

Newsletter



Ministry of Health

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SEYCHELLES 41ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED WITH GIFT OF LIFE

Seychelles 41st Independence Day was celebrated at the Ministry of Health with a blood drive. Over 90 foreign workers from 10 private companies showed up to give blood in this activity organised in partnership with Lions Club Seychelles on Thursday 29th June 2017.

The activity begun at 7am, at the Blood Transfusion Centre of the Seychelles Hospital, with an address from the Minister for Health, Mr Jean Paul Adam. Minister Adam praised the donors for mobilising on this special day, of unity and love. "I would like to commend all the contractors and companies who have taken this opportunity to celebrate a very auspicious day in Seychelles, our Independence Day, to bring people forward and make a blood donation," Minister Adam said.

The donors proceeded one by one to undergo the various procedures of giving blood. Despite the large turnout, the staff of the blood transfusion centre



First donor in the activity

adeptly accommodated everyone. Mr Immanuel Christu Doss, Lab Technologist and coordinator of the blood transfusion team praised their hard work. "We are managing quite

well," Mr Christu Doss said. "We're explaining to the donors the various procedures. We tell them clearly what they will have to do and guide them through all the various stations."

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HEALTH BOOSTER

Say NO to fizzy drinks. Soft drink consumption is linked directly to the rise in obesity, high blood pressure, poor teeth and chronic high blood sugars. Cut back on carbonated drinks or stop consuming them to reap some great benefits such as more energy, better weight and a brighter glow.





Nursing staff assists blood donor

Upon arrival, donors are required to register and fill out a questionnaire. This covers their medical health. After registration donors undergo a screening which requires blood pressure, sugar levels and haemoglobin count to be measured.

For this activity, the donors were asked to give only 450 ml of blood (1 unit of blood per person). World Blood Donor Day, which was celebrated on 14th June 2017 under the theme 'What can you do? Give Blood. Give Now. Give Often.' urged for more blood donation to help save lives The Ministry of Health in partnership with Lions Club Seychelles hopes to do this activity more regularly.

NEW EQUIPMENT HIGHLIGHTS COMMITMENT TO IMPROVED EYE CARE SERVICES

Staff of the Seychelles Hospital Ophthalmology Unit celebrated the donation of an Optical Biometer from the Seychelles Port Authority in a handing over ceremony held at the Yellow Roof Eye Clinic on Thursday 1st June 2017.

The CEO of the Seychelles Port Authority, Colonel Andre Cisseau, officially presented the apparatus to the CEO of the Health Care Agency, Dr Danny Louange, in the presence of the Minister for Health, Mr Jean Paul Adam, the Director of the Seychelles Hospital, Dr Kenneth Henriette and appreciative staff from the clinic as well as those from the Seychelles Port Authority.

The Optical Biometer costs around 7 hundred thousand Seychelles Rupees and is an indispensable tool in the treatment of cataract. It is used to measure the length of the eye, curve and width of the cornea so patients can have correct lens replacements to improve their eyesight.

An all in one apparatus, the Optical Biometer will enhance daily services



Dr Barbe (left) discusses use of optical biometer with Minister Adam (centre) and Colonel Cisseau (right)

provided to cataract patients.

“It is a computer in itself. It has a hard disk for storing information, such as the patients’ measurement or biometry,” Dr Louange said. “It can access our network and, this means we can connect it to our health information system that we’re introducing soon. Moreover, the attending nurse can choose to immediately print the measurements from the machine itself.” he added.

The use of the new Optical Biometer is already improving service delivery to great extent. Where patients would normally wait 5 to 10 minutes to obtain their results, they now received in about 1 minute. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of patients consulted per day. However, Dr Louange admits that a fixed amount of patients consulted per day will need to be set so that patient will further make use of other services provided at the clinic following this procedure.

Nutrition Corner

Hi all, let's talk about Gluten-Free Diets

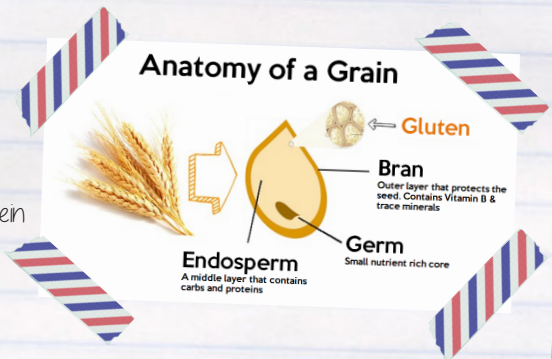


There is a wide misconception that gluten free foods are healthier. In recent years, the gluten-free diet has become more of a trend than a medical necessity.

