



The Eastern *Vibes*

Monthly Newsletter 2023

November 2023, Issue #112

Evening of Excellence Awards Ceremony: Celebrating Our Eastern Gems



Front row (L-R 3rd person) Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer Ag., The Honourable Terrence Deyalsingh, Minister of Health, Ms. Esmè Rawlins-Charles, Chairman of the ERHA Board of Directors, Ms. Lucy Torres, Director and Ms. Sasha S.A. Darbeau, Deputy Chairman with the winners.

Top performing individuals, departments and facilities were awarded at the ERHA's Excellence Awards Programme entitled **"Celebrating Our Eastern Gems"**. The event was held on Saturday 18th November, 2023 at Bishops Anstey High School East, Trincity.

The Honourable Terrence Deyalsingh, Minister of Health in his remarks congratulated and thanked members of staff for their hard work and commitment. He also reminded staff of the good work done by Mr. Ronald Tsoi-a-Fatt, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who has been at the Authority during good and bad times and asked staff to recognise him. The CEO received a standing ovation followed

by several individual and group embraces.

Ms. Esmè Rawlins-Charles, Chairman of the Board of Directors in her remarks stated that the ERHA staff are not just employees but they are gems-precious, valuable and unique and their contribution lie in the dedication they show, durability through challenges and the uniqueness they bring.

Guests were warmly welcomed by Ms. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, Acting Chief Executive Officer. In her welcome remarks she indicated that the key to the continued success of the ERHA has been the staff and their passion, caring and innovation in providing quality healthcare.

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Evening of Excellence Awards Ceremony: Celebrating Our Eastern Gems Con't

She expressed that the Authority continues to listen to its clients needs and has developed new programmes, adjusted services and built resilience in the communities we serve.

Ms. Michelle Ramnarine, General Manager- Quality and Risk Management gave some insight

into the creation of the awards programme and the criteria. She further stated that recognising employees hard work, dedication and commitment help boost morale, increase productivity and foster a sense of belonging while creating a positive work environment.

💎 WINNERS 💎



1. Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre - Innovation/Project-Essential Health and Wellness
2. Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre - Best Managed Facility
3. Sangre Grande Blood Bank - Overall Service Excellence
4. Dr. Damion Basdeo, Registrar-Internal Medicine- Individual of the Year-Medical Professional
5. Ms. Tricia Bramble, District Health Visitor- Individual of the Year Nursing Professional
6. Mr. Kwesi Browne, Pharmacist II - Individual of the Year Allied Health Professional/ Professional Related to Medicine Auxiliary Staff
7. Ms. Sherifa Ali, Health Education Aide - Quality Individual of the Year
8. Sangre Grande Hospital Pharmacy Department - Highest Performing Department

Highlights of the Evening of Excellence Awards Ceremony



Public Board Meeting

Stakeholders commended the ERHA during its Public Board Meeting for its astute stewardship and excellent service that was provided for the period 2022/2023. The meeting was held at the Morton's Memorial Presbyterian Church on November 2, 2023 in accordance with Rule 12 of the second schedule of the RHA Act, No. 5 of 1994.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the Authority to review what was accomplished in fiscal 2022-2023 and to consider goals to be set and targets to be achieved in 2023/2024.

Mrs. Esmé Rawlins-Charles, Chairman of the Board of Directors informed the meeting that the performance of the duties of the Board is grounded in the quest for operational excellence and to ensure that there is a quality improvement culture throughout the Authority. The chairman further stated that one of the key functions is to ensure astute and effective financial stewardship through robust financial control and strategic planning. The Board also has oversight and strategic management through Board and Committee meetings and also monitors the Human Resource requirements of the Authority to ensure that the services provided are of a high standard.

Mrs. Rawlins-Charles highlighted some of the achievements to strengthen the resources in rural communities which include among others the provision of: Two (2) Dental Suites at Manzanilla and Biche Outreach Centre's, Two (2) Ultrasound machines at Rio Claro Health Centre and Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre, Four (4) portable Cardiotocography (CTG) machines at Toco and Rio Claro Health Centre's; Mayaro District Heath Facility and Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre.

The Chairman also informed the meeting that the new Sangre Grande Hospital was 85% completed and will offer a range of new services when completed in the first quarter of 2024.

