Advancing the Development of Caribbean People

Preventing disease, promoting and protecting health
FOREWORD

The Caribbean region has made progress through Caribbean Cooperation in Health (CCH) 1, -2 and -3, including the elimination of indigenous measles, scaling up prevention and control of HIV/ AIDS, and elevating the Non-communicable Disease (NCD) challenge to the global level. However, many significant challenges remain that threaten health and development, including the threat of emerging/re-emerging infectious diseases; poverty-inducing NCDs and obesity; the ageing population; high levels of injuries and violence; and ongoing environmental degradation and climate change – an existential threat to Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Yet there are many cost effective public health solutions and “best buys”, many of which require multiple sectors to take joint action, including civil society and the private sector. It is within the scope and vision of CARPHA that the work of the Agency, in collaboration with Member States and partners, can significantly improve health, productivity and development prospects for the Region. Investment in public health – in disease prevention, health promotion and protection measures in Member States, and in CARPHA at regional level, will be needed to realise this vision.
INTRODUCTION

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is the new single regional public health agency for the Caribbean. It is an integrated agency for public health and was legally established in July 2011 by an Inter-Governmental Agreement signed by Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Heads of Government and began operation in January 2013. The Agency rationalises public health arrangements in the Region by combining the functions of five previous Caribbean Regional Health Institutions (RHIs) into a single instrument of Caribbean Cooperation in Health. These institutions were:

1. The Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC)
2. The Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI)
3. The Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI)
4. The Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC)
5. The Caribbean Regional Drug Testing Laboratory (CRD TL)

CARPHA has unified these RHIs under a public health umbrella into a single strong force to address issues requiring a regional response. These include:

1. The surveillance and management of chronic non-communicable diseases that have reached epidemic proportions such as obesity, cancer, heart disease and diabetes.
2. The surveillance, management and response to communicable diseases and other threats to health security;
3. The surveillance and prevention of injuries, violence and job related illnesses;
4. Emergency preparedness and response for pandemics, hurricanes, earthquakes, and flooding;
5. Improving the quality of and healthfulness of the environment, including climate change and health
6. Contribution to global health agreements and compliance with international health regulations.
7. Improving the quality of pharmaceuticals.

The Agency is the Caribbean’s collective response to strengthening our health system approach so that we are equipped to address the changing nature of public health challenges, which threaten development. This approach provides an opportunity to address existing gaps, respond to common regional public health challenges and strengthen public health capacity in Member States to improve the health of the Region’s residents and visitors.

CARPHA serves twenty four (24) Member States: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, BES Islands (Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba), British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curacao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St Maarten, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, and Turks & Caicos Islands.

This document is intended to serve as a useful guide for staff, stakeholders and partners of CARPHA.
OUR VISION, MISSION & OBJECTIVES

Our vision: A Caribbean in which the health and wellness of the people are promoted and protected from disease, injury and disability, thereby enabling human development in keeping with the belief that the health of the Region is the wealth of the Region.

Our mission and objectives: The overall objective of CARPHA is to create conditions that improve the health and wellbeing of the entire Caribbean population. Our mission and objectives are:

• To promote the physical and mental health and wellness of people within the Caribbean

• To provide strategic direction in analysing, defining and responding to public health priorities in the Caribbean Community

• To promote and develop measures for the prevention of disease in the Caribbean

• To support the Caribbean Community in preparing for and responding to public health emergencies and threats

• To support solidarity in health, as one of the principal pillars of functional cooperation in the Caribbean Community

• To support the relevant objectives of the Caribbean Cooperation in Health (CCH)

To achieve its objectives, the Agency is divided into three directorates. The Executive Management Team, under the leadership of the Executive Director, coordinates the leadership and management of the operations of the Agency.
OUR FUNCTIONS

In order to achieve its objectives, CARPHA performs the following functions:

1. Provision of an evidence base for public health decision-making and policy in the Caribbean, including the definition, collection, maintenance and analysis of minimum data sets, health situation analysis, critical analysis of the impact of social and other determinants of health and response to public health interventions.

2. Conduct of relevant research on public health priorities in the Caribbean.

3. Provision of support and coordination of the development of regional standards and networks related to laboratory practice.