Gluten free diet is the only treatment for a condition known as celiac disease. Celiac disease is a serious, genetic autoimmune disease whereby the ingestion of gluten causes damage to the small intestine.

SO, WHAT IS GLUTEN?

Wheat is one of the world's major food crops, cultivated, consumed, and traded worldwide. The wheat kernel contains 8% to 15% of protein, of which 10% to 15% is albumin or globulin and 85% to 90% is gluten. Different wheat varieties vary in protein content and in the composition and distribution of gluten proteins.



YOUR GLUTEN-FREE SOURCES

- Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables are naturally gluten-free.
- Most beverages are gluten-free, including juices, soft drinks, and sports drinks. Alcoholic beverages, including wines and hard liquor/distilled liquors/hard ciders are also gluten-free. Alcoholic beverages, including wines and hard liquor/distilled liquors/hard ciders are also gluten-free.
- Corn in all forms (corn flour, cornmeal, etc.)
- Plain rice in all forms (white, brown, basmati, enriched rice, etc.)
- Cassava, flax, millet, quinoa, sorghum, soy, and tapioca
- Flours made from gluten-free grain, nuts, beans, millet, and chickpeas. Always look for products labeled gluten free to avoid cross-contamination.



Your Gluten Sources

- Gluten are found in bread and other baked products such as pasta, cakes, pastries, and biscuits
- Gluten is commonly used as an additive in processed foods for improved texture, flavor, and moisture retention. It is always a good idea to read the label of any pre-prepared or canned soups, sauces and packaged foods. Some of the processed foods where gluten can be found include;

♥ Food products such as; processed meat, reconstituted seafood, vegetarian meat substitutes; thickeners, emulsifiers, or gelling agents in candies, ice cream, butter, seasonings, stuffings, marinades and dressings, processed fruits, veggies, dried fruits and packaged frozen potatoes.

♥ Beers, ales, lagers, malt beverages and malt vinegars that are made from gluten-containing grains are not distilled and therefore contains gluten.



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HEALTH MANAGERS LEARN IMPROVED HUMAN RESOURCE COORDINATION



Management staff participated in the workshop to learn more about the benefits of WISN

A 5 day workshop to train management staff in more efficient human resource management was organised from Monday 15th May to Friday 19th May 2017, at the Sheikh Kalifah Diagnostic Centre.

28 health managers from the various entities of the ministry, including the Health Care Agency, the Public Health Authority and the National Institute for Health and Social

Studies were introduced to **Workload Indicators of Staffing Need (WISN)**.

WISN is a tool promoted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to ensure efficient human resources planning and management.

Opening the workshop, the Principal Secretary for Health, Dr Bernard Valentin, listed several of the challenges encountered in

human resource optimisation. “We more than anyone else know that our staff to patient ratios are not optimal,” Dr Valentin said.

There are currently more than 450 thousand nurses and 100 doctors to cater to more than 150 thousand potential patients per year, presenting a major challenge to human resource production, retention and distribution within the health sector.

WISN will help the Ministry of Health understand work pressure within health facilities and better delegate work. Moreover, it will allow the ministry to eventually achieve the expected level of patient-centred care. “WISN should be able to provide the evidence necessary for us to begin a new conversation in the area of employee training and re-training, time management and more,” added Dr Valentin. “At a policy level this will translate to greater efficiency, more equity and better value for money.”

300 BLOOD DONORS RECOGNISED FOR NOBLE CONTRIBUTION

World Blood Donor Day 2017 was celebrated with a special ceremony to honour and reward the contribution of 300 regular blood donors.

The ceremony took place on Wednesday 14th June 2017 at the Seychelles International Conference Centre. In attendance was the Minister for Health, Mr Jean Paul Adam, the Minister for Tourism, Ports and Civil Authority, Mr Maurice Loustau Lalanne, the Principal Secretary for Health, Dr Bernard Valentin, the CEO of Health Care Agency, Dr Danny Louange and ministry of health staff.

The blood donors were thanked for their contribution with an array of entertainment. These included poems and dance as well as performances from two local artists, Mr Joseph Sinon and Elijah. Each donor was presented with a little token

of appreciation from the Health Care Agency and other sponsor.

A special mention was given to three donors who contributed the most amount of blood. Ms Julita Auguste was recognised as the top female donor, having donated more than 27 units of blood since 2007. Mr Claude Barra and Mr Harry Dingwall were the top male donors having each donated 95 and 96 units of blood respectively since 1991. “It all started during an activity at work. It was workers’ day and there was a blood donation activity. I just decided to take part and since then I have stopped.” Ms Auguste and Mr Dingwall collectively encouraged others to come forward and start donating blood. “Don’t be afraid. When you’re giving blood, you’re not just saving a stranger’s life. You could also be saving someone close to you, a family member.” Mr Dingwall said.

