyond. This initiative is part of the Government's ongoing investment in modernising Guyana's health infrastructure and ensuring equitable access to quality care for all citizens.



## Key features of the hospital include:

- three fully-equipped operating theaters to support a wide range of surgical procedures,
- s state-of-the-art dialysis unit with capacity for multiple patients,
- a modern birthing suite designed to ensure comfort and safety for mothers and newborns,
- a dedicated Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to support patients with critical medical needs,
- 75 private, air-conditioned inpatient rooms that offer comfort, privacy, and dignity to patients,
- advanced diagnostic imaging, including computed tomography (CT scans), X-ray and ultrasound capabilities, and
- fully operational medical laboratories for timely and accurate testing and analysis.

President Ali emphasised the role this hospital will play in improving lives and reducing the need for residents to travel long distances for advanced healthcare. He reaffirmed Government's

commitment to building a robust healthcare system that prioritises innovation, inclusivity, and patient-centered care.

Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, also hailed the project as a model for future regional health institutions and praised the team of local and international partners involved in the successful completion of the facility.

The hospital is now officially open and poised to become a cornerstone in the region's development, ushering in a new era of accessible, quality healthcare for the people of Region Five.



# Health Ministry launches suicide surveillance system



The Ministry of Health has officially launched the National Suicide Surveillance System, a critical initiative aimed at strengthening Guyana's response to suicide prevention and mental health.

This pioneering system was developed with technical support from the Pan American Health Organisation/World Health Organisation (PAHO/WHO). It serves as a centralised digital platform for the collection, integration, analysis, and reporting of data related to suicide and attempted suicide across the country.

By capturing real-time and accurate information, the system is expected to significantly enhance evidence-based decision-making, improve early intervention strategies, and foster greater accountability in national mental health efforts.

The launch of the National Suicide Surveillance System aligns with the Suicide Prevention Act 2022, and forms a key component of the National Mental Health Action Plan and National Suicide Prevention Plan 2024-2030. Together, these frameworks underscore the Government's continued commitment to building a safer, healthier Guyana where every life is valued.

The initiative, long in the planning, is intended to improve the country's

ability to respond effectively and compassionately to cases of attempted suicide and related mental health.

Developed with technical support from PAHO/WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the system will serve as a vital tool to gather accurate, timely data to guide targeted interventions aimed at reducing the tragic loss of lives to suicide across the country.

All data collected through this system will be handled confidentially in accordance with Guyana's laws. Information gathered will support coordinated, real-time responses by the Ministry of Health, the Mental Health Unit, and other stakeholders committed to providing care and support.

After a mental health practitioner completes the form, it will then be submitted to a server and become accessible only to officials within the Ministry of Health. Using the information provided in the document, the Ministry of Health, the Mental Health Unit and other stakeholders will respond accordingly.

This surveillance form will be made available at all health institutions and all telemedicine sites across the country.

The launch of this transformative

initiative was held on July 23 at the Ministry of Health's Head Office on Brickdam, Georgetown and was attended by Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, representatives from PAHO/WHO and officials from the Mental Health Unit.

During his address, Minister Anthony elaborated on the strategic steps made by the Government leading up to this point. "We had challenges with suicide. For many years, Guyana had high suicide numbers, and we wanted to have a very special focus on reducing the cases of suicide," he said.

Dr Anthony explained that, in the past, although legislation dealing with mental health and suicide cases existed, efforts to gather accurate information proved challenging since data were not always readily available.

"With this existing law, we were still having challenges with institutions reporting, especially hospitals. So, we thought by developing this in electronic format and giving people access to it, we will be able to get the information almost in real time," the Minister said. With the implementation of this new system, persons in both coastal and remote areas will be able to access mental health services in a timely and strategic manner, and persons who may attempt suicide will have access to the help they need.



“We started with policy, and we did legislation; we went to policy and, from policy, we have a number of initiatives that we are now putting in place to ensure that we reform what we’re doing here in mental health,” explained Dr Anthony.

The Minister pointed out that one of the things they envisaged in the various pieces of legislation passed thus far looked at ensuring that, whenever an attempted suicide or suicide happened, it should be reported in a timely manner so that officials have timely information and action is taken to have mental health professionals work with the individual and/or their families.

To this end, it was noted that the newly implemented system will allow for the monitoring of the results of the many suicide prevention initiatives implemented in Guyana over the past two years.

The system will also serve as a backbone for Guyana’s national strategy to address the root causes of suicide and facilitate a comprehensive data-driven approach to understanding and addressing the complex issue of suicide in Guyana.

Meanwhile, Dr Barbosa, hailed the Government’s prioritisation of reforming mental health care at all

levels with a focus on rights-based law reform. He disclosed that PAHO has supported the Ministry to advance mental health and suicide prevention in Guyana in the development of the Mental Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Suicide Prevention Act of 2022, along with the National Mental Health Plan 2023-2030.

“Surveillance is an essential component of suicide prevention. Quality, real-time data on suicides and suicide attempts are crucial to understanding the problem, identifying high-risk groups, and responding early with effective and targeted interventions, which should always be evidence-based,” he said.

