

# Health Department Newsletter



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## A Persistent Motivation: Les Mamelles Health Centre After Grand Re-opening

2017 indeed made an entrance with greater things, especially for the eastern region of Mahe as they now have their health centre fully restored. Not too long after re-opening, the Les Mamelles Health Centre is working at maximum capacity. Their main aim, to provide the best care to patients.

Operations at the Health Centre provide a change in pace from previous establishments in which staff were placed. However, they have quickly adapted to this change. Staff are giving their best to provide an ideal setting for them to deliver a service and for patients to receive care.

In just two weeks of operation, more than 500 patients have already visited the health centre, resulting in an estimated total of 70 to 100 visits per week. Staff of the Les Mamelles Health Centre have implemented many strategies to cater to this flow. Communication is most important for an effective service. At the Les Mamelles Health Centre, communication with patients is definitely of upmost priority. Taking into account the changes in location of



*The Les Mamelles Health Centre Re-opened its doors to patients on Thursday 5 January 2016*

several units and the lengthy one year renovation, several signs and symbols have been set-up to facilitate patients' navigation of the setting. A large notice board has been placed at the entrance to provide those coming to the Health Centre with important information.

Despite certain materials being out of date and mishaps with infrastructures, plans to upgrade are in the vines. Patients

numbers used in the waiting area appear quite shabby and over-used. However, this won't be long-lasting. Wooden-squared numbers have already been ordered from an eager local carpenter. This will surely add some finishing touches of freshness.

Ms Monette Ernesta, Nurse Manager,

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### HEALTH BOOSTER

*Eat a good and fulfilling breakfast to give your body the boost it needs to stay sharp all day.*





*Staff of the health centre welcome all patients with a smile*

expressed her pride at the hard work that all staff members are putting into their tasks to ensure a smooth progression. “There has been very good team work amongst all the staff,”

she says. “We are very conscious of the orientation towards patient-centred care in all that we do. We’ve conducted meetings with staff members to discuss our objectives for this new year, and to

ensure that we strengthen our service delivery. It is important at the end of the day, that we are working towards having a high and flexible level of service.”

Ms Ernesta further stressed on the opportunities she hopes to provide to staff. “Training is also something we are stressing upon. We wish to groom our staff to develop upon what they already have.” Late last year, staff conducted a SWOT Analysis to identify their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the areas within which they believe they can improve. Ms Ernesta said that this would be used to facilitate the goals towards which they are working.

The Les Mamelles Health Centre reopened earlier this month on Wednesday 4th January 2017 whereby the Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Mr Jean Paul Adam unveiled the inauguration plaque, and they welcomed their first patients the following morning.

## ‘Twas the night before Christmas at the Seychelles Hospital

Everybody hopes to have someone thinking of them at Christmas. We all want to spend, what is supposed to be a heart-warming moment, with loads of lasting memories to be made, at home with those we hold closest to our hearts. Sometimes that is not possible. And, that was the case for patients admitted at the Seychelles Hospital during the 2016 festive season.

Spending the festive season in the hospital can truly be a dreary affair but, health workers always strive for the extra mile to delight patients at this special time of the year. So, every year amazing decorations are set up in an innovative way and local Christmas music boom from small radios. Patients are transported from their pain and blues to a state of glad tidings and good cheers.

The Minister for Health and Social Affairs also resolved to bring some extra joy to patients of the Seychelles Hospital, by wearing Santa’s shoes just a few days early. Minister



*Minister Adam puts on smile on patients faces this Christmas.*

Adam conducted his first Christmas round on the 22nd December last year where he distributed gifts to all admitted patients. This yearly visit is a popular and expected tradition upheld by all Health Ministers.

Minister Adam unstintingly dropped in on every patient on all the wards. They delighted at his presence, especially the young ones who were

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thrilled to receive an early Christmas gift. Patients also received a nutritious gift of fresh fruits from the Seychelles Commercial Bank.