This year, World Blood Donor Day themed ‘What Can You DO?’ brings a special focus to blood donation in crises and emergencies. It reminds people to “Give blood. Give now. Give often”.



Ms Auguste and Mr Dingwall received their token from Cable and Wireless

What about a career in health?



The Ministry of Health launched the first ever Health Professionals careers week between 12 th - 16 th June 2017. Minister Adam handed careers teachers their starter pack during the launch ceremony



Nurses took the reigns with a travelling exhibition in all secondary schools to promote their noble careers between 10th -25th May 2017. Students had the chance to discuss more about this career choice.



NHSS signed an MoU with Chamberlain University on Friday 30th June 2017, to allow nurses to expand their qualifications. In service nurses can now do their Bachelor in Nursing and Masters in Nursing Education



The dental directorate organised a cpd between the 11th and 12th May 2017 for dental professionals to learn more about endodontics / root canal treatments

NORTH EAST POINT MENTAL HOME GIFTED NEW DINING CHAIRS

Residents of the North East Point Mental Home received a gift of 45 dining chairs from the Seychelles Centennial Women's Lions Club on Monday 15th May 2017.

Dr Kenneth Henriette, Director of the Seychelles Hospital, accepted the donation from members of Seychelles Women's Lions Club in a ceremony held at the home at 2pm.

Dr Henriette thanked the club for their generous contribution. "What may be seen a simple contribution, is actually very big. Our mandate is to care for these patient's mental health. We cannot cater to their mental health without creating the best environment." Dr Henriette said.

The donation will favourably improve the lives of residents of the home. The new chairs will be put in the dining hall and the old ones will be removed. This will allow patients to



Club members donated 45 red dinning chairs to the residents and staff

be able to dine together, something they could not do previously.

"The facility presently occupied by the residents is not conducive and as team advocating for mental health we firmly believe that improving the environment for these people

will certainly bring some hope in their lives," says Dr Daniela Malulu, Consultant in Charge of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

Presently some residents choose to sit in other areas of the institution due to lack of chairs in the dining hall.

TRIVIA!!!

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE, STAND A CHANCE TO WIN A **FREE LUNCH** AT THE MOH CAFETERIA

Have a go at the two questions on the blackboard. Answers are to be submitted by email to ntomkings@health.gov.sc or in writing to Communications Officer, Ministry of Health, Red Roof Building by Wednesday 19th July 2017 before 12pm.

Correct entries from Ministry of Health staff will be placed in a draw. Stand a chance to win a free lunch voucher offered by the Hospital Canteen. Only **THREE** vouchers up for grabs! We're hoping for many submissions this time!

Q1. Which health institution was opened on the 30th November 1924?

Q2. Which health professional performs a western blot?

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

Q1. Dr. Halfdan Mahler and Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima

Q2. Physicians/doctors/pharmacists

Q3. Health statistician.

UK VASCULAR SURGEONS MAKE HISTORY IN SEYCHELLES



Dr Pherwani (left) and his team at the operating theatre

The first ever angioplasty procedures to be done in Seychelles were performed during the last week of June, in the operating theatre of the Seychelles Hospital. These procedures were done by a group of three vascular surgeons from United Kingdom.

Leading the team was Dr Arun Pherwani, Consultant Vascular Surgeon at the University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust. Dr Pherwani has been journeying to Seychelles from UK to voluntarily perform complex vascular surgeries since 2009.

“For years I’ve been coming to Seychelles and all of these missions I do in my own time,” affirmed Dr Pherwani. “It’s an opportunity to give back to something in the world. The patients are grateful and the staff very happy and thankful.”

Accompanying him on this charitable mission which holds a special place in his heart, was Dr John Asquith, a vascular x-ray specialist who specialises in angioplasty and Mr Mark Smith who runs the x-ray equipment. For these new procedures, Dr Pherwani and his team brought over £50,000 - £100,000 worth of equipment with them from UK.

During this visit a total 46 patients were consulted. This is a great increase from last year’s number of consultations which was only 37. “Every time I

come there are more and more patients on dialysis. Right now there are over 150 patients who get dialysis treatment,” Dr Pherwani added.

For this mission, a great feat was accomplished by the team. In only three days, 27 procedures were performed in 26 dialysis patients, with half of these procedures being angioplasties.

Angioplasty is a minimally invasive, endovascular procedure employed to open narrowed or obstructed blood vessels. A deflated balloon is attached to a catheter and inserted into the narrowed vein or artery and then inflated to a fixed size. The balloon forces expansion of the blood vessel, allowing improved blood flow. A stent may then be inserted to

ensure the vessel remains open. “What makes a difference to these patients is good quality dialysis. And the best dialysis they can have is through a sheath in their arms.” The angioplasty procedures performed by the surgeons will allow patients to continue to undergo the best dialysis treatment.