Mrs. Angelina Rampersad-Pierre, General Manager-Operations provided further insight on the significant achievements such as: Expansion of Services, Refurbishment and Upgrade of Infrastructure, Acquisition of Medical Equipment and Commitment to Staff Morale.

Ms. Yolande Benjamin, General Manager-Finance presented an overview of the financial position of the Authority to provide insight on the spending of the budget for Recurrent and Capital Development Expenditure allocations.

After the presentations the moderator of the meeting and the Deputy Chairman of the Authority, Mrs. Sasha C.A. Darbeau, invited the audience to ask questions, make comments or suggestions. Several representatives of stakeholder organisations such as Mr. Idi Stuart-President of the Trinidad and Tobago Nursing Association, Mr. Wayne Huggins-President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Kenwyn Phillip-Chairman and Mr. Nassar Hosein -Vice Chairman of the Sangre Grande Regional Corporation commended the ERHA and asked questions on behalf of their constituent. Managers from the respective departments provided responses and clarification to issues that were raised.

The chairman assured the clients and the represented organisations that the ERHA remains committed to excellence in healthcare and service to the people of Trinidad and Tobago and to continue serving them. *See highlights below*



Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative Assessment

The Eastern Regional Health Authority recognises the importance of infants and young children receiving safe and adequate nutrition. We also note the benefits to be derived not only by mothers, babies and families but also by the whole of society when babies are exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of their lives. This is why the Authority began the journey to regain Baby Friendly Hospital status in the year

2019 and has completed the second and final assessment phase in November 2023 which was conducted by the Pan American Health Organization in partnership by the Ministry of Health.

While the Authority awaits the results of the assessment, let us continue to practice the ***Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.***



Senior Members of the Pan American Health Organisation, Ministry of Health and the Eastern Regional Health Authority with members of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative Team

Give Blood-Save Lives

Members of staff at the Sangre Grande Hospital Blood Donation Centre continued their Outreach initiatives with the hosting of a Blood Donation Drive at the hospital on November 10, 2023.

19 persons responded to the call to become Ambassadors for Non-Remunerated Voluntary

Donation and donated blood for the greater good without expecting anything in return.

You can make a difference and save a life by donating blood. Call the Sangre Grande Hospital Blood Donation Centre at 226-9779/9780 to make an appointment.



World Diabetes Day

"Know your risk, Know your response"



Ms. Zanisha Mohammed-Jaimungal, Primary Care Nurse Manager-St. Andrew/St. David and Certified Caribbean Diabetes Educator

Are you aware of your risk factors

Prediabetes is a serious health condition where your blood glucose (sugar) levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes.

According to statistics more than 1 in 3 persons have prediabetes. More than 80% of these persons are not aware that they have prediabetes.

What Causes Prediabetes?

Insulin is a hormone made by your pancreas that acts like a key to let blood glucose (sugar) into cells for use as energy. In prediabetes, the cells in the body don't respond normally to insulin. Your pancreas makes more insulin to try to get cells to respond. Eventually your pancreas can't keep up and your blood glucose (sugar) rises, setting the stage for prediabetes which can lead to type 2 diabetes down the road (CDC). The good news is that prediabetes can be reversed.

Signs & Symptoms

You can have prediabetes for years but have no clear symptoms, so it often goes undetected until serious health problems such as type 2 diabetes show up.

Risks Factors

- Being overweight
- Being 40 years or older
- Having a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes
- Being physically active less than 3 times a week
- Previously having gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or giving birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds
- Having polycystic ovary syndrome

How to prevent Type 2 Diabetes or lower your risk?

- Weight loss
- Regular physical activity-just 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- Making healthier food choices

Which blood test you can do?

- Random Blood Sugar Test -This measures your blood sugar at the time you're tested. You can take this test at any time and don't need to fast (not eat) first. A blood sugar level of 200 mg/dL or higher indicates you have diabetes.
- Fasting blood glucose (sugar)
- Oral glucose tolerance test

Result*	HbA1C Test	Fasting Blood Sugar Test	Glucose Tolerance Test	Random Blood Sugar Test
Diabetes	6.5% or above	126 mg/dL or above	200 mg/dL or above	200 mg/dL or above
Prediabetes	5.7 – 6.4%	100 – 125 mg/dL	140 – 199 mg/dL	N/A
Normal	Below 5.7%	99 mg/dL or below	140 mg/dL or below	N/A

Diagnostic criteria (Adapted from WHO/ADA/CARPHA guidelines)

Health Education Department - Diabetes Programmes

Toco Chronic Disease Support Group Walk



World Diabetes Day is observed every year on November 14. It provides an opportunity to raise awareness of diabetes as a global public health issue and what needs to be done, collectively and individually to improve prevention and diagnosis. The theme for World Diabetes Day 2023, which focuses on the prevention of type 2 diabetes and diabetes-related complications is **Access to Diabetes Care- "Know your Risk, Know your Response"**.