Setting the Christmas mood with renditions of famous carols, was the Health Department Choir. Members of this esteemed group within the department dressed in their red and gold uniform which they also wore for

the recent Office Choir competition.

Minister Adam also took this opportunity to personally congratulate and thank all health professionals at the Seychelles Hospital on their successful work throughout the year and their extra dedication at this special time of the year. "At Christmas time, it's nice for us to take a moment and spend it with patients and it's also a chance

for me to individually congratulate and thank all health workers."

Minister Adam further urged a reflection on the year that has passed and also that together partners in health continue to work towards a successful 2017, which will undoubtedly hold various new initiatives.

## **IT GOES BEYOND 5: VIRGINIE MOUSTACHE CELEBRATES FIVE YEAR SERVICE ANNIVERSARY AT HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Virginie Moustache started working at the health department in 2012, when she assumed the position of an Office Assistant in the office of the Principle Secretary. This January she celebrated five years of successful work within the department. An achievement she is extremely proud of.

Virginie graduated from the School of Business studies with a diploma in Secretarial Studies and is highly skilled in various areas around the office. Her job requires her to carry out a variety of clerical duties, such

as filing, typing, diary keeping, client interaction, tending to incoming and outgoing mails, and much more, or as she puts it, "any other duties".

Before she assumed her current post, Ms Moustache naturally had some expectations of what such a new chapter of her life would entail. Her anticipations were what many have when taking on a new job. Virginie foresaw a highly professional environment where she would have to undertake a demanding job that would challenge her to points of improvement and she also

anticipated that her job would require her to push past what she had already gathered from previous experiences. Virginie also knew that she would encounter some difficulties within her workplace but was more than ready to face them head on. Many of her expectations were met, however, she sadly admits that some were not. "I did not expect people to be this rude in their interaction," she says of the hope she had of people being more approachable.

Little inconveniences do not deter Virginie in her profession, though. As is expected of young women today, Virginie has many dreams for her career progress. Her ultimate goal is to venture into Human Resources, more specifically to culminate her journey at the position of Director in Human Resources. For now though, she aims to become a private secretary, something that will set her on the path to achieving her dream.

To achieve her goals, Virginie plans to go back to school to further her studies. A subject she wishes to learn is office management, but does not want to stop there. "One day I might even get my degree," she states confidently. Virginie expects to start working towards achieving her dreams within the near future and is certain her workplace is supportive of her ambitions. "I have a good employer, who pushes me forward. And a really nice co-worker, who encourages my dreams."



Virginie celebrates five years service anniversary at the Health Department.

*"I wish to tell all those young people who have just started their first jobs that in every workplace there will be ups and downs. And when you happen to be down, don't give up and do not listen do those who wish to discourage you. There is no place of work that won't have downsides. You just have to let those experiences make you stronger but most of all you need to motivate yourself. See those challenges as a means to learn, grow and move forward."*

# 9

## Essential Things You Should Know About The HOON Committee.

### What does the acronym HOON stand for?

These four letters mean the Health of Our Nation.

### When was the committee set-up?

The HOON Committee was launched in 2013.

### What is the role of the Committee?

It acts as a platform for different people to discuss health promotion activities. Any individual within the community has a chance to propose ideas to promote the betterment of the health of our population.

The HOON Committee also provides visibility for activities done by individuals towards health promotion.

### How many members does the committee have?

There are 22 members in total for 2017. These include the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and the secretary. Members stem from various sections within the health department well as other sectors.

### Who were the founding members?

When the HOON Committee was first set-up, its members were Mrs Patricia Rene, Dr Conrad Shamlaye and Dr Bernard Valentin. They are all still members.



*The Hoon Committee convened its first meeting of the year on Wednesday 18th January*

### How are members appointed?

Previously membership was on a voluntary basis. It was open to anyone. However, as the years passed and more meetings were done, keeping track of representatives quickly became difficult. So, starting 2017, the committee sent out letters to the heads of various departments and units. From these invites, representatives were appointed.