4. Coordination of effective responses to public health crises in the Caribbean.

5. Provision of leadership in defining effective public health interventions in the Caribbean and development and adaptation of relevant models for various circumstances.

6. Provision of accurate, reliable, timely and relevant public health information to various Caribbean and international audiences.

7. Enhancement of national capacities to deliver public health goods and services to address new and emerging public health priorities in the Caribbean, through on-going teaching, training and collaboration.

8. Production of an annual report on the state of public health in the Caribbean region.

9. Building strategic alliances with regional and international partners.

10. Mobilisation of resources for priority public health issues.

11. Monitoring global agreements and developments that may impact on public health.

12. Implementation of measures to attain the approved objectives of the CCH.

13. Strengthening public health quality and regulatory capacity of countries across the Region.
OUR STRUCTURE

This section shows the structure of CARPHA as at 2 July 2014, the 1st anniversary of the Agency. CARPHA will continue to evolve over time and command the confidence of regional and international, professional and scientific, and other public health-related communities.

Governance structure
The governance body of CARPHA comprises the CARICOM Council of Human and Social Development (COHSOD) which reports to the CARICOM Heads of Government. An executive board and technical advisory committee in turn report to the COHSOD. An executive management team, led by the CARPHA Executive Director reports to the Executive Board.

Organisational structure
The Executive Director and three directors comprise the Executive Management Team, collectively providing strong strategic leadership to ensure integrated working across the three directorates. They are responsible for ensuring that the Agency has the capacity and capability to serve Member States’ diverse needs in a cost effective, scientifically sound manner.
OUR MEMBER STATES

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OUR VALUES

The driving force behind CARPHA’s values is the belief that the reputation and credibility of the Agency are vital in fulfilling its mandate. Therefore, the Agency will be guided by these values in the delivery of its services as it safeguards the integrity of the Agency.

Regional Solidarity: the Agency will always operate from the philosophical foundation of regional solidarity and functional cooperation.

Evidence-Informed Innovation: CARPHA embraces an evidence-informed approach in the planning, implementation and evaluation of its programmes.

Collaboration and Partnership: CARPHA values working with others in order to achieve a collaborative advantage by using an “all of society” approach.

Service Excellence & Cost-consciousness: the Agency strives for quality at the highest standards and to deliver value for money, conscious of the challenging financial situations faced by CARPHA Member States.

Integrity and Ethics: CARPHA is committed to adhering to principles of integrity and ethics in all of its operations.

Health Equity: the Agency is committed to health equity so that all sectors of society will benefit equally from its operations.
OUR PRIORITIES

The priorities outlined below cover CARPHA’s broad remit which includes protecting the people of the Region from serious health threats; promoting healthier behaviour and lifestyles; improving the health of vulnerable populations and strengthening health systems.

Some areas are amenable to early progress, while others may take several years before progress is seen.

CARPHA’s priorities are:

1. Provide leadership and action to address and reduce the burden of preventable disease, disability and death impacting the health status of people in the Caribbean

CARPHA supports and promotes intersectoral action at national and regional levels, in order to facilitate concerted effort on the wider determinants of health and complex problems. This includes health, agriculture, trade, education, finance and tourism. CARPHA also encourages revision, amendment or implementation of legal provisions to ensure that national regulations and policies meet identified current and future public, occupational and environmental health needs.

Examples:

a. Non-communicable diseases – diabetes, cancer, mental health and cardiovascular diseases
b. Obesity and malnutrition
c. Violence and injury prevention, and disability
d. Tobacco, drugs and alcohol

2. Prepare and protect the Region from infectious, environmental and other public health threats.

CARPHA provides regional leadership by strengthening national and regional epidemiological, environmental and public health laboratory scientific and technical capacity to detect and respond to existing and emerging threats as a regional public good that contributes to regional and global health security

Examples:

a. International Health Regulations (2005)
b. Outbreak and emergency response
c. Communicable diseases – emerging, epidemic, endemic and neglected
d. Laboratory strengthening
e. Disaster response
f. Drug testing and regulation – medicines and pharmaceuticals
g. Tourism and health
h. Environmental health and sustainable development – including climate change
3 Institutional capacity and capability developed and strengthened;
CARPHA supports strengthening public health capacity in the Region through the development of a public health workforce that has breadth, depth and capability, and the science to support implementation of effective interventions, strategy development and policy decisions