Diabetes Self Management Workshop

The Health Education Departments of St. Andrew/St. David and Nariva/Mayaro hosted a Diabetes Self-Management Workshop for members of the Chronic Disease Groups as well as other members of the community on Wednesday 22nd November and Friday 24th November respectively.

90 persons collectively attended both workshops and benefitted from a wide range of topics that were covered which included managing your blood glucose with nutrition and responding to diabetes with physical activity. Persons also participated in arm chair aerobics.

The Health Education Department in collaboration with the Toco Chronic Disease Support Group hosted a Health Walk on November 14, 2023 to increase awareness to this cause. 70 persons demonstrated their interest by participating in the walk which commenced at 9:00 a.m. at the Toco Health Centre and proceeded along the Toco Main Road to the Police Station and ended at the Toco Regional Complex. Chronic Disease Groups from Manzanilla, Sangre Grande, Cumana and Grande Riviere as well as students from Toco Anglican Primary School and Toco R.C. Primary School and representatives from the Sangre Grande Lion's Club participated in the walk. Participants of the walk also engaged in an aerobic session led by Ms. Onika Phillip and a nutrition lecture held by Dr. Candace Simpson-Smith, Public Health Nutritionist.



Dr. Candace Simpson-Smith, Public Health Nutritionist conducts lecture at Morton Memorial Presbyterian Church



Ms. Sydelle Gibson-Mahabir - Nutritionist conducts lecture at Mayaro Civic Centre

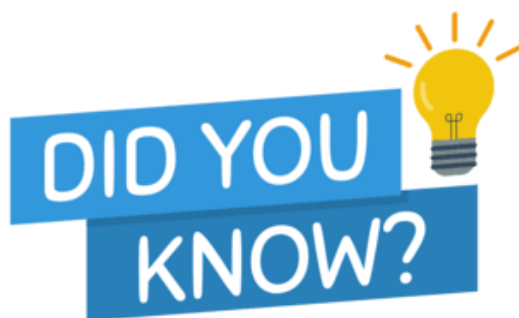
World Radiography Day



radiography as a career, as a vital contribution to modern healthcare, and as an opportunity to increase public awareness of diagnostic imaging and radiation therapy.

The International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists' theme for 2023 "***Celebrating Patient Safety***" is significant especially as we look forward to expanding the New Sangre Grande Campus Hospital. It is important that our patients recognise the importance we place on their safety and care. "Perception is reality in the eyes of the beholder" and the ERHA's radiographers recognise the need to engender confidence in the profession through rebranding and education.

World Radiography Day is celebrated on 8 November each year. The date marks the anniversary of the discovery of x-radiation by Wilhelm Roentgen in 1895. Radiographers worldwide use the day and the days around the date to promote



X-ray was invented in 1865

Wilhelm Roentgen, a physics professor, was the inventor of the x-ray, making him the first to discover a way to peer inside the body without surgery. He accidentally discovered x-rays while conducting an experiment. Roentgen received a Nobel Peace Prize in physics for his invention of the x-ray.

The first x-ray did not impress the "patient."

Roentgen's first x-ray was of his wife's left hand, on which was her wedding ring. However, when she saw the image, she was not impressed. She said, "*I have seen my death!*"

The "X" in X-ray stands for "unknown"

X-ray translates to "*unknown beam or ray*" in German. After initially inventing the x-ray, the name was fitting considering it was initially a mystery on how it will be used. X-ray can be spelt a variety of ways including *xray*, *X ray*, *X-ray*, and *x-ray*.

There are various types of x-rays and uses.

X-rays are not only used when identifying broken bones, fractures, and capturing dental images. A few x-ray uses include contrast x-rays, CT scans, dental x-rays, fluoroscopy, and mammograms.

Influenza Vaccination Campaign

The influenza can lead to hospitalisation and sometimes even death.