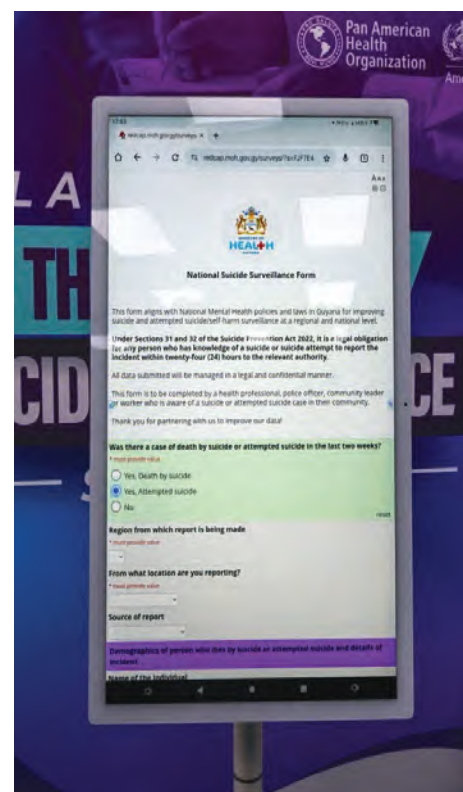
Further to this, Dr Barbosa noted that timely and accurate data on suicide and self-harm are vital to informing mental health service provision, resource deployment, and guidelines for managing suicidal behaviour.

He added that the steps taken focused on surveillance and producing data for action will contribute to the fulfilment of commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

“I commend Guyana for recognising

that mental health conditions, and their underlying risk factors and determinants deeply impact people in the places where they live, work and play,” he said.

The Ministry of Health has expressed appreciation to all stakeholders, technical experts and international partners who contributed to the realisation of this vital tool. The initiative marks another step forward in Guyana’s mission to reduce the incidence of suicide and ensure comprehensive, accessible mental health services for all.



# 165 healthcare workers enrol in GOAL's first online health sciences programme -partnership with India delivers 300 online courses

Some 165 Guyanese doctors, nurses and allied health professionals have enrolled in the Government of Guyana's Online Academy for Learning (GOAL) first-ever online healthcare science programme.

The digital health education initiative is being delivered through a partnership with Medvarsity, Asia's largest healthcare EdTech company, which is accredited by the British Accreditation Council. The partnership marks the first collaboration between GOAL and Medvarsity, accessible in more than 190 countries.

Speaking at the official launch of the



first cohort on July 8, Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, said the programme is a critical next step in further developing Guyana's healthcare system by investing in human capital, describing it as a bold step towards transforming the country's healthcare system.

"We are really looking forward to using the courses that you have here to upskill our doctors and nurses and other technicians so that they would be able to give a higher level of medical care to the people of Guyana," he said. "In time to come, the people of the region will see Guyana being developed as a Caribbean hub for the delivery of health care and, with your assistance, we will be able to do that," said the Minister. He explained that the initiative is designed to address existing gaps in the health system and to help build a sustainable and efficient healthcare sector.

Speaking directly to the first cohort of students, Dr Anthony highlighted the programme's role in building technical capacity among healthcare personnel, a key priority for the Government of Guyana.

One of the programme's highlights, said Minister Anthony, is its approach. Participants will learn medical practices and techniques in keeping with international standards; skills that will be applied in areas such as the critical care units in new hospitals slated to open across Guyana in the coming months.

## **Future Training**

Looking ahead, Minister Anthony explained that GOAL and Medvarsity will adopt a "mixed approach," allowing Guyanese students to participate in practical training in India.

"While we are starting with most of the courses that probably you can do all online, in the future we are hoping to pursue some of the courses that would be delivered in a mixed way," he said.

The Minister pointed out that, while this inaugural programme is currently entirely online, the Ministry of Health and Medvarsity are looking to expand their partnership to include international student exchange and training.



“You do the theory online, and then if there are practical things that need to be done or learned, we can send those persons to India to get those types of practical skills. Because, you know, medicine, apart from knowing the theory, it’s also a hands-on thing. So, you need to have some practical skills, and we look forward to sending some of our people to India to get those skills,” he added.

## Healthcare Vision

On the broader development of Guyana’s healthcare sector, Minister Anthony highlighted the sector’s ongoing growth, new initiatives, and infrastructure, and emphasised the role that trained Guyanese professionals can play in a rapidly evolving landscape.

“We’re expanding the health sector here. Six new hospitals will be opened by August this year, and we have another six in the pipeline to be constructed and opened over the next two years. We’re also going to be building an oncology centre, and there are lots of specialists that we would need in the area of oncology,” he stated.

The goal, Dr. Anthony said, is not just to create a better healthcare system, but to deliver the best possible care to Guyanese and make Guyana the Caribbean’s newest healthcare hub.

Of the 165 beneficiaries, 141 are women and 24 are men. Nurses and allied health workers account for 84 percent of the participants, while 16 percent are doctors. Each participant has received scholarships to pursue two courses, amounting to a total of 330 scholarships awarded in total. The programmes range from one to six months.

The most popular courses being offered include Advanced Certificate in Critical Care Nursing, Certificate in Electrocardiogram (ECG) Interpretation, Certificate in Diabetes Mellitus, Advanced Certificate in Infection Prevention and Control, Advanced Certificate in Surgical Nursing, and Advanced Certificate in Clinical Cardiology.

Dr Anthony urged participants to make full use of the academic opportunity and expressed hope that the skills gained will be applied effectively in the future.

“I would like to encourage all the beneficiaries of the programme to make sure that they work hard, do all the different quizzes and so forth that are there because you are the pioneering batch and the example that you set would

certainly set the role and pace for the others who would come after you,” he said.

The initiative aims to bridge the gap in the availability of trained healthcare professionals and specialists to support Guyana’s rapidly expanding health infrastructure, including the construction of five new regional hospitals.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of Medvarsity, Mr Gerald Jaideep, echoed the Minister’s vision of combining online education with real-world experience.

“Aligning with the Minister’s vision of online plus offline learning, the key impact of healthcare training happens at the bedside, beside the patient. And we’re very excited to hear the Minister’s vision of looking at that aspect of skilling and enablement, because that’s where truly transformative healthcare outcomes happen,” said Mr Gerald Jaideep.

