

the pulse

CAYMAN ISLANDS HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

From the Chairman



Stephen Scott

"I do not underestimate the challenges that lie ahead, and it will be important that we work together with the community in building a health care system that everyone will be proud of."

I welcome the opportunity to share my thoughts with the staff of the Health Services Authority in this month's publication of your 'employee newsletter'.

I must first commend those who are responsible for putting together this high quality and informative publication. I applaud the effort and firmly support and encourage such initiatives to provide information to staff and the wider public on the many good things that are happening at the Health Services.

I am convinced that the Health Services has one of the best teams of healthcare workers in all areas - ancillary, administrative, medical, nursing and technical staff. While we have excellent equipment and good facilities it is the contribution made daily by each of you that makes the health services what it is today.

We are all proud of our Health Services. Our

achievements over the years are largely attributed to you the employees who have given outstanding service in the duties you perform each day. I want to encourage you to never let

The Cayman Islands can proudly boast of developing a first world healthcare system all because of the hard work done by all of you.

that spirit of care, commitment and dedication to duty die. As healthcare workers, you are unique individuals. Whilst most working persons generally interact with healthy individuals, the nature of your jobs frequently brings you in contact with people who are suffering or in pain, which requires an extraordinary human touch.

The Cayman Islands can proudly boast of developing a first world healthcare system all because of the hard work done by all of you. In spite of our achievements there is much more that still needs to be done and I look forward to

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Patient Monitoring System Implemented Hospital Wide

With the wiring to network the Medical ward telemetry to Critical Care now completed the Critical Care Unit (CCU) now has the capability of monitoring beds on Medical Ward, Accident and Emergency, Recovery Room and Paediatric High Dependency.



Nurse Manager for the Surgical Department, Joanne Taylor says “the benefits of the fully integrated system will be monumental as trained staff in the Critical Care Unit will be able to provide the clinical team in these units with vital patient information, particularly where immediate decisions are critical.”

“No longer will there be need to wait for reports to be sent to the Unit, then processed, analyzed and then delivered” says Taylor. “We are truly excited to be provide clinicians and patients with a communication system that significantly improves patient care.” ■

From the Chairman

Continued from page one

working with everyone during my tenure as Chairman to bring about further improvements in our healthcare system.

I also look forward to meeting with many of you in the coming days and months to share thoughts on how best we can work together to make the Cayman Islands Health Services the epitome for the rest of the region.

I know there are challenges which lie ahead but I am confident that if we work together we can surpass any obstacles and achieve our mission of providing a viable, high quality, efficient, cost effective and customer friendly health care system for the people of the Cayman Islands. ■

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Minister of Health
Hon. Gilbert McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Michael S. Elliott

This publication is published monthly by the Public Relations & Marketing Department of the Health Services Authority for the employees of the Cayman Islands Hospital, the Public Health Department, Faith Hospital (Cayman Brac) and the Little Cayman Clinic (Little Cayman).

Health Services Moves into New Frontier

... for excellence in health care

The Health Services is moving into a new frontier by charting the course towards being a medical center of excellence in the Caribbean.



"This initiative will be in several phases. We don't know final timelines yet, but the changes will happen over many months. Some services will make their moves first," states Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Michael Elliott.

In the first phase, the Cayman Islands Hospital will enter into partnership agreements with medical facilities and professionals overseas to share resources. This is expected to begin later this year through a joint arrangement between the Health Services Authority (HSA) and a team of Canadian cardiac specialists, which will provide specialized services not currently offered on the island.

According to Mr. Michael Elliott, "by combining our expertise and resources, we

can improve quality and service. Teams of Doctors will be coming in to share with those currently in the service. They pool their knowledge and expertise, and the outcome is even better than what you had before."

The visiting cardiologists will work alongside Dr. Neeraj Prasad, HSA Consultant Cardiologist in providing a full-service cardiology centre within the Hospital, offering a range services including EKG, cardiac ultrasound, stress testing and holter monitoring for the evaluation of heart rhythms, pacemaker insertion and our newest service, transoesophageal endoscopy and internal echocardiograph.