The Eastern Regional Health Authority hosted an Influenza Vaccine drive from October 16, 2023- November 4, 2023 in front of the Unit Trust Corporation compound, Sangre Grande and the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation Car Park, High Street, Rio Claro.

Several persons came out to update their immunization status to be prepared for the flu season which runs from October to May.

The 2023-2024 influenza vaccines are available at all health facilities and persons are encouraged to visit their nearest facility to receive their vaccinations.



Papsmear Outreach Programme at the Manzanilla Outreach Centre



"Taking care of me as a woman" was the theme for a Papsmear Outreach Programme hosted by the Manzanilla Outreach Centre on Saturday 25th November 2023. The aim of the outreach was to encourage persons to get screened for early detection of Cervical Cancer.

25 women were screened to ensure that there are no signs of abnormalities enabling them to take preventive measures to avoid the risk of developing cancer. Women are encouraged to have routine papsmears every 3 years.

The influenza vaccine was also offered to clients.

Promoting Wellness in the Workplace



The ERHA's Health Assessment Team conducted a health assessment exercise on November 22, 2023 at The National Infrastructure Development Company Limited (NIDCO), Don

Miguel Road, Extension, El Socorro. A health assessment is an essential primary care function when data about an individual's health status is collected to provide the foundation for quality nursing care and intervention.

50 persons were assessed during the exercise by the ten-member team led by Mrs. Dionne Patrick-Waterman, Registered Nurse to identify their needs and clinical problems and to recommend a plan to address those needs.

The services provided include Blood Pressure, Blood Glucose, Body Mass Index, Cholesterol checks and nutritional guidelines. Persons who presented with levels outside of the normal ranges were informed about the corrective diet

Staff Wellness Exercise



In an ongoing commitment to prioritise the well-being of its staff, the Wellness Department at the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre (SGEHC) has introduced Staff Wellness Exercise Classes. These sessions commenced on November 2, 2023, and provide a unique opportunity for staff members to engage in regular physical activity within the supportive environment of the SGEHC Wellness Centre. Recognising the demanding nature of healthcare professionals, the Staff Wellness Exercise Classes were scheduled for every Tuesday and Thursday at 4:15 p.m. to align with staff schedules and to encourage regular attendance.



The classes are facilitated by experienced personnel from the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Physical Training Instructors (PTIs). Leveraging the expertise of these professionals ensures that the classes are not only effective but also designed specifically to the unique wellness needs of healthcare professionals focussing on both physical and mental well-being. Staff members are strongly encouraged to prioritise their well-being and participate in these weekly sessions. You can foster a culture of well-being in the workplace and set positive examples for the clients we serve.

Wellness Department Focuses on Mental Health



Ms. Nadira Narine, Mental Health Officer conducts lecture

Members of the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre exercise classes and the wider community participated in a mental health session on November 17, 2023 at the Wellness Centre hosted by the Wellness Department.

Recognising the importance on mental health to a person's emotional, psychological and social well-being a lecture was facilitated by Ms. Nadira Narine, Mental Health Officer attached to the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre. The topics covered focused on stress management, emotional well-being and coping strategies. The enlightening session generated a lot of

discussion and provided tools that persons can use daily to enhance their mental health.

Participants expressed their gratitude for the valuable information provided during the lecture. Many attendees reported feeling enlightened and appreciative of the insights shared by Ms. Nadira Narine. The relevance of the topics discussed resonated with the audience leading to a positive and enriching experience. The positive feedback from participants highlights the importance of such educational sessions in creating awareness and providing practical tools for enhancing mental well-being.



Wellness Dance Class



Members of the community participate in the Wellness Dance Class

The ERHA Wellness Department launched Wellness Dance Classes on November 3, 2023 at the Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre. The aim is to increase accessibility to programmes in the community that promote physical activity. The classes which are for all members of the community, combine exercise with the art of dance and are scheduled on Fridays at 11:00 a.m.