“We are super excited to work in whatever form or manner possible, bringing our clinical expertise to Guyana, supporting Guyana’s experts to come to India or other parts of the world to learn from the best of the best out there. And hopefully, very soon with the six new hospitals opening, we can make Guyana the centre of medical excellence for the Caribbean region,” he said.

Since its launch in 2021, Government has invested \$12.6 billion in the GOAL initiative, averaging around \$312,000 per student. The programme has nearly doubled its original target of 20,000 online scholarships, with more than 39,000 awarded to date.



Chief Executive Officer of Medvarsity,  
Mr Gerald Jaideep

# New Amsterdam hospital launches advanced CT services



Healthcare delivery at the New Amsterdam Hospital in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) has been enhanced with the installation of a new computerised tomography (CT) scan machine to diagnose a range of medical issues, ranging from injuries to diseases.

The medical imaging device produces detailed, cross-sectional images of the body, often known as slices, using X-rays.

Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, who spoke at the commissioning ceremony on July 16, disclosed that the hospital urgently needed a CT scanner because the old one was no longer functional.

He explained that before the machine was installed, patients had to travel to the Anamayah Memorial Hospital Laboratory on the Corentyne, Berbice or to Georgetown to have a scan done. That makes the new 128-slice CT

scanner a game-changer for local residents. Dr Anthony explained that Government opted to purchase a new machine instead of spending \$15 million to repair the existing one.

“We can now look at different organs and see what is going on with those specific organs. We can look at what is happening with the heart, vessels, and muscles,” said the Minister. “I am sure that the doctors here would utilise it in a more specialised way.”

Over the years, the hospital has benefited from the installation of an updated digital X-ray machine, a mobile unit and a mammography machine to improve healthcare access. Three operating theatres are also available at the health facility.

To advance patient care in the region, Minister Anthony reminded residents at the ceremony that a state-of-the-art hospital will soon become a reality at Number 75 Village on the Corentyne.

The hospital’s top floor will have two operating theatres, a minor theatre, a delivery ward, and a 75-bed inpatient facility, while the lower floor will feature a 24-hour Accident and Emergency Unit.

It will also have an imaging suite equipped with a CT scan, digital X-rays, and ultrasound. Residents will also enjoy 24-hour laboratory services.



# Guyana's remains committed to regional health security

## -Health Minister



Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, has called on global leaders and regional partners to unite in building robust, future-ready health systems through visionary action, strategic investment and strong partnerships.

In his keynote address at the opening of the joint Regional Health Security (RHS) and Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security (RCM-HS) Workshop on July 29, the Minister welcomed delegates to the “land of many waters” and reaffirmed Guyana’s commitment to transforming the Caribbean’s health security architecture amid rising global challenges.

“Health security in the 21st century is not confined by borders; it is dynamic, complex, and increasingly shaped by the intersection of environmental threats, misinformation, and systemic vulnerabilities. We must not only prepare, we must partner. We must act together,” Dr Antony said.

This two-day workshop is being hosted by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the Pandemic Fund Project, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The workshop aims to strengthen regional capacities to protect public health and respond to infectious diseases, pandemics, and other health

threats. Achieving effective health security requires a comprehensive understanding of the pathway, region-specific public health goods, and mechanisms that support coordinated, harmonized action among member states, regional agencies and international partners.

In light of the evolving global and regional landscape, the workshop also provides a platform to update member states on Caribbean-specific strategies to enhance health security, share experiences on preparedness and response, and deepen collaboration among stakeholders.

The workshop is aimed at achieving a number of objectives, including:

- providing updates on global frameworks, agencies, and partners involved in supporting regional health security,
- presenting the current RHS pathway, including key public health threats and priorities identified by member states and agencies,
- introducing Caribbean-tailored Regional Public Goods (RPGs) for enhancing disease surveillance, early warning systems, laboratory networks, workforce development and coordination mechanisms,
- facilitating the development of draft

action plans incorporating CARPHA’s RPGs and mechanisms aligned with the RHS pathway, and

- strengthening coordination and collaboration mechanisms among agencies and partners for effective implementation of Caribbean Pandemic Fund grants and other initiatives aimed at improving preparedness, prevention and response (PPR) capacities across member states.

This workshop represents a critical step in advancing a unified and resilient regional health security framework that can effectively safeguard Caribbean populations from current and future public health threats.

Minister Anthony praised the collaborative work of CARPHA and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), noting the Caribbean’s leadership in designing a tiered, digitally integrated One Health-based health security system, responsive to the region’s climate, health, and economic realities.



“Our region is building a model for resilience, rooted in data, grounded in science, and strengthened through cooperation,” he said. “From early warning systems to digital disease surveillance and countering misinformation, the Caribbean is stepping forward as a global example.”

The Minister urged participants and the broader international community to recognize health security as the defining challenge of the century, on par with climate change and

geopolitical conflict.

He also called for simulation-based training for frontline health workers; innovative investment in technology and foresight; multisectoral partnerships that bridge health, environment, agriculture, and education; and ethical use of digital platforms to combat misinformation and build public trust.

“We may not be able to predict the next pandemic, but we can prepare.

We can strengthen systems, and above all, we can act in solidarity,” Dr Anthony said.

The Minister reaffirmed Guyana’s commitment to leading by example and fostering regional unity in health governance. Delegates from across the Caribbean and international institutions will engage in scenario planning, coordination strategies, and knowledge sharing aimed at building a safer, more resilient future for all.

high-quality healthcare right at their doorsteps. They will be able to access services such as gynaecology, audiology, dentistry, ophthalmology, psychological support, neonatal and general medicine -- services that were previously not available on the East Coast.