A full service Cardiac Catherization Lab will also be offered in the near future. Cardiac catheterization is a diagnostic procedure available

at MRMC used to examine the blood vessels of the heart. It allows the cardiologist to assess the pumping function of the heart and to examine the coronary arteries. By combining the information obtained during this procedure with information from other diagnostic tests, the cardiologist is able to accurately diagnose problems that may exist, and to choose the most effective treatment.

According to Dr. Prasad it is expected that within one year the Health Services will be able to offer the most comprehensive range of invasive and non-invasive cardiac services to meet the needs of the island.

Noninvasive cardiac testing, which consists of procedures done with technology that

Continued on page four

Dr. Neeraj Prasad
HSA Consultant Cardiologist



Health Services Moves into New Frontier

Continued from page three

penetrates the body or skin to obtain information about the heart.

Procedures include:

- EKG
- Holter Monitor
- Echocardiogram
- Stress Tests

Invasive cardiac testing consists of procedures with technology that penetrates the body of skin to obtain information about the heart.

Examples of procedures include:

- Cardiac Catheterisation
- Angioplasty
- Stents
- Laser

Dr. Prasad is elated about the new developments and the prospects of further enhancing the services provided at the HSA. "With these new additions to our services we are well positioned to become a major centre of excellence in the region with the most comprehensive cardiology services," said Dr. Prasad.

He continued, "by creating centres dedicated to particular services, we can also customize how we care for patients. Patients will see a very focused effort by a skilled team of medical specialists who can meet the patients' needs. For example, the nurses will have even greater expertise in taking care of cardiac patients, because that's what they'll do all the time."

"Ultimately the patients will benefit" said Dr. Prasad. The expansion of services will reduce the need and cost of sending patients overseas and often times away from their families as these services will now be offered locally.

Hospital Accreditation

Another phase, which will also commence this year, is the process towards accreditation of the Cayman Islands Hospital. Minister of Health, Hon. Gilbert McLean recently disclosed that the Board of the Health Services Authority has been requested to take steps toward accreditation by the Canadian Council on Health Service Accreditation.

According to Mr. McLean "that is a much more achievable goal today than it was only a few months ago. The HSA's medical standards are already high and positioned for more excellence, and the quality of administration processes are well on their way to becoming standardised."

The accreditation of the Cayman Islands Hospital will demonstrate that the organization has achieved certain high standards and that the standards and quality of care offered are as good as those offered elsewhere in North America.

The process towards full accreditation is likely to take two to three years.

Medical Tourism

As part of the new thrust, the Health Services will also take advantage of innovative marketing opportunities, one of which is medical tourism.

Already, the Cayman Islands are considered the jurisdiction of choice when cruise ship passengers need medical care. Cruise lines which operate within the Caribbean chose the Cayman Islands Hospital as the first health facility to send patients for the treatment of medical emergencies during cruises in the western

Caribbean.

Many overseas patients who utilize our facilities often send letters thanking the medical staff for their expertise and compassion, and most always refer to the excellence of the medical technology available here. Sometimes these letter writers express surprise that a country of this size could offer such outstanding service, meaning that the reputation of our practitioners and facilities has spread internationally, beyond what we sometimes recognize.

Citing the tremendous potential to in this niche market, Mr. Gilbert McLean told employees recently "it is only natural, then, for government and by extension, practitioners, to think about medical tourism as the marriage between two of Cayman's strengths. On the medical side, we have the qualified staff, the modern equipment and the facilities. As an international travel destination, we have the beaches, the sun and the water. A medical tourism visit to Cayman would therefore provide that important anonymity for persons who wish certain procedures to be done in private, so to speak. And it's much easier to recuperate in a beautiful setting, where a patient can be pampered and enjoy the tranquility before returning to their everyday world."

Mr. McLean continued, "even by enhancing certain services – for example, dialysis – the HSA could attract visitors whose decisions to travel are based on a country's ability to care for their particular medical needs. Medical tourism is an idea whose time has come for Cayman, and I assure you that my colleagues and I in Cabinet are investigating the possibility. ■"

New Organisational Structure to be Implemented Soon

The Health Services will soon have a new organisational structure. Chief Executive Officer, Michael Elliott, says the implementation of the whole structure will take time but will begin with the re-organisation of the senior management team.

“I believe the new structure will provide the basis for sustainable health services delivery and I am confident that the management team which will be announced shortly will have the skills and dedication to make the best of the new structure,” says Mr. Elliott.