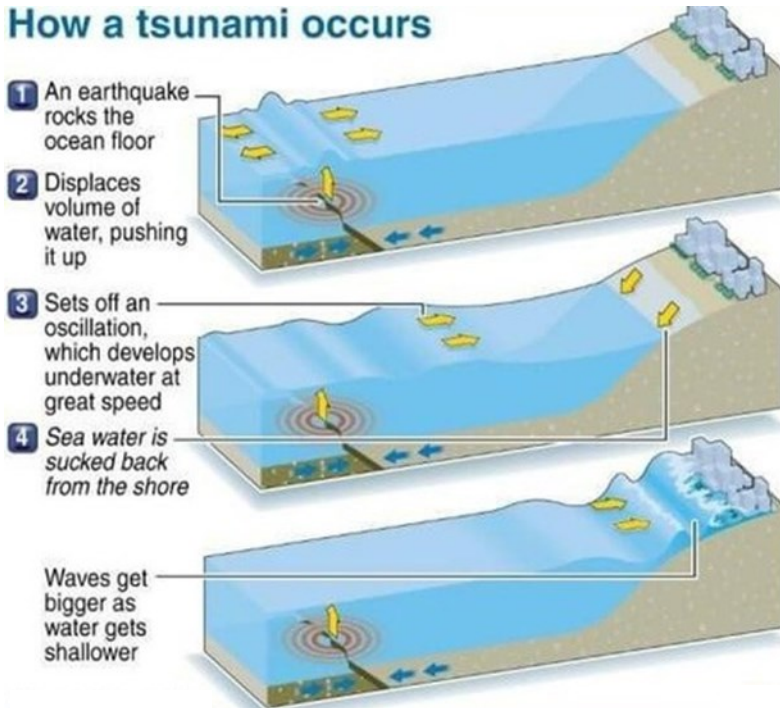
This approach brings individuals from diverse backgrounds and fitness levels together to foster a sense of community and support. Interested persons can contact the Wellness Department at 226-9603 to join for an enriching experience.



WORLD TSUNAMI AWARENESS DAY

5 NOVEMBER

How a tsunami occurs



WHAT ARE TSUNAMIS?

According to the United Nations officer for Disaster Risk Reduction the word "tsunami" comprises the Japanese words "tsu" (meaning harbour) and "nami" (meaning wave). Tsunami is a series of enormous waves created by an underwater disturbance usually associated with earthquakes occurring below or near the ocean.



WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF TSUNAMIS?

- **Earthquakes**- Must occur below the ocean and be of magnitude 6.5 or higher.
- **Landslides**- which occurs along the coast can force large amounts of water into the sea, disturbing the water and generating a tsunami.
- **Volcanic Eruptions**-violent volcanic eruptions also represent impulsive disturbances, which can displace a great volume of water and generate extremely destructive tsunami.
- **Extraterrestrial Collisions**- (i.e. asteroids, meteors) are an extremely rare occurrence. Should these celestial bodies strike the ocean, a large volume of water would undoubtedly be displaced to cause a tsunami.

#GETTOHIGHGROUND

In 2022, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) launched the #GetToHighGround campaign to promote awareness about reducing the risk of tsunamis. The campaign encourages citizens to participate in drills, runs, or walks along tsunami evacuation routes, which helps communities prepare for natural disasters and build their resilience.

Tsunamis can be deadly, but they need not be. Early warning and early action are effective tools to protect people, saving lives, and preventing the hazard from becoming a disaster.

Sources:<https://www.un.org/en/observances/tsunami-awareness-day>:

<https://www.pmfias.com/tsunami-2004-indian-ocean-tsunami-tsunami-waves-warning-systems/>



Christmas Food Safety Tips

Christmas time is here and in true Trini form, many will be gathering around the table, liming at the office, visiting their family and friends and enjoying their favorite holiday foods.

Although food poisoning is a danger all year round, the holiday season is particularly high risk. There's always a lot going on during this time of year and it's easy to forget the importance of storing and preparing food safely which can result in bacteria that are normally present in all foods to easily multiply and reach unsafe levels.

Holiday cooking often involve preparing and storing large amounts of food and eating or cooking outdoors. All of these can present their own challenges so here are some things that can keep you off the Food Safety "Naughty List" this Christmas.

Shop Wisely

Do not get caught up in Christmas Sales. Always purchase foods from registered vendors. Look out for up to date Food Badges and Certificates. Pay attention during sales and check for expiry dates on products and if the packaging is secure. For example, do not purchase items that are in dented or rusted tins.

When purchasing fresh meats, pay attention to the surroundings and if the meat is stored on ice. Have the meat and poultry bagged separately from other groceries to avoid cross-contamination. After purchasing your meat, make as few stops as possible and once you get home quickly refrigerate or freeze the meat.