Apart from providing healthcare, some 1,000 individuals from Enmore and surrounding communities will gain employment at this new facility, filling positions such as doctors, nurses and nursing assistants, along with administrative roles.

“The hospital is part of a larger vision -- a vision of a Guyana where every child, every mother, every elder, every patient, regardless of their income or their address, has access to high-quality, modern, responsive and people-centred healthcare,” said President Ali.

“We are opening a door to the future, we are raising the curtain on a new era of healthcare,” the President said, addressing what can only be described as a very large gathering of people.

The hospital features a 24/7 emergency department, dental

facilities, eyecare and 75 inpatient beds in private, air-conditioned rooms. There will be two state-of-the-art operating theatres and comes equipped with dialysis, computed tomography (CT) and X-ray machines. It will also be able to perform ultrasound imaging and full-service labs for speedy test results.

In the next two months, four other hospitals will be commissioned. They include new hospitals in Lima, Essequibo Coast; De Kinderen, West Coast Demerara; Bath, West Coast Berbice; and Skeldon, Corentyne, Berbice. The Diamond Hospital was recently opened, delivering services to 40,000 residents on the East Bank of Demerara.

“Guyana will emerge as a regional leader in smart care health services through a bold and forward-thinking health agenda. The country’s rapidly integrating digital technology and the public health infrastructure,” Dr Ali said.

Minister Anthony also urged staff to deliver compassionate and professional healthcare to patients and encouraged residents to make full use of the services.

# Enmore Regional Hospital to provide access to high-quality healthcare -President Ali

His Excellency President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali commissioned the first-of-its-kind Enmore Regional Hospital on July 4, saying the facility will deliver much-needed medical relief to thousands of residents along the East Coast of Demerara.

The new hospital will eliminate costly and time-consuming travel to Georgetown by providing access to

China's Ambassador to Guyana, Her Excellency Yang Yang, extended congratulations to the Government and people of Guyana for achieving yet another milestone in their development story. She described the occasion as a shining example of a strong partnership shared between the two countries.

Ambassador Yang also reaffirmed China's commitment to supporting Guyana's national development, particularly in the healthcare sector. "We will continue to do our part to ensure the regional hospitals across Guyana operate at the highest possible standard," she said.

Through a \$38 billion investment, the Government is constructing six modern regional hospitals, two of which have now been commissioned.

When these projects are completed, they will add 450 additional inpatient beds, 12 state-of-the-art operating theatres, six fully equipped 24/7 departments, computed tomography (CT) scanners, digital X-ray units, neonatal units, operating theatres, ultrasound machines and fully equipped modern labs.

Hospitals are also being built in Moruca in Region One (Barima-Waini), Kamarang in Region Seven (Cuyuni-Mazaruni), Kato in Region Eight (Potaro-Siparuni), and Lethem in Region Nine (Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo). Major upgrades are also underway at existing hospitals in Bartica in Region Seven, Linden in Region Ten (Upper Demerara-Berbice), and West Demerara in Region Three (Essequibo Islands-West Demerara).

Apart from these regional facilities, the Government is constructing a specialised Paediatric and Maternal



Hospital at Ogle, East Coast Demerara, dedicated to pregnant women, mothers and their newborns.

### Quality of life

The new hospital will be staffed by fully skilled health professionals and outfitted with the most modern amenities. "This is not just a health expansion, it is health transformation. We are building a digitally integrated health ecosystem," the President said.

The new facility is a significant step up from the polyclinic that served the East Coast Demerara communities for years. It is equipped with the latest medical technology and forms part of the broader digital transformation ongoing countrywide.

"Everything that surrounds these investments and the centrepiece of these investments is all about people. When we build our roads, when we improve your recreational facilities, when we give you lights in your grounds, when we create safe spaces for family, all of it is about people. It's about quality of life," President Ali said. "This hospital is part of a larger vision, a vision of a Guyana where

every child, every mother, every patient, regardless of their income or address, has access to high-quality, modern, and people-centred healthcare."

### Smart-healthcare hub

Already, Guyana has started digitising its medical records. The Government is also engaging its international partners to bring on-stream cutting-edge technology that would position the country as a smart-healthcare hub for the region.

"No more guesswork, no more lost files, no more patients falling through the cracks. We are harnessing the power of artificial intelligence. This is the age of smart healthcare, and Guyana is leading the way. Guyana will emerge as a leader in the region in this arena," President Ali asserted.

Minister Anthony said that the hospital will be staffed with health professionals, offering a number of specialised services.

"We have designed the hospital to do a number of specialisation clinics, clinics in internal medicine and subspecialty

in internal medicine, including things like cardiology and so forth. We also have specialised clinics in obstetrics, in gynaecology, in surgery, in orthopaedics, and then we have clinics in psychiatry, in dermatology and others visiting clinicians who will be coming to me in this hospital to offer those services,” Dr Anthony said.

The ultimate goal of the new facility is decentralising healthcare services across the country.

“For generations, the people on the East Coast Demerara had to journey to Georgetown to get their surgeries, and if they needed a simple thing like an x-ray, many of them have to go to the Georgetown hospital to get that X ray. “If you wanted to do a CT scan, you have to go to the Georgetown hospital to get that CT scan. And very often, it depends on the types of laboratory

services that you need. You have to also go to Georgetown to get those types of laboratory services. All of that you will now be able to get at this new hospital,” the Minister said.

Minister Anthony noted that these investments are not simply about infrastructure and acquiring modern equipment, but also about ensuring that Guyanese benefit from compassionate and reliable healthcare.

### Nurses

To this end, he noted that the Government is making equal investments in its human capital with over 6,000 nurses expected to be trained in the next five years.

The Enmore facility was built in collaboration with China’s Sinopharm International and is part of a broader

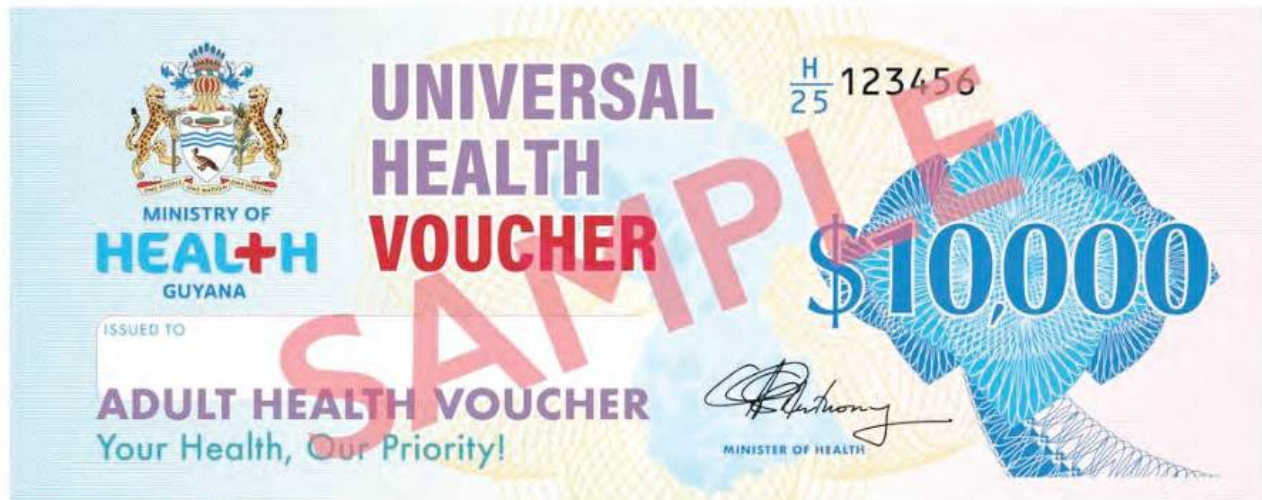
\$38 billion national health transformation across the country.

According to the Chinese Ambassador to Guyana, the project is another shining venture of the two nations’ bilateral relations.

The facility is the second state-of-the-art hospital to be commissioned so far in collaboration with the Chinese Government. The first was at Diamond, East Coast Demerara. The facilities, the Ambassador said, are being constructed with strong standards exceeding international benchmarks.

She said that it is a concrete manifestation of the Chinese Government’s commitment to supporting Guyana’s development, particularly the healthcare sector.

## What Does The **Universal Health Voucher** Look Like?



# Ministry of Health, PAHO/WHO launch surveillance workshop to boost elimination efforts

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization/ World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) conducted a two-day Disease Elimination Surveillance Workshop in Georgetown.

The workshop, held on July 9-10, marks a critical step in Guyana's continued commitment to eliminating communicable diseases and achieving public health targets in line with regional and global priorities.

This workshop builds on the outcomes of the April 2024 Joint PAHO/WHO-Ministry of Health Disease Elimination Mission, which focuses on strengthening Guyana's health system through four key pillars: integrated service delivery, strategic

surveillance, addressing environmental and social determinants, and reinforcing governance and financing. Chief Medical Officer Dr Narine Singh emphasised the need for a unified and integrated approach to disease elimination.

“We recognise that many programmes have been working diligently, but often in silos. This initiative helps us align efforts, share data and challenges, and move forward as one Ministry, under one elimination agenda,” he said.

Dr Singh added that, while some disease programmes are nearing elimination, others still face significant cross cutting challenges. “By strengthening indicators, using dashboards and improving collaboration, we can track our

progress more effectively and adjust our strategies where needed,” he said.

He explained that a Disease Elimination Task Force has been actively coordinating and monitoring national activities to eliminate targeted diseases.

The current workshop aims to reinforce these efforts by clarifying disease elimination definitions based on PAHO/WHO guidelines, developing standard indicators to monitor elimination progress, fostering inter-programme collaboration within the Ministry of Health, supporting regular monitoring and evaluation of target programmes, and strengthening the use of data dashboards for visualising progress and guiding decision-making.

## MOH launches emergency medical skills training in Berbice

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the US-based Northwell Emergency Medicine specialists and local Emergency Medicine Specialists, has officially launched its Basic Emergency Medicine Skills and Preparedness Training programme in Berbice, reinforcing the Government's commitment to strengthening emergency response across the country.

Speaking at the launch on July 17, Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, underscored the importance of continuous training for medical professionals as Guyana

modernises its healthcare system. “The quality of medicine we practise will depend on the quality of people in the system,” he noted.

The Minister explained that upskilling healthcare workers is a top priority of the current Administration in order to ensure they are equipped to deliver fast, efficient and high-quality care, especially in emergencies.

Dr Anthony highlighted the crucial role of continuous training for healthcare workers as the country's health sector evolves.

“The quality of medicine we practise will depend on the quality of people in the system,” he said, pointing to upskilling as a top priority to ensure medical teams are ready to deliver fast, efficient, and high-quality emergency care.

Fifteen doctors who work in that region also benefitted from the training. The participants were engaged in five days of rigorous in-person lectures and practical training, delivered by emergency medicine specialists from Northwell and the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC).

It will prepare doctors in the Accident and Emergency Department to be equipped with the basic skills to provide standard emergency care.

This initiative aims to strengthen emergency response and patient care by equipping healthcare workers and first responders with essential skills in trauma management, resuscitation, and urgent care protocols.

The new training programme is part of the broader transformation underway in Guyana’s health sector, which includes the construction and commissioning of six state-of-the-art hospitals.

Two of these new hospitals are already operational, and feature fully equipped Accident & Emergency Departments staffed with four to six doctors, significantly boosting critical

care services in Regions Five (Mahaica-Berbice) and Six (East Berbice-Corentyne).

This latest initiative reflects the Government’s ongoing investment in building a resilient health workforce, and ensuring that communities across Guyana have access to modern, lifesaving care when they need it most. It will prepare doctors in the Accident and Emergency Department to be equipped with the basic skills to provide standard emergency care.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health said the training forms part of its nationwide strategy to modernise healthcare and ensure that no region is left behind where life-saving interventions are involved. Similar sessions are expected to reach all regions where regional hospitals are present.



# GPHC, Duke University strengthen collaboration on corneal transplant mission



Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, has met with officials from the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) and renowned Corneal Surgeon, Dr Lloyd Williams, from Duke University, North Carolina in the US.

The meeting, held on July 17, focused on strengthening collaboration under the Duke University Global Ophthalmology Cornea Transplant Mission.

Corneal transplant surgery was first introduced at GPHC in 2016 through a vital partnership with the George Subraj Foundation, a non-governmental organisation that has helped perform life-changing surgeries in Guyana. The foundation played a key role in sourcing and providing corneal tissue, making the procedure accessible locally to patients who once had to travel abroad for such care.



Dr Williams arrived in Guyana on July 13 and has been performing corneal transplant surgeries while training and tutoring local eye surgeons as part of a three-day mission.

Local Surgeon, Dr Celeste Hinds, who has been previously trained in corneal surgery, worked closely with the visiting surgeon in the GPHC's Department of Ophthalmology.

Apart from the standard procedure referred to as Penetrating Keratoplasty (where the entire thickness of the cornea is transplanted), Dr Williams successfully performed a partial-thickness corneal transplant, referred to as DMEK (Descemet Membrane Endothelial Keratoplasty) – the first time this procedure has been performed in Guyana.

Dr Williams brings a wealth of experience to this initiative. He

performs hundreds of cataract surgeries and corneal transplants annually across Africa, Central America, and other regions. Notably, in 2021, he performed the first-ever corneal transplant in Sierra Leone.

He is also the founder and Chairman of the Board of HelpMercy International and co-founder of the educational platform MoranCore, which provides ophthalmology training resources globally.

Corneal transplant surgery, or keratoplasty, replaces damaged or diseased corneal tissue with healthy donor tissue to restore vision. This procedure is essential for patients suffering from conditions such as corneal scarring, keratopathy (swelling), keratoconus, or endothelial dysfunction, which can lead to blurred vision and, in severe cases, eventual blindness.

Following delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, GPHC has now renewed its efforts to reestablish a sustainable corneal transplant program and lay the groundwork for a local eye bank. The collaboration with Duke University Global Ophthalmology marks a significant step forward in this journey and represents a promising long-term partnership to combat corneal blindness in Guyana.

This will be a continuous collaboration moving forward, aimed at building local capacity, enhancing clinical outcomes, and ensuring greater access to sight-restoring care for patients in need.

The GPHC remains committed to improving access to specialised eye care and training the next generation of local eye surgeons, ensuring that sight-saving procedures are available to all who need them.

# CARICOM, PAHO launch strategy to strengthen Caribbean health systems

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) have taken a bold step forward in health cooperation with the official signing of an agreement aimed at re-imagining the future of health and well-being in the region.

A signing ceremony for the Joint CARICOM Subregional Cooperation Strategy (JSCS) 2025-2029, bringing

together leaders and health officials from across the region, was held on July 22, at the CARICOM Secretariat Headquarters, Georgetown.

The documents were formally signed by PAHO Director, Dr Jarbas Barbosa, and CARICOM Secretary-General, Dr Carla Barnett, in the presence of Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, Executive Director of the Caribbean Public Health Agency

(CARPHA), Dr Lisa Indar, and other senior officials and stakeholders.

The JSCS serves as a transformative five-year blueprint designed to address persistent and emerging health challenges, including non-communicable diseases, climate vulnerability, demographic shifts, health workforce migration, and mental health crises. It builds on the foundation of previous frameworks



such as Caribbean Cooperation in Health IV, the PAHO Strategic Plan, the CARICOM Strategic Plan 2022-2030, and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“The strategy is grounded in equity, resilience and action,” said Minister Anthony during remarks at the ceremony.

The Minister underscored the need for the region to move beyond traditional approaches, saying, “We must act boldly, think creatively, and collaborate deeply to address the evolving health challenges facing the Caribbean.”

Dr Anthony further affirmed the fundamental principle guiding the strategy: “Health is not just a service, it

is a human right. In the Caribbean, that right must not be determined by geography, income, or age.”

There are five strategic priorities that chart the path forward in the JSCS:

- Enhancing resilience of primary health care-based health systems,

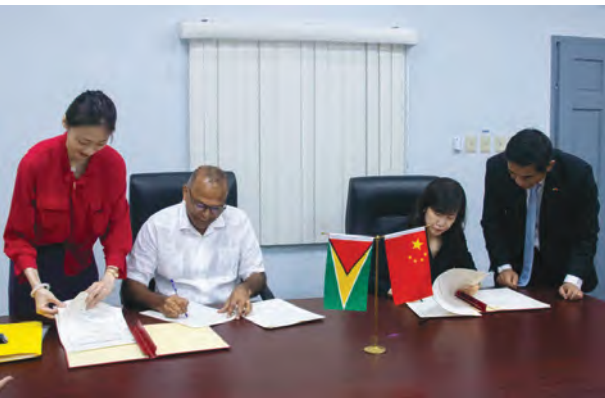
- Advancing climate adaptation, mitigation, disaster preparedness and response to enhance environmental sustainability, and health security,

- Strengthening multisectoral action towards the surveillance, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), violence, injuries, mental health conditions and their risk factors,

- Advancing the prevention, control and elimination of priority communicable diseases through subregional coordination with the One Health approach, and

- Enhancing technical cooperation through partnership, resource mobilisation and advocacy.