“We are embarking on a new era that not only calls for changes in the way we deliver health care and services, but calls for integration across the range of services. We must work together to ensure that patients, residents or clients, when they access care and services from the Cayman Islands Hospital, encounter effective and efficient care that meets their

needs. Implementing this structure is a necessary first step towards that goal.”

In the first phase of the reorganisation, the health services will be restructured into directorates with a senior manager in charge.

Mr. Elliott says adopting an organizational structure under the leadership of a new Chief Executive Officer will not only promote more responsibility and authority but will also streamline decision making within the Hospital. ■



Mr. Michael Elliott
Chief Executive Officer



HSA Staff to benefit from Links with Jackson Memorial Hospital

The Health Services will forge closer ties with the University of Miami of Medicine and Jackson Health Systems, which will provide benefits to patients and staff through access to medical resources and continuing education programmes.

Minister of Health, Hon. Gilbert McLean, highlighted this important partnership recently during a meeting with Health Services staff to introduce Mr. Michael Elliott as the new Chief Executive Officer.

According to Mr. McLean, “having previously worked with the University of Miami School of Medicine and Jackson Health Systems – which, by the way, are the only two teaching hospitals in the South Florida – Mr. Elliott is a link to an incredible professional network including Miami and New York.”

With this link, Mr. McLean stated that “two obvious benefits immediately come to mind; first, the HSA already

has an arrangement with Jackson regarding patients who require advanced tertiary care, and this can be only be strengthened with Mr. Elliott as the authority’s CEO. Second, the authority has publicly stated its ongoing commitment for continuous education opportunities for its practitioners, and this avenue has been broadened through the CEO’s connections with teaching hospitals. With all of this in mind, I think that the Health Services Authority is well positioned to become an even stronger powerhouse in the health sector.”

The partnership with the University of Miami and Jackson Health Systems will also facilitate visits from specialists’ doctors from Jackson to the Cayman Islands, which according to Mr. McLean “will make tertiary health care more affordable, more convenient and more comfortable for patients.” ■

Health Services Reaches out to **West Bay Cancer Patient**

Showing its commitment to the people of the Cayman Islands and its concern for the plight of West Bay resident, Mrs. Lola Parsons the Cayman Islands Hospital has announced that it will be providing chemotherapy treatment for Mrs. Parsons who is battling cancer and that all charges not covered by her insurance for the treatment at the hospital will be waived.

Previously, Mrs. Parsons travelled to Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami for her on-going medical treatment, sometimes as often as twice a month. The journey and the absence of family support during some of these costly trips for treatment offshore impacted her recovery. While her insurance company covered the cost of her medical care, incidental expenses such as travel and hotel stay were not covered.

Chief Executive Officer of the Health Services Authority, Mr. Michael Elliott, said, "Once the hospital was made aware of Mrs. Parson's plight we determined that the treatment she was receiving in Miami could be transferred here in Cayman." He added, "Our business is about healthcare – including wellness, and to that end we are committed to providing on-island care whenever possible, rather than send our patients off-shore for medical treatment which can be safely provided at the Cayman Islands Hospital. We care a great deal about Mrs. Parson's quality of life, -- being able to receive her chemotherapy treatment in Cayman where she has the support of her family and a familiar environment was important to the family and our Organization."

Mr. Elliott went on to say that the Hospital's Oncology Unit had discussions with Mrs. Parson's medical team at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami and

all chemotherapy modalities and protocols for her continued treatment at the Cayman Islands Hospital were reviewed and approved. We will continue her ongoing care in collaboration with the specialist in Miami

Mr. Elliott also commended the initiative taken by Ms. Rachel Powery of the Samaritan Outreach Ministries in bringing the plight of Mrs. Parson's to national attention and for her exceptional efforts in raising funds to assist the family with travel and miscellaneous.

The Cayman Islands Hospital's is extremely proud of its Oncology Unit and the staff who provide a range of services on-island for cancer patients, on par with service offered in healthcare facilities in North America. In addition to treatment, the Oncology Unit at the Cayman Islands Hospital helps patients and their families meet the challenges of living with cancer through counselling, appropriate medical information, guidance and practical suggestions to involve them in the decision-making options along the way. The care of oncology patients also involves frequent lab tests, diagnostic radiology, dietary consultation, pain management and chemotherapy treatment. The service provided by our unit offers patients a convenient and cost effective alternative to hospital admission. The Unit will soon offer regular exercise, diet and spiritual counselling classes for cancer patients.

The Unit is staffed by a team of trained nurses, supported by on staff Physicians and a visiting Oncologist Dr. Gillian Wharfe. Consultations are available by calling 244-2797.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Mr. John Parsons, says "the family is deeply appreciative of the offer made by the Hospital for her continued treatment as this will make a significant difference in the quality of her life and the emotional and financial hardship on the family who had to be separated from her while she travelled to Miami for treatment." ■

Health Services to Pilot New **Telemedicine Programme**

Through a US\$200,000 grant, the Health Services will be the pilot for a new telemedicine programme which will link the Cayman Islands Hospital with the University of Miami, Jackson



Health Systems and a remote medical facility in Tanzania. The grant will allow for the acquisition of desktop videoconferencing systems, maintenance and staff support, the high speed fibre optic cable link between the Cayman Islands Hospital, Jackson Health Systems and the remote facility in Tanzania.

Telemedicine is the practice, which allows health professionals at multiple sites to meet, through the use of special telephone lines, and computers that transmit data for remote television viewing, for consultation without having to leave their hospitals. Sophisticated diagnosis and medical treatment is possible at any distance.

With the new technology, Doctors in all three locations can see and talk with each other and review laboratory work via two-way audio/video linkage. The 3 core components of the program include Distance Learning, Teleconferencing, and Telemedicine Clinical Consultations. ■

It's time to get your Flu Shot

If you have not already received your flu shot, it is time. Flu season begins in October and peaks between December and March.

The flu vaccine will be available in Cayman beginning _____ and will be offered as long as supplies last.

Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Kiran Kumar says "those who wish to receive the vaccine should get it as soon as possible in order to be protected during the season."

No appointments are necessary to receive the vaccine. Persons may be immunized at these locations:

- *The General Practice Unit at the Cayman Islands Hospital, from 9 am to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday*
- *Faith Hospital in Cayman Brac, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday*
- *All district health centers, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday*
- *Little Cayman Clinic. Residents of Little Cayman may contact the clinic to make arrangements.*

The vaccine is recommended for persons older than 65 years, as well as anyone four (4) years or older with certain chronic conditions – such as heart or lung disease, diabetes, renal problems, blood disorders and



immune system problems – that are susceptible to complications of influenza infection.

Dr. Kumar notes that "the vaccine is effective for only one season, so persons at high risk should be immunized every year",

However, the flu vaccine is not recommended for individuals who are allergic to chicken, chicken eggs, chicken feathers or chicken dander; with diseases of the brain and nerves; and with fevers. Side effects of the vaccine include fever and body pains that may last up to two days, although Panadol or similar medications will relieve the symptoms. Before being immunized, persons are urged to pick up and read flu vaccine handouts that are available at each location that offers the immunization.

For more information contact the Public Health Services at 244-2648: the General Practice Unit at

244-2800: Faith Hospital at 948-2243: the District Health Centres or your doctor.

Surviving the cold and flu season

Here are some ways to lower your risk of catching colds, coughs or flu this winter - but if the worst happens, there's also some good advice on how to get better soon.

Keep your Lifestyle as Healthy as Possible. Eating a diet which includes plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit each day, going for regular walks and avoiding too much alcohol all make it easier for your body to resist any kind of infection, including colds and flu.

Be a Non-Smoker. One great advantage of not smoking is that you get fewer colds, coughs, sore throats and flu than if you do smoke.

Keep Away from People Who Have a Cold or Flu. Because the viruses that cause these infections are coughed and sneezed into the air you share with other people, it helps to stay away from people who are ill, and to avoid enclosed, crowded places if you can. Don't touch other people's used tissues or handkerchiefs. If you have flu yourself, it's better to stay away from work so you don't pass it on to others.

Wash Your Hands More Often. It's very easy to pick up cold and flu germs from things other people have touched - telephones, door handles or money, for instance - or from shaking hands with someone who is infected. Reduce your risk of catching a cold or flu by washing hands frequently

- using warm water and soap removes germs better than a quick rinse under the cold tap. It's also important to avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands - these are all ways that germs can get into your system.

