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**Summary of Proceedings**  
**Public Hearing**  
**Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory  
Authorities (including the THA)**

Wednesday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016  
[10:17 a.m. to 12:23 p.m.]

**Venue:** A.N.R. Robinson Room (East), Level 9, Office of the Parliament, Tower D, The Port of Spain International Waterfront Centre, 1A Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain.

**Subject matter:** Inquiry into the Administration and Operations of the South-West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA) in relation to the adequacy of human resources and equipment at the San Fernando General Hospital (SFGH).

**Committee Members**

The following Committee members were present:

- i. Mr. H. R. Ian Roach (Chairman)
- ii. Ms. Ramona Ramdial, MP (Vice-Chairman)
- iii. Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus
- iv. Mr. Darryl Smith, MP
- v. Mr. Faris Al-Rawi, MP
- vi. Mr. Nigel De Freitas
- vii. Mr. Daniel Solomon

**Witnesses who appeared**

The following officials of the SWRHA and Ministry of Health appeared before the Committee:

**SWRHA:**

- i. Dr. Alexander Sinanan – Chairman
- ii. Mr. Anil Gosine -Chief Executive Officer
- iii. Mrs. Valerie Alleyne Rawlins - Deputy Chairman

- iv. Mrs. Gail Miller-Meade - General Manager Finance
- v. Mrs. Debra Singh Khan - GM Human Resources
- vi. Dr. Anand Chatoorgoon - Medical Director, Secondary Care Service, Director of Health (Ag.)

**Ministry of Health:**

- i. Ms. Donna Ferraz - Permanent Secretary
- ii. Dr. Akenath Misir - Chief Medical Officer
- iii. Mr. Lawrence Jaisingh - Director Health Policy Research and Planning

**Key Issues Discussed**

The following are the key subject areas/issued discussed during the hearing:

- i. The main expenditure items that accounted for the increase in budgetary allocations to the SWRHA over the last three fiscal years;
- ii. The factors that contributed to the decrease in budgetary allocations to the SFGH;
- iii. The reallocation of funds from the SFGH to three (3) District Health Facilities including Princes Town, Couva and Siparia;
- iv. The impact of the San Fernando Teaching Hospital (SFTH) on the provision of health care services;
- v. The reduction of patient overcrowding at the SFGH;
- vi. The shortage of nurses at the SFGH and throughout Trinidad and Tