

## THE BARBADOS CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION COALITION

### Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition plays its part in support people living with NCDs during COVID-19

The Barbados Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition in its Healthy Hamper Initiative which took place as Barbadians battled the COVID-19 pandemic has served 360 hampers to families across the island.

The initiative which was a partnership with the Household Mitigation Unit of the Prime Minister's Office, aided some of the most vulnerable families with persons living with diabetes or hypertension, as they seek to cope with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Coalition, which comprises of a wide cross section of civil society organizations (CSO) and individual members in Barbados, noticed the need to provide healthier foods to the most vulnerable persons during the COVID -19 national lockdown. As a result, the Coalition provided vegetable and fruit hampers to those persons living with NCDs as identified by the Household Mitigation Unit.

Spokesperson for the coalition Dr. Kia Lewis highlighted that the initiative surpassed the goal of 300 hampers due to the assistance by businesses such as EZ Pave and Barbados Packaging Industries and farmers such as Rico Wiltshire, Richard Mayers from Edgcombe Farms, Andrew Simpson from BANGO, Yughistir Jainaught from Shul's Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, Yam House Farms and Redland Farms who donated produce to the endeavor. Additionally, she explained that the Barbados Defence Force was also critical role in the packing and distribution of the hampers under the direction of Lt. Ramon Blackman. Dr. Lewis thanked all the partners and contributors to the initiative and explained it showed that a team effort is required in response to the COVID pandemic.

Through the Healthy Hampers Initiative, the Coalition has also sought to promote the inclusion of healthier foods, particularly fruits and vegetables, in the thousands of care baskets that are being distributed throughout Barbados at this time. This is critical in helping vulnerable families better manage their condition and boost their immunity during this COVID 19 pandemic.