What to Do If you Catch a Cold or Flu. The best treatment is to rest, keep warm and drink plenty of fluids to help flush the germs out of your system. Although there are no drugs to cure colds and flu, there are some non-prescription medications available from pharmacies which can help relieve the symptoms. Besides relieving symptoms like headache and sore throat, some painkillers such as aspirin, paracetamol or ibuprofen also help reduce fever. (Paracetamol is best for children - aspirin and ibuprofen are unsuitable for children under 12). As for buying cough medicine, ask your pharmacist to help you choose the best one for your type of cough.

Whenever you buy painkillers or cough and cold remedies, always read the directions carefully. Some of these drugs shouldn't be taken with other medication, others can cause drowsiness which can be dangerous if you're driving or operating machinery. If in doubt, ask your pharmacist.

If you are prescribed antibiotics, remember to finish the whole pack. If you don't finish the pack or if you take the pills less often than the doctor advises, it means you will have too little medication in your body - not enough to kill the germs, but enough to help the germs learn to become resistant to the drug. ■

After many years of training and extensive experience in the United States, working alongside some of the worlds' most renowned physicians, Dr. Darley Solomon Jr., has returned home to the Cayman Islands and to the post of General Surgeon at the Health Services Authority (HSA).

Another Caymanian Doctor Returns Home

Please send photo

Dr. Darley Solomon

Dr. Solomon who was born in George Town to Darley and LeVonne Solomon completed his medical training at Howard University in Washington and later went on to do his internship in internal medicine at Bronx Municipal Hospital in New York. He accomplished his specialist skill in general surgery at the University of Mississippi and later went on to take up the post of General Surgeon at the Montfort Jones Memorial Hospital serving a community of 50,000 people in Mississippi as the only surgeon.

The Administrator of the Montfort James Memorial Hospital, Mr. Thomas Bland wrote this of Dr. Solomon: "Dr. Solomon has demonstrated exceptional skills as a general surgeon and an excellent bedside manner with his patients. I would not

hesitate to have Dr. Solomon perform surgery on myself or any member of my family."

Dr. Solomon has honed his skills alongside such legendary physicians as Dr. James Hardy who was the first physician in history to do a joint heart and lung transplant and who is also

the author of several medical textbooks including the Hardy's Textbook of Surgery, which is akin to the surgeon's bible.

He was a member of the medical team to conduct the first minimally invasive arterial bypass angio-graphic procedure in the United States, which was done at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, where he did his residency in General Surgery.

Chief Executive Officer of the HSA, Mr. Michael Elliott says Dr. Solomon is an excellent clinician who has been able to develop his skills extensively in the US, working in a variety of hospital settings and will be an asset to the Cayman Islands Hospital.

Dr. Solomon says he is pleased to return home and to work with the Cayman Islands Hospital in his new capacity. "I have always wanted to return home and to utilise my skills to better the lives of the people of the Cayman Islands and encourage other Caymanian medical practitioners to return."

Minister of Health, Hon. Gilbert McLean says the return of Dr. Solomon is encouraging and that the government would actively support the return of Caymanians to work in the health services.

"It's been a longstanding government policy to encourage Caymanian doctors to work for the largest health-care provider, and that is now the HSA. If there are vacancies, Caymanian doctors will continue to receive priority when it comes to recruiting" Mr. McLean said recently in a speech to staff at the Health Services Authority.

"I'd also like to see

Caymanian doctors hired as locums, just as we hire practitioners from other approved jurisdictions. This policy reflects the parent/child relationship, for although there are technically no "government" doctors, the government does have a grandfathered-in commitment, if you will, to provide this strategic support for the HSA. But to all Caymanian doctors in service, in all health care facilities in the Cayman Islands, I say welcome home. We're glad to have you back on our shores and ably tending to the needs of our residents."

In addition to his role as General Surgeon, Dr. Solomon runs a weekly Breast Clinic for women at the Hospital's Women's Health Centre. He also has keen interest in the treatment and care of diabetes and has done extensive research in this field, authoring several publications on the subject.

Dr. Solomon was listed in the Who's Who Among Students in the American Universities and Colleges listing in 1994. He received an Academic Leadership Award in General Surgery in 1998.

He is also a member of the American Medical Association, American Society of General Surgeons and American College of Surgeons.