The Minister also called for enhanced collaboration among CARICOM, PAHO, CARPHA, the University of the West Indies (UWI), and other regional institutions. He emphasised that this collective effort is essential to fostering innovation, strengthening human capital, and advancing digital and community resilience across the Caribbean.



# Guyana, China strengthen decades-long medical partnership with new agreement

The Ministry of Health has signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China, reaffirming the longstanding partnership between the two nations in the field of healthcare. The agreement facilitates the continued dispatch of Chinese medical teams to Guyana, a collaboration that has flourished for more than 32 years.

This initiative represents China’s first-ever medical cooperation project in South America, forming the cornerstone of a robust and evolving

healthcare partnership. Under the terms of the MoU, each batch of Chinese medical professionals will serve in Guyana for a minimum of one year.

To date, China has deployed 20 medical teams, comprising 295 professionals to support healthcare delivery in Guyana.

Delivering remarks at the ceremony, Chinese Ambassador to Guyana, Her Excellency Yang Yang, praised the enduring dedication of the Chinese

medical teams.

“For over three decades, these teams have demonstrated tenacity, selflessness, and a deep commitment to saving lives. Their work has not only enhanced local healthcare but also helped nurture a capable medical workforce within Guyana,” she stated.

Ambassador Yang reaffirmed China’s unwavering support in advancing Guyana’s healthcare system, pledging to fully utilize the expertise of the Chinese medical teams to elevate

medical services and improve the well-being of the Guyanese people.

Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, also addressed the gathering, acknowledging the profound impact of the collaboration. “Over the years, more than 1.31 million patients have benefitted from lifesaving surgeries and treatments conducted in partnership with the Chinese medical teams,” Dr Anthony said. He noted that the initial

agreement, signed in 1993, has since evolved into a lasting and impactful bilateral relationship.

“We are extremely grateful, not just to the medical brigades that have served here, but also to the Government and people of China for making this partnership a reality,” the Minister added.

Present at the signing ceremony were Permanent Secretary of the Ministry

of Health, Mr Malcolm Watkins; Chief Executive Officer of the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC), Mr Robbie Rambarran; and Director of Medical and Professional Services at GPHC, Dr Ravindranauth Rambaran.

The renewed MoU, signed on July 1, symbolizes continued commitment from both nations to strengthen healthcare delivery and build a resilient, collaborative future in health.

# Health Minister engages Zara Group, Subraj Family Foundation on advancing dental technology

Minister of Health, Honourable, Dr Frank Anthony, has met with representatives from the Zara Group of Companies and the Subraj Family Foundation to discuss the integration of new and advanced technology into Guyana’s dental services.

The meeting was held on July 4 at the Ministry of Health’s Brickdam office in Georgetown. The meeting served as a valuable platform for exploring cutting-edge innovations in dentistry, with the goal of enhancing the quality and accessibility of oral healthcare across the country.

The Subraj Family Foundation is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that has helped perform many life-changing surgeries in Guyana.

The Zara Group of Companies operates primarily as a telehealth practice to provide accessible and convenient care.



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# New Enmore Hospital a turning point in regional healthcare

## -residents highlight hospital's positive impact on community

The Enmore Regional Hospital on the East Coast Demerara is equipped with 75 in-patient beds, a modern accident and emergency unit operating on 24-hour basis and several operating theatres for emergency and elective surgeries.

For years, residents of Enmore relied on a small polyclinic in the area or travel to Georgetown or Mahaicony, East Coast Demerara to seek treatment, often facing long waits and high travel costs. With the opening of the new hospital, community members

say they finally feel seen and supported.

Early in July, Guyana's President, His Excellency Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali commissioned the Enmore facility and many residents were on hand to offer their comments.



***Shurwyn Stewart**, who previously worked at the Enmore estate, said, "I know a lot of the people personally who are around here, I see a lot of friends who are here and who are happy that the hospital is here, so it's going to be very convenient for them. They don't have to go to Georgetown. It's going to improve the general health of the community."*

*"This hospital is a great initiative," said **Mr Leroy Smith**, a former Enmore resident, now based in the United States.*

*"I came here recently and I heard about the opening. I must say thanks to the Government. I drove around a lot and I see a lot of things going on, so it's great. It would be a great service to this community and the surrounding area," he said.*



*For **Mr Deoraj Nauth**, a lifelong Enmore resident, the new hospital will diversify the local economy by creating what he calls much-needed jobs for the community.*

*"As a born Enmorean, it would help to reduce unemployment that was caused by the closure of the sugar industry. It would be a boost to the entire East Coast where people would get treatment at a higher degree of expedition," he said.*

**Mr Shawn Baynes** highlighted the relief it brings to people who previously had to endure long waits and added transportation costs.

