



**GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA
Ministry of Health and Wellness**

October 2, 2018

Caribbean Wellness Month of Celebrations

Duration: 2 minutes 47 seconds

LEAD: The Ministry of Health and Wellness with the support of PAHO and other Key Stakeholders held several outreach programs during the month of September, with the aim of increasing awareness and sensitizing the public of the social and economic impact of non-communicable diseases-NCDs.

MORE IN THIS REPORT FROM MIGUEL MAURICETTE.

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The Ministry of Health & Wellness hosted a series of activities during the month of September in commemoration of Caribbean Wellness Day. Activities began with a church service at the Odsan Pentecostal Church. Natasha Lloyd-Felix is the Director of the Bureau of Health Education.

Natasha Lloyd-Felix is the Bureau of Health Education Director.

“Health is all encompassing, its physical, its mental, its emotional and its spiritual and so we have started off our observation with a church service at this church where we will be offering prayers for persons who are championing the cause of chronic illnesses as well as persons who are living with the conditions because we know through the support of our fellow spiritual leaders and through prayers many things can be healed amongst us.”

Narration:

Following the church service was the official Launch and Recognition Ceremony, which took place at the Sandals Grande on Monday September 10th. The primary focus of this ceremony was to recognize and award establishments who have contributed or lend support in raising awareness, sensitizing the public and establishing health policies in order to improve the prevention of non-communicable diseases. Whilst addressing the gathering, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Merlene Fredericks said, though the Ministry of Health is the main custodian for health matters, everyone has a responsibility.

Dr. Merlene Fredericks - Chief Medical Officer

“We each have an individual responsibility to do all we can to exercise more often choose healthier foods afford alcohol and tobacco and decrease our intakes of sugar and salt. Nevertheless, communities,

NGOs and Civil Societies, organizations and business places also have a responsibility in decreasing the impact of NCDs. Your presence here today shows that you have embraced your responsibility in that regard and have led in various ways in promoting healthy behavior and decreasing the impact of NCDs. To you we are most grateful.”

Narration:

The third activity which took place on the 19th of September, was a health fair. Family life Educator, Heidi Khodra said, the department tactically took wellness promotions and health services to the Vendors Arcade in Castries. She said, it was pleasing to see how receptive men were to the services that were offered and it is very important for individuals to know their family history.

Heidi Khodra – Family Life Educator.

“The table was filled with men, we had the taxi drivers from outside, they came I did prostate examinations with them, we went through the process of the different stages of cancer, they asked different questions as to when should they test, where should they go and it was really informative. I learned from them, they learnt from us so it was really good. Normally men in general, even when I asked this morning when last did you go to your doctor, when last did you have a general checkup oh but we not sick and you see that’s where the problem lie unless we don’t suspect that something is wrong then we don’t go check but we encourage you to get the screening done with knowledge comes power and actually knowing what you about especially your family history some people done even know whether their grandmother has high blood pressure or whether their father had diabetes, it is important that you know.”

Narration:

Activities to mark Caribbean Wellness Day 2018 culminated with a health fair for staff on the 20th of September. Fauhn Minvielle is a Family Life Educator in the Ministry of Health.

Fauhn Minvielle – Family Life Educator

“We have a staff initiative, to encourage staff to come out and get tested, get their screening done, blood pressure, blood sugar, our nutrition people are here to do BMI, to do nutrition counseling, we have breast exams on offer as well as pap-smears. Usually you find that health workers are out there taking care of the public and it is important that we take some time to take care of ourselves, to do our screenings as a preventative measure towards reducing our level of chronic illness in Saint Lucia.”

The Ministry of Health & Wellness will continue to promote and advocate for healthy lifestyles even after the month of observance has ended. Caribbean Wellness Day was held under the theme “Be Healthy, Stay Healthy... It’s your Job”

FROM THE COMMUNICATION UNIT IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, MIGUEL MAURICETTE REPORTING.