A committed family man, Dr. Solomon said another motivating factor for his return to Grand Cayman was to be close to his family. Married to Dana and the father of three boys, Bo, Zachary and Jared says "the importance of family supersedes everything in life". A fourth addition to the family, and the first girl, is expected in October. ■

New Chairman Appointed

for Health Services Authority

Minister of Health, Hon. Gilbert McLean has announced the appointment of Mr. Stephen Scott as the new Chairman of the Board of the HSA effective Monday, September 1, 2003.



Stephen Scott

...‘we have been fortunate to have outstanding individuals on the board over the past year and a strong foundation for the future has been laid.’

Mr Scott is a businessman and is the eldest son of the late Leeland Scott of Cayman Brac and Leleith Scott. He is a Past President of one of the leading community clubs and a member of several charitable and community organizations.

Commenting on the appointment of the new HSA Chairman, Mr. McLean said, “I believe Mr. Scott has the requisite experience and leadership qualities to lead and oversee this new phase of the HSA and to ensure that the Authority continues on a firm footing.”

In accepting the appointment as Chairman Mr. Scott said, “I am delighted to be appointed to this exciting new organisation and to have the opportunity to build on the excellent work which has already been done. There are many challenges ahead and I hope early on to meet staff and local groups to listen to their ideas so we can work together to create a world-class health care service for our people”

“I am looking forward to working with the very capable and professional team at the

HSA so they may continue to grow from strength to strength in providing excellent Health care to the Cayman Islands.” said Mr. Scott.

He continued, “I do not underestimate the challenges that lie ahead, and it will be important that we work together with the community in building a health care system that everyone will be proud of.”

In commending the work of the members of the Board, Mr. McLean said ‘we have been fortunate to have outstanding individuals on the board over the past year and a strong foundation for the future has been laid.’

He also had high praise for the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Ms. Andrea Bryan who served as Acting Chairman of the HSA for the past three months following the resignation of Mr. Kel Thompson on June 9.

Outgoing Chairman Ms. Andrea Bryan said: “I am delighted that Mr. Scott has been appointed as the Authority’s new Chairman. I believe Mr. Scott has exactly the right skills needed for the exciting challenges which lie ahead and I look forward to working closely with him to deliver improved health services to the people of these islands.”

The Minister of Health has also appointed as a Director of

the Board.

The full membership of the HSA Board are:

- o Mr. Stephen Scott (Chairman)
- o Hon. Gilbert McLean, Minister of Health Services
- o Ms. Andrea Bryan, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health
- o Mr. Lewis Ebanks (Deputy Chairman)
- o Mr. Tim Ridley
- o Mr. Christopher Saunders
- o Mrs. Virginia Suckoo
- o Mr. Al Suckoo
- o Mr. Harry Chisholm
- o Mr. Charles Watler
- o Mr. Ken Jefferson
- o Mr. Mervyn Conolly
- o Mr. Michael Elliott, Chief Executive Officer – HSA
- o Dr. Bryan Heap Medical Director, HSA
- o Dr. Kiran Kumar Medical Officer of Health, HSA

Mr. McLean said ‘the backgrounds and experiences of the board members are very impressive and with their collective expertise will no doubt bring fresh ideas and approaches to ensure that the Authority is efficient and delivers high quality service to the residents of these islands.’ I look forward to significant contributions from them in the years ahead.” he added. ■

From the Faith **Welcome Bill!**

Faith Hospital is proud and happy to have the good fortune to welcome Dr. Bill Newsome to its staff.

Dr. Newsome comes to Cayman Brac from Montana, where he had been practicing Internal Medicine for the past 28 years. He also served on the faculty of Montana State

The Newsomes enjoy the Brac so much that "When the opportunity to live and work on the Brac became available, it was too good to pass up"! The Newsome's have a 7-month-old



Dr. Bill Newsome

University as clinical professor. Dr. Newsome attended the University of Oklahoma Medical School and completed his residency at the University of Washington.

Although new to Faith Hospital, Dr. Newsome is not new to Cayman Brac where he and his wife Cathy had been vacationing for the past 7 years. Dr. Newsome is an avid Astronomer, and the clear skies of the Brac are perfect. His other hobbies are fishing, snorkelling and scuba diving.

daughter Claire, and they have started construction on a home on the South Side.