Examples:
- Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Programme (FELTP)
- Research
- Workforce and professional training and development
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Public health policy development

5 Strategic partnerships and resource mobilisation;
CARPHA catalyses change in the Region through the development and establishment of meaningful partnerships, stakeholder engagement and identification of new opportunities that meet the health needs of our Member States and support the Agency’s vision and values

Examples:
- Sustainability and resource mobilisation
- The CARPHA Foundation
- Cost Sharing and Income from service

4 Strengthen National and Regional public health capacities and services;
CARPHA facilitates the development and maintenance of networks that provide Member States and others with access to knowledge and information, to address existing and emerging public health issues in a cost-effective manner

Examples:
- Laboratory network
- Epidemiology and Surveillance network
- Knowledge Management
- Health information

6 Internal services strengthened and improved;
CARPHA seeks ways to improve its performance and efficiency through the delivery of services supported by effective governance, management and operational processes, innovative programme delivery, cross-Agency collaboration, teamwork and professional development

Examples:
- Culture change
- Communications strategy
- Management and oversight
- Governance - legal
- Corporate services management – resources and assets
2014
To provide strategic direction in analysing, defining and responding to public health priorities of the Caribbean, in order to prevent disease, promote health and respond to public health threats and emergencies.

To support solidarity in health, as one of the principal pillars of functional cooperation in the Caribbean Community.

2019
A Caribbean in which the health and wellness of people are promoted and protected from disease, injury and disability, thereby enabling human development in keeping with the belief that the health of the Region is the wealth of the Region.
OUR PARTNERS

CARPHA recognises that progress in regional public health requires coordinated action across all segments of society to address underlying social and environmental determinants of health. Our strategic objective is to strengthen and expand private and civil society partnerships and networks within an ethical framework, at the regional and international level, to improve public health in CARPHA Member States. We believe that our partners are therefore essential to our future success, and are fundamental as we work closely with our Member States to deliver a timely response to acute events and to deliver long-term and sustainable results.

In pursuit of our mission and strategic priorities, CARPHA has forged strategic partnerships with a range of organisations who provide us with technical expertise, guidance and funding. We believe that these partnerships help us to improve our standards and support our aim of making excellence a habit. They also help us to deliver far more than we could do alone.

CARPHA is constantly building collaborative networks and partnerships with organisations that share our purpose, vision and values. Partnership means that we and our partners have agreed to collaborate to deliver certain services, and there may or may not be a Memorandum of Understanding or other agreement between CARPHA and the organisation. Our partnership with them does not mean that we necessarily endorse these organisations, or their products and services.

Within the framework of our partnership policy, CARPHA explores opportunities for synergies with other institutions to access resources and collectively respond to the health challenges of the Caribbean. Our existing resources sometimes limit the range of services that we can offer.
OUR PARTNERS (cont’d)

You can help us to improve and expand our services within the Caribbean. If you share our purpose, vision and values and are interested in partnering with us, collaborating on a project or supporting us through funding specific initiatives or research projects, we would be happy to start discussions with you.

CARPHA Foundation
The CARPHA Foundation was incorporated on 18 September, 2014 under the Companies Act, 1995 of Trinidad and Tobago. The mission of the foundation is to mobilise financial and non-financial resources to support CARPHA in discharging its public health mission of preventing disease, promoting and protecting health and conducting educational and public health activities.

SETH FUND
The Stop Epidemics There and Here (SETH) Fund was part of a 10-point plan of action endorsed by Caribbean Heads of Government to respond to the Ebola virus and other threats. It is expected that through the establishment of the SETH Fund, governments, citizens and businesses here and abroad can through their donations contribute to a regional response to emerging threats and epidemics that may affect the Region.

SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER
In recent years, working in close collaboration with our partners has enabled us to have an impact in a range of areas. However, the work done by CARPHA requires support in order to help shape the future.

Current avenues for contribution include the CARPHA Foundation and the SETH Fund.

If you have a question or comment about this document, or would like further information on how you could support CARPHA, please contact us at: postmaster@carpha.org or visit our website at carpha.org and DONATE