*“It is a great relief to the people within Region Four and the East-West corridor. You don’t have to go to Georgetown or Mahaicony and wait long to be served. I must say thanks to the Government, our President, and our Minister of Health for this gesture for the people of Guyana,” he said.*

*Highlighting impact, Ms Sandra Sukhu noted that thousands would benefit from the hospital.*

*“Thousands of people would benefit from this hospital, and I know that it would be a great relief, so we don’t have to go to Georgetown anymore. We can come right here and do all our tests,” she pointed out.*



**Mr Munindra Seeraj** also praised the project, calling it a “significant improvement” from what had existed before.

*“First of all, the hospital here at Enmore, it’s a significant improvement to what we had before. As you would know, there was a polyclinic that couldn’t serve all the members within this community and our neighbouring communities,” he said. “However, with the state-of-the-art hospital here, we are now capable of addressing each and every community member as well as our neighbours within this district and leading on to the outskirts of it.”*

**Ms Kuntie Tekchand** added that the hospital is not only a gift to Enmore, but to Guyanese across the region.

*“This hospital is very accommodating for us I must say. I thank the Government of Guyana, Dr Irfaan Ali for such a wonderful thing for everyone and I think each and every one of the Guyanese will be beneficial for this hospital wherever region you are from, you could get assistance,” she said.*

The hospital will serve not only Enmore, but also the wider Region Four (Demerara-Mahaica) communities, including Buxton, Victoria, Nabaclis, Golden Grove and beyond. The Enmore Hospital forms part of the Government’s broader

plan to improve health infrastructure across the country. Residents are hopeful that with more initiatives such as this, healthcare in Guyana will become more modern, accessible and reliable.

# Health Minister, PAHO Director discuss strengthening healthcare in Guyana

Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, on July 21, received a courtesy call from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Director, Dr Jarbas Barbosa.

The meeting focused on deepening collaboration in public health, strengthening health systems, and advancing universal health coverage in Guyana and the wider Caribbean.

Dr Barbosa, who is currently in Guyana on a three-day visit, was

accompanied by his PAHO counterparts in Guyana at the meeting.



## Health Ministry taking steps to strengthen partnerships in cardiac care

Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, has held discussions with visiting cardiac specialists, Dr Gaurav Kumar (Paediatric Cardiologist) and Dr Varun Bansal (Robotic Cardiologist), from Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi, India, as part of an ongoing collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Apollo Hospital Group to enhance specialised health services locally.

The doctors were in Guyana for a two-day visit and the meeting with the Health Minister was held on July 22.

During their visit, the team conducted a clinic at Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) and hosted a Continuing Medical Education (CME) session at the Royal International Hotel, Georgetown.





# Health Minister calls for inclusive mental health, disability empowerment

Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, participated in the “Unleashed-Ability Summit,” which was held on July 30 at the Pegasus Hotel, Georgetown, under the theme, “Empowering people with disabilities through innovative mental health initiatives and inclusive rehabilitation for sustainable change.”

The event was organised by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRCO). It brought together government officials, development partners, health professionals, advocates, and persons living with disabilities to engage in critical dialogue and action planning aimed at building a more inclusive Guyana.

The Minister underscored the importance of holistic healthcare, emphasising that mental health must be addressed as a core component of rehabilitation and inclusion. He highlighted the Ministry of Health’s ongoing efforts to improve access to psychosocial services, community-based rehabilitation, and

equitable healthcare for all, especially marginalised and differently-abled individuals.

He said the Health Ministry has been actively working with persons across different regions and has conducted a survey on persons living with disabilities. There are over 24,000 persons across Guyana living with various disabilities, including learning disabilities.

As such, the Ministry of Health, he said, has tailored programmes with various stakeholders to provide support for those persons, be it the provision of prostheses and assistive devices, among other things.

With this, he said that the summit serves as a forum to identify and address gaps that exist in this regard. Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Honourable Dr Vindhya Persaud, delivering feature remarks, noted that the summit brought to the forefront the importance of not only acknowledging persons living with disabilities, but also celebrating their strengths and accomplishments, while listening to them to be able to draft inclusive

policies and programmes.

“This is the first of its kind, a conference bringing adults and children living with disabilities together in the same room with key stakeholders, our local partners, our international partners, and also our agencies of Government and the private sector, to understand how we can achieve what it is we’re setting on to do, which is to have you not only buy into it, but commit to the core principles of engaging with persons living with disabilities,” she said.

Against this backdrop, Dr Persaud told those gathered that the summit is of importance as when they sign the core principles of how to engage persons with disabilities, they will understand why it is imperative that every member of their agency must be trained to be able to engage professionally, ethically and compassionately with persons living with disabilities.

She added that, as they listen to the work of the Government across agencies, they would see that there has been a sharp focus on ensuring that persons not only dream of a quality of life but have that quality of life.

“We will continue to work with all our partners to listen to their recommendations and their ideas on policy, so that as a government we continue to have a kind of transformational impact for that community,” said Dr Persaud.

### Core principles

Among some of the core principles for engaging people, including children with disabilities, is ensuring services are delivered respectfully, safeguarding individual privacy and protecting personal information. One aspect

outlines that high standards of personal and professional conduct must be maintained while reporting incidents that involve a breach of conduct.

Further, the Government of Guyana acknowledges and respects the evolving capacities of persons, including children, with disabilities, recognising their right to self-determination.

The event featured panel discussions, interactive sessions, and presentations from experts in mental health, social work, disability rights, and community

development. A key emphasis was placed on developing sustainable policies that integrate disability inclusion into the national mental health framework.

The summit marks a significant step forward in Guyana’s journey toward disability rights, inclusive policy-making, and integrated mental health reform, aligning with the country’s commitments under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

# Health Ministry joins nationwide celebrations for Emancipation 2025

The Ministry of Health proudly joined the rest of the nation in celebrating Emancipation 2025 with vibrant displays of culture, heritage and unity. Staff showcased traditional African

wear and cuisine on July 30 in honour of Guyana’s ancestors’ resilience and the richness of the country’s heritage.

The event was graced by the presence

of the Minister of Health, Honourable Dr Frank Anthony, who participated in the festivities and underscored the importance of embracing Guyana’s history and culture.