Dr. Newsome will assume the duties of Cayman Brac's District Medical Officer as well as practicing Internal Medicine. The expertise and experience he brings to Faith Hospital's medical team will enhance the delivery of quality health care to the people of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. ■

New Menopause Clinic Opened

The Cayman Islands Hospital is increasing its services to women through the opening of new menopause clinic in its Women's Health Centre. The clinic will be held on the first Friday of each month from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Specialist Services Manager, Hazel Brown says the clinic will be specifically helpful to women who have reached menopause and are anxious to maintain their quality of life and to prevent associated problems.

"Broadly, there are three groups of women who may benefit from attending the Menopause Clinic says Brown: those who are approaching or who have just reached the menopause and have symptoms which are severe enough to make them seek help; the second group are those who may have minimal symptoms but are concerned about long term prevention of bone loss, strokes or heart attacks especially if they are at higher risk of these problems and women who have gone through an early menopause or who have had their ovaries removed."

Although many women go through the menopause without any problems, many others experience distressing symptoms. These symptoms often start before periods have ceased.

"We want women to understand that menopause is a natural biological process, not a medical

problem. Although it is associated with hormonal, physical and psychosocial changes in a woman's life, menopause is not the end of youth or sexuality. Several generations ago, few women lived beyond menopause. Today, women may spend as much as one-third to one-half of their lives after menopause and we want to help our women through this crucial phase of their life in a caring and supportive manner" says Nurse Brown.

While some women breeze through menopause with few symptoms, others may experience a number of physical and emotional changes, including:

- *Irregular menstruation.*
- *Vaginal changes.*
- *Hot flashes.*
- *Sleep disturbances and night sweats.*
- *Changes in appearance. (More fat settling in the waist and abdomen, loss of fullness in the breasts, thinning hair and wrinkling skin.)*
- *Emotional changes, mood swings, irritability.*

Appointments for the Menopause Clinic can be obtained by calling 244-2649. The clinic will be held in the Women's Health Centre, which is conveniently located at ground level in new and spacious facilities, recently opened at the Health Services Complex. Patients accessing the Women's Health Centre should enter through the main entrance of the Hospital complex and follow the directional signs to the centre. ■



Weststar TV Ltd.

Donates Cable Boxes

to the
Cayman Islands Hospital's
Dialysis Unit.

Weststar TV Limited has donated Cable Television Services for the Dialysis Unit at the Cayman Islands Hospital, with 6 boxes already in place and a further 3 boxes to be installed. Richard Corbin, Manager of Cable Operations at Weststar TV Ltd. was pleased to officially present the donation to the Health Services Authority's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Michael Elliott.



*The Habib family,
whose mother
Mrs Florence
Habib was a
dialysis patient,
donated six
television sets to
the unit last year.*

Richard Corbin said: "With each dialysis treatment taking 3-5 hours and some patients receiving two treatments per week we wanted to provide our cable television service to entertain them during their long treatment. Provision of this cable service was made possible by the combined efforts of Weststar TV Ltd. and members of the Pink Ladies Volunteer Group, in particular Liz Walker."

Mr. Elliott was extremely thankful for the donation and is looking forward to the positive impact it will have on the patients.

The Cayman Island's

Hospital's Dialysis Services started in 1983 with limited service. In order to meet the medical needs of residents and visitors to these islands the service has expanded and currently has the capability to treat up to ten patients at a time. Except for a few acute patients whose kidney malfunction is temporary, most patients require treatment for three to five hours, three times per week for life or at least until they have a successful transplant.

Within the unit, patients are linked to a haemodialysis machine, which does the all-important work of the

kidneys, which is cleaning the blood of impurities. The unit is currently staffed with three nurses and operates three days each week from 5:30am until around 9:30pm.

The purpose built Dialysis Unit serves local outpatients and inpatients, visitors and in-transit cruise-ship passengers. Twenty-eight residents and thirteen visitors were given a total of 3,694 treatments in 2002.

The Habib family, whose mother Mrs Florence Habib was a dialysis patient, donated six television sets to the unit last year. ■

Fish Poisoning Advisory

With fishing season right around the corner, the Public Health Department advises persons to be cautious when consuming large fish, especially barracudas, from reef areas.