Do Not Overbuy

We tend to buy more than usual at Christmas which often means cramming our fridge full of festive food. But did you know that the temperature of your fridge can rise when it's full which can allow food poisoning bacteria to grow? Your fridge should always be between 0 - 5°C.

Our cupboards are also often overstocked and so sometimes we store items directly on the ground. Leaving then susceptible to dust and contaminants from foot traffic and easily accessed by pets or vermin. Try and plan and write a list so that you can purchase only what you need.

Defrost Safely

Take meat out of the freezer and defrost it on the bottom shelf of the fridge or in a sink of cold water however, this water must be changed every 30 minutes. Do not thaw meats or other foods at room temperature on the counter. Allow 10-12 hours of defrost time per kg of meat. For example, a 2kg or more Turkey will take approximately 24 hours in the refrigerator. Defrosting at room temperature can result in bacteria growing the surface of the meat while the inside is still thawing.

Cook Properly

Use two cutting boards: one for preparing raw meat, poultry and fish, and the other for cutting fruits and vegetables, cooked food or preparing salads. This will help prevent cross contamination as it is easier to make mistakes when preparing food in larger amounts.

Cook to proper temperature at least 70°C. If possible, use a thermometer to make sure meats has been cooked enough inside to kill bacteria. There should be no visible pink meat and the juices should be running clear.

Salmonella and other harmful germs can live on both the outside and inside of normal-looking eggs. Many holiday favorites contain raw eggs, including eggnog and ponche de crème using pasteurized eggs when making these and other foods made with raw eggs can help to eliminate risks.

Reheat Correctly

When storing leftovers, food should be allowed to cool to the point where steam is no longer coming from it before placing in the refrigerator. Ideally, leftovers should be divided into smaller portions, stored in several shallow containers and refrigerated. Do not leave it out at room temperature for longer than two hours. Leftovers should be eaten within three to four days. When in doubt, throw it out.

Some family and friends may be at higher risk for serious food poisoning such as grandparents, pregnant women and young children. Take steps to help prevent them from getting sick this holiday season.

Merry Christmas

from the Public Health Department County St. Andrew St. David



November 2023

Sangre Grande Hospital

Ojoe Road, Sangre Grande
Tel: 226-4744/668-2273
Fax: 668-4368

Mayaro District Health Facility

Pierreville, Mayaro
Tel: 226-1575/630-1258/9
Tel/Fax: 630-1257

Biche Outreach Centre

Canque Village
Biche
Tel: 280-9781/668-9053

Brothers Road Outreach Centre

Brothers Road
Tabaquite
Tel: 656-2547/340-6895

Coryal Outreach Centre

Balata Hill Road and Cumuto Main Road
Coryal
Tel: 484-1368/668-8066

Cumana Outreach Centre

Toco Main Road
Cumana Village, Cumana
Tel: 226-1134/670-8250

Cumuto Outreach Centre

Main Road
Cumuto
Tel: 226-1106/643-9075

Grande Riviere Outreach Centre

Hosang Street
Grand Riviere
Tel: 670-8264/385-5421

Guayaguayare Outreach Centre

Guayaguayare Road,
Guayaguayare
Tel: 226-4090/630-8777

Manzanilla Outreach Centre

Eastern Main Road
Manzanilla
Tel: 226-1111/668-2063

Matelot Outreach Centre

Main Road
Matelot
Tel: 670-2428/354-0052

Matura Outreach Centre

Toco Main Road
Matura
Tel: 226-1261/668-6276

Rio Claro Health Centre

De Verteuil and Dougdeen Street,
Rio Claro
Tel: 226-1104/644-2236/644-0181

Sangre Grande Enhanced Health Centre

Ojoe Road
Sangre Grande
Tel: 226-1102/668-2509

Sans Souci Outreach Centre

Corner Paria Branch Road and
George Street,
San Souci
Tel: 670-2382/280-8694

Toco Health Centre

Paria Main Road, Toco
Tel: 226-1576/670-8277

Valencia Outreach Centre

Alexander Street
Valencia
Tel: 226-1260/667-8197

Satellite Dialysis Unit,
Narine Ramrattan Building
Naparima/Mayaro Road,
Rio Claro
Tel: 226-9353

**Submit Articles / Pictures for the ERHA's Newsletter by the 20th of each month to
corpcomm@erha.co.tt**

Website : www.erha.co.tt



ERHA Trinidad & Tobago



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