

New head for Heart & Stroke Foundation



**Dr. Stephen Moe, new President of the Heart & Stroke
Foundation of Barbados**

The Heart & Stroke Foundation of Barbados (HSFB) has a new President. He is Cardiologist Dr. Stephen Moe, who was appointed to the position unopposed at the 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Foundation, which was held at the organization's headquarters, Jemmotts Lane, St. Michael on Friday 18th April, 2008.

Dr. Moe is Consultant Cardiologist at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and at the Bayview Hospital. He is also in private practice at Woodside Memorial Clinic, Bay Street. He takes over from former President Drurard "Dru" Symmonds, who did not stand for re-election. Another new face to the Board is Charles Holder, who fills the position vacated by former Director Rosalind Jackson, who resigned earlier this year. Mr. Holder is currently Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Barbados Tourism Development Incorporated.

Dr. Moe said that he would make every effort to continue the good work of his predecessor. Noting that the HSFB has a lot to offer Barbados, he said that one of his goals will be to increase the membership of the organization so as to widen its base and influence in the society.

Other members of the Board are Senior Vice President Dr. Rowena Ahyee-Hallsworth, Vice President, Financial Services Lt. Col. V. Owen Springer, and Directors Ms. Sonia Connell, Dr. David Corbin, Mrs. Ena Harvey, Professor Trevor Hassell, and Terrance Mahon. Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation, Adrian Randall is the Company Secretary. Mr. Symmonds will serve on the Board for one year as Immediate Past President.



Well done: Dru Symmonds, left, receiving a gift from CEO Adrian Randall, in recognition of the former president's yeoman service to the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Barbados.

Mr. Symmonds said in his final report to a well-attended AGM that, as he demitted office after 13 years at the helm, he looked forward to assisting his successor and colleagues in the continued pursuit of the mission of the organization, which is "to keep people heart healthy and to reduce suffering and death from heart disease and stroke."

In a wide-ranging address Mr. Symmonds updated members on the successes of two key sections of the Foundation; the Cardiac Disease Prevention and Rehabilitation (CDP&R) programme, popularly known as the "Gym With A Difference" and the Emergency Cardiac Care programme.

He noted that in the year under review one hundred and ten new persons were admitted into the CDP&R programme, inclusive of thirty-six indigent clients who joined under the Ministry of Health (MOH) contract. The average number on the CDP&R register throughout the year was one hundred and thirty eight. He also updated the audience on the work done by the Gym With A Difference in integrating the care of stroke victims into the Foundation's activities.

He also revealed that a total of one thousand one hundred and ninety three participants were trained in ECC programmes for the year, locally and in the region, the Basic Life Support (BLS) course being most prevalent with 862 persons trained.

In his speech Mr. Symmonds also touched on a number of issues relating to the Foundation's activities, including staff training, a Heart & Stroke Foundation of Barbados hosted international CNCD Conference which will take place later this year in Barbados, and the Foundation's participation in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

The feature address of the evening was given by Minister of Health, Hon. Dr. David Estwick. He revealed that in Barbados it has been estimated that cardiovascular disease alone accounted for almost 1/3 of mortality among Barbadians and, when linked to diabetes, for almost 42% of total deaths and excess mortality. "It is now well recognised that hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol raise the risk of cardiovascular disease" he said. "It has been estimated that by age 50 years, the average Barbadian has a 50% chance of having hypertension, while the prevalence of diabetes in the over 40 age group is 17%. By age 50 years 15-20% of Barbadians have diabetes and by age 70 years, that figure increases to 25%", Dr. Estwick told the audience.

Dr. Estwick indicated that in response to this situation the Ministry of Health established the Cardiovascular Disease Task Force in 2006, in an effort to achieve quantum improvements in the health of the population of persons at risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Among the recommendations was the call for the establishment of a Cardiovascular Event and Stroke Registry, as part of an overall registry system to provide for the continuous monitoring of the incidence and impact of cardiovascular disease. It is also planned that during this financial year 400 persons will be trained in basic cardiac life support, and that this will include the use of automated external defibrillators.

The Minister noted that his Ministry had entered into a 5.75 million service level agreement with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) for the upgrading of cardiology and cardiac services, and that the Ministry was providing up to \$150,000 per year to the Heart & Stroke Foundation, for the provision of cardiac rehabilitation services for up to 50 patients referred from the QEH in any given year.

He added that The Ministry of Health through its National Nutrition Centre is currently working with the

Ministry of Education in developing guidelines for healthy and nutritious foods in primary and secondary schools in Barbados.

The Heart & Stroke Foundation Inc., evolved from the Heart Foundation of Barbados, which celebrated its twenty-first anniversary on April 18th 2006, and on that date completed the process of change as it formally included stroke.

Eighteen months earlier, in September 2004, the Foundation had moved to become a more dynamic, business oriented organization with the hiring of Adrian Randall as its first Chief Executive Officer.



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