### What are some of the past projects you have worked on?

The committee was present for the National Day Expo for both 2015 and 2016. In 2015, the HOON Committee focused on the 'Healthy Home Concept'. And for 2016, Hospital Services were promoted. Representatives from various units, including Psychology, Physiotherapy, Nutrition and others, set up their own stalls where they performed screening activities as well as some educational sessions.

### Will there be a new theme for 2017?

For 2017, the theme will carry from the previous one. "My Health, My Responsibility. Move it!" The aim of this theme is to encourage the population

to be more physically active, especially with a concentration in obesity and chronic diseases. A more active lifestyle will help to lead to a healthier population.

Also, the theme sets to get people to act now. It is a wake-up to tell people to stop the procrastination and to start working towards a healthier lifestyle right now.

### What are some projects on the committee's calendar for this year?

The first activity for 2017 is the launch of the new theme which is set for the February 2017. This event will centre greatly around being physically active. Soon after, there will be a Half-Day session on the 24th February 2017. For this activity, members will present the activities they have done.

### ...A few words from the current HOON Committee Chairperson Mrs Stephanie Desnousse...

We encourage anyone with Health Promotion ideas to come forward and approach us and we will provide our assistance to realise those ideas.



## A YEAR OF SUCCESS CELEBRATED AMONGST COLLEAGUES

The 30th December 2016 was a night of celebration for all Health Department staff. Many gathered that warm and exciting evening at the ex-SMB Hall, to rejoice their hard work and immense dedication throughout 2016 and say goodbye to all the mishaps encountered along the way.

That Friday evening, the hall had been converted into an ideal setting for a staff party. The team in charge of decorating had taken all necessary measures to transform a usually dull environment into a wonderfully lit New Year's fantasy.

The chosen white and blue theme intricately added to a well-planned winter wonderland, bringing that 'White Christmas' that Irving Berlin's been reminiscing about for decades, to our little tropical paradise.

It's not a lie when I say that everyone was elegant. Who doesn't want to spend their last few days of the year in style?

Literally everyone present glistened; the women in their sequin adorned dresses or clear sapphire dangly earrings and the men in finely polished pointed shoes. Even the stage shone, in what might be the most attractive decorations of all, tiny but tastefully positioned white fairy lights. These lined

every corner of the blue and white stage, wrapped around dry branches (re-enacting a forest, I suppose) adding that final touch of the northern star guiding the way through the dark, reminding of us of our journey into a new year!

The night did not disappoint when it came to a good time. The food was awesome, an assortment of healthy dishes to choose from. You expect nothing else from a Health Department staff party. Drinks flowed from two corners giving just that needed lilt in the steps for an all night long boogie. Little surprises popped up at every opportune occasion.

The two December holidays are renowned days for giving and gifting. The night did not fail to provide on that front either. For weeks after invites to the event had been sent out people anticipated the promised raffle. For years the Health Department staff party raffle has delighted staff from all around the country.

This year, once again, the prizes sent roars throughout the gathered crowd, igniting la soiree. Upon arrival, guests had placed their invitations in a basket at the entrance, which were later transferred to a bag for the name picking. A lucky six, went home with the prizes which included:





Star Prize: a return ticket to Abu Dhabi on Air Seychelles/Etihad Airways sponsored by the Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Mr Jean- Paul Adam.

1st Prize: 2 tickets for an Excursion to Cousin, Cousine, St Pierre islands sponsored by Mason's Travel.

2nd Prize: an iPad Air sponsored by local telecommunications company Cable and Wireless Seychelles Ltd.

3rd Prize: 1500 Seychelles rupees savings account sponsored by the Mauritius Commercial Bank.

4th Prize: a lunch for two at the Seselwa Restaurant sponsored by the Constance Ephilia Resort.

5th Prize: a jewellery set sponsored by Jouel.

6th Prize: a hamper also sponsored by Minister Adam.