In light of the continuous and alarming increase in dialysis patients noted during each of his visit, Dr Pherwani urged the population to take better care of their health and to be more conscious of what they eat in a way to prevent diabetes and hypertension, leading causes of kidney failure in Seychelles. “People eat badly and they don’t exercise. I will tell them to look after their health. Seychelles is a beautiful country, filled with natural resources. There are fresh fruits and the ocean produces all the food needed.”

Dr Pherwani and his team also thanked Ms Elsia Sinon and her team from the Dialysis Unit, whom he congratulated on their excellent job of looking out for their patients. They also expressed their gratitude towards Ms Ramona Bristol, nurse manager at the operating theatre, and her team for their constant support during his missions. The surgeons are expected back in Seychelles in December for a second stage of these interventions for the patients.



From left to right Ms Noella Mellie, Ms Bristol, Dr Pherwani and Ms Sinon in souvenir photo

STAKEHOLDER MEETING PROMISES IMPROVED SERVICES AND QUALITY OF CARE



Sitting at the head table from left to right, Mr Conrad Shamlaye, Minister Jean Paul Adam, Dr Bernard Valentin and Mrs Daniella Larue

60 senior decision-makers of the Health Care Agency, the Public Health Authority and the National Institute for Health and Social Studies convened in an 'Extended Coordination Meeting' on Friday 9th June 2017, at Eden Bleu.

The meeting was aimed at reviewing recommendations from the 'Modernisation Agenda' implemented by the Ministry of Health after the creation of the Health Care Agency, the Public Health Authority and the National AIDS Council in 2013.

Sitting on the panel, was the Minister for Health, Mr Jean Paul Adam, the Health Principal Secretary Dr Bernard Valentin, the Chairperson of the Health Care Agency Board, Mrs Daniella Larue and the Chairperson of the Public Health Authority, Dr Conrad Shamlaye.

Opening the meeting, Minister Adam emphasised on the importance of good governance behind the scenes to ensure the best service delivery. "I don't feel at the moment that we have completely cracked the human resources problem," Minister Adam stated during his opening address. "We are prioritising specialisation of our Seychellois doctors, of which

there are seventeen," he added. The enrichment of human resources is a key objective of the ministry of health. This is for service delivery and other departments.

Minister Adam, assisted by Dr Valentin, led the discussions on a better way to coordinate strategies to improve service delivery and quality of care between chairpersons, board members, chief executive officers and members of the senior management of all the public health entities.

"It is important that we do this now because we are at exactly four years since the Cabinet approved the seminal Health Task Force Report and empowered the public health sector to implement the recommendations contained therein," said Dr Valentin.

Key points raised during the discussions, which paralleled previous discussions from the Health Task Force, was the role of the Ministry of Health and its entities, as well as communities between these parties. It was established during these discussion that a distinction need to be made between these establishments to ensure proper communication with stakeholders.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Anse Royale Health Centre will undergo a re-roofing procedure for the coming months. Although start date for the project has not yet been confirmed, Dr Danny Louange, CEO of Health Care Agency, assures that the best material has been sought with the approval of the Ministry. Dr Louange also reassures the public that the maintenance work will not disrupt the services provided at the health centre.

Airtel donated to a National Kidney Screening Program being coordinated by the Ministry of Health and Lions Club Seychelles on Monday 29th May 2017 at the Sheikh Kalifah Diagnostic Centre. Dr Danny Louange, the CEO of Health Care Agency accepted the cheque of 150 thousand Seychelles Rupees from Mr Henritiana Randrianarison, a representative from Airtel. The kidney screening programme is currently ongoing in several districts across the country.

A Seychelles delegation led by the Minister for Health attended the World Health Assembly held in Geneva, Switzerland between 22nd and 31st May 2017. During this year's assembly, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was elected the Director General of World Health Organisation.

The Minister for Health, Mr Jean Paul Adam unveiled Seychelles' first Blood Bank Application on Wednesday 14th June 2017. The app, designed by Mr Joseph Raj, Principal Research Officer-Innovation at the National Institute for Science, Technology and Innovation (NISTI), will greatly simplify the process of searching for blood, especially in the case of emergencies.

A workshop was held between 8th and 10th May 2017 to dynamically address Anti-microbial Resistance (AMR) in Seychelles. Various participants came together at the Sheikh Kalifah Conference Room to discuss the impact of AMR in Seychelles and different strategies to combat this issue.