Strengthening primary health care

Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago: Since September 2014, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Health have been receiving international UN Volunteers to work in Health Care Centres across Trinidad and Tobago to support current staff and ensure consistent quality service is being provided for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

This partnership also ensures that regional health centres are properly staffed to meet the needs of the various communities, especially as the centre hours are being extended to ensure that everyone can access and receive treatment and care.

UNV and UNDP pride themselves in the success of their projects. Therefore, to ensure that this project achieves its aims and objectives, the UNV Caribbean Regional Sub-Hub embarked on missions to conduct site visits where the international UN Volunteer doctors are placed. These visits will showcase the doctors in action, and provide an opportunity for their
colleagues and their patients to report on the service that is being provided by the UNV doctors.

We are eager to report that not only were the UN Volunteer doctors thrilled to have us visit them so that they can showcase the great work they are doing, but the UN Volunteers and their patients also repeatedly noted their gratitude for the service that was being provided by the UN Volunteer doctors in the health centres.

Anna, a 23-year-old patient at the Mayaro Health Centre stated the following about our UN Volunteer Doctor Emma Thompson: "She's kind, loving and understanding. If she sees something that is in your file that shouldn't be there, she goes to check to find out why. She always puts you on the right path." This was Anna's second visit with Dr Thompson.

"She's very approachable. She takes her time with the patients and explains things to the patients in detail," said Dr Thompson's colleague, Ms Jackson, the District Nurse.

After visiting Mayaro Health Centre, the next stop was Tabaquite Health Centre with UN Volunteer Doctor Diki Wangyal. A two-time patient, Peter, 59 years old, stated that Dr Wangyal is "loving and explains to me about my visit and what needs to be done. I hope she returns."

Ms Alexander, District Health Visitor at Tabaquite Health Centre noted that she had "no complaints, only compliments" about Dr Wangyal, and that "she's been the only doctor in charge due to the vacations of the other doctors. The patients are very happy."

The UNV Caribbean Regional Sub-Hub is also visiting San Fernando, Cedros, Arima and Cocorite to capture more stories and receive further feedback. You can follow us on our visits via Facebook and Twitter.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Trinidad and Tobago • basic health care

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 3: Good health and well-being