Already this year there have been 11 reported cases of ciguatera food poisoning with many of them having to seek medical attention as a result. "These cases periodically occur in the Cayman Islands, especially during rainy season, and barracuda is commonly implicated as the source," said Medical Officer of Health Dr. Kiran Kumar, noting that 36 cases were reported last year.

Occurring in tropical areas, ciguatera is a toxin that is generated by algae growing on submerged reefs. Fish that eat the algae become toxic in turn, and the effect is magnified throughout the food chain so that large, predatory fish become the most poisonous.

"Persons should avoid consuming large fish from reef areas," Dr. Kumar emphasised. "However, the occurrence of toxic fish is sporadic, and not all fish of a given species or from a given locale will be toxic." Therefore, he reminds the public to save unconsumed portions of suspected poisoned fish and to call the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) at 949-6696 to arrange for testing. "Although the DEH has recently obtained kits

capable of testing for ciguatera toxin, we need to determine if the kits are fully applicable to the Cayman Islands species," said the Director of Environmental Health, Roydell Carter. He added that once this is confirmed, the testing would greatly enhance public safety as suspect fish could be tested quickly and easily before consumption.

Ciguatera poisoning is characterised by gastrointestinal and neurological symptoms (i.e. affecting the stomach, intestines, nerves and muscles). Diarrhoea, vomiting and abdominal pain occur first, usually within 24 hours of eating the fish. In severe cases, patients may develop low blood pressure as well as low heart rates. Neurologic symptoms may appear at the same time, or may follow one or two days later; they include pain and weakness in the lower extremities, which Dr. Kumar noted is very characteristic in the Caribbean. Ciguatera may also cause a tingling sensation around the mouth.

More bizarre symptoms include temperature reversal, such as ice cream that seems hot or coffee that feels cold, he said. "Aching teeth" also are frequently reported.

Most patients completely recover within a few weeks, but the symptoms can reappear over a period of months or years. According to Dr. Kumar, "Ciguatera poisoning is a very serious condition, but medical care can ease the symptoms."

Dr. Kumar added that anyone experiencing these symptoms should visit a doctor for treatment as soon as possible. ■

Progressive Distributors, Ltd., Celebrates with Mothers at Cayman Islands Hospital

Andrea Hill (front right) of Progressive Distributors, Ltd., presents this new mother with a gift package of baby supplies. Progressive Distributors,



Ltd., has teamed up with the Cayman Islands Hospital to present Johnson & Johnson's Baby Gift Sets, as well as Huggies Supreme & Ultratrim diaper samples to all mothers giving birth at its Maternity Unit.

The Johnson's Baby Gift Starter Sets include Johnson's Baby Soap, Johnson's Baby Powder, Johnson's Baby Oil,

Johnson's Baby Shampoo, and Johnson's Baby Lotion. These gift programs are currently in full swing and will continue into the future.

Pictured in photo are: (l-r) Lead Nurse for the Maternity Unit, Shannon Hydes, Surgical Services Business Manager, Lizzette Howell, Nurse Midwife Donnette Marshall-Walford and Nursing Assistant, Sheilane Ricot. ■

Cayman Islands Hospital Dental Clinic Welcomes New Dentist

Dr. Maurice MacDonald has joined the Cayman Islands Hospital Dental Clinic this past July and has won the admiration and trust of many patients who speak unhesitatingly of his professionalism as well as his caring, gentle and reassuring personality.

Over the course of his 17-year career, he has developed a natural ability of making even his most frightened patients relax during dental procedures. Dr. MacDonald is a graduate of the University of Nebraska and Howard University in the United States and has extensive practice experience in the United States and Jamaica.

Commenting on his appointment, Dr. MacDonald states, "I welcome this new

and challenging opportunity to be part of a team of competent and caring professionals who are dedicated to delivering the highest quality health care to the people of these islands."

According to Chief Dental Officer of the Cayman Islands Hospital, Dr. John Vlitos, the Dental Clinic staff have always adopted a caring approach to health-care delivery and apart from Dr. MacDonald's excellent qualifications and experience, his qualities as a practitioner and his outstanding people skills made him an ideal choice for the Health Services team. He added, "he will also serve as the Dental Officer for the sister islands (Cayman Brac and Little Cayman), making weekly clinic visits on Wednesday and Thursday. ■