These prizes were won respectively by Ms Wilhemina Benoit, Mr Luc Estrale, Ms Tracy Larue, Ms Paola Maillet, Mr Joachim Didon, Mr Mubashir Khan and Ms Majitha

Boniface, all health department workers.

The organising committee planned a little surprise for those who did not win something in the raffle. We all wish to receive a little something. The moment calls were made for invitees to check under their chairs, which most likely had a number stuck underneath corresponding to a prize that evening, health department staff went diving under the rows of chairs that evening. In total, 100 prizes of various sorts stood to be won.

The night was also a great moment to honour the work done by three important figures within the Health Department.

Mrs Mitcy Larue, Minister for Home Affairs was presented with a gift of appreciation along with Minister Maurice Loustau-Lalanne, who had served as the Secretary of State for Health but had just taken on the position of Minister for Tourism, Port Authority and Civil Aviation earlier that day. Despite having only recently joined the Health Department team, Minister Adam's work in filling such big shoes was also recognised with a little gift.



Raffle Winners, from left to right, Mr Mubashir Khan, Ms Majitha Boniface, Ms Tracy Larue, Ms Wilhemina Benoit and Mr Joachim Didon.

## HIGHLIGHTS

•Mrs Bella Henderson celebrated her 62nd birthday on the 19th January 2017. She celebrated this wonderful day with colleagues who toasted to her good health.

•Health Department Choir won second place in the Office Choir Competition held last year. Their song was 'Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer and their chosen organisation to donate to was the Centre D'accueil de la Rosiere.

•The ground floor toilet located at the red roof benefited a makeover in an upgrade project. The project was sponsored by an external partner. The toilet remained closed for a period of three weeks and users had to get the key to use the facility. Unaware of the aim of this exercise, some staff got frustrated. A new sanitary pad disposal bin, soap dispenser and toilet paper dispenser was introduced. However, due to its excessive cost the project has been cancelled.

•Lemon-grass incense is being successfully burned in the Principal Secretary's office to combat gnat infestation. This method of getting rid of these irritants stems from advice shared within the grapevines as many establishments suffer from these insects.

•Patients gown at the Seychelles Hospital are getting lost. There is speculation that due to the outsourcing of laundry services, the initial number of gowns are not returned. Furthermore, there are reports that staff members may be wearing gowns to conduct their daily duties, resulting in less gowns available for patients who are to undergo surgery.

## 35 year old Health Centre receives much-needed makeover



*Mr Nicholas Shamlaye, Director Community Health Services receives handover from the CEO of STC Ms Veronique Laporte*

The Anse Aux Pins Health Centre benefited a facelift sponsored by the Seychelles Trading Company Ltd (STC) worth approximately 250 thousand Seychelles rupees. The CEO of STC, Ms Veronique Laporte presented the restored clinic to the Director of Community Health Services, Mr Nicholas Shamlaye, in a handover ceremony held at the Health Centre on Friday 27th December 2017.

Attending the ceremony was the Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Mr Jean Paul Adam, Health Department staff and members of staff from the Seychelles Trading company.

"STC remains a faithful partner of the Health Department. They continuously contribute towards the improvement of the services we offer," Mr Shamlaye said upon receipt of the contribution. Mr Shamlaye further expressed his appreciation at the company's decision to

provide the Anse Aux Pins Health Centre with a required makeover. "Taking into account the fact that the health centre is 35 years old, it needed this facelift."

Restoration works on the clinic was carried out during the last month of 2016 by Randolph's Maintenance, a maintenance company located in the west of Mahe, at Anse Boileau. Mr Randolph Valmont, owner of the company, also contributed 14 thousand Seychelles rupees worth of flooring in the Maternal and Child Health Section.

Work done on the health centre includes the re-flooring of the general waiting area and that which is located at the Maternal and Child Health Clinic, and painting of walls across the whole facility. These enhancements not only reinforce the aesthetic appeal of the clinic but, its utility to both patients and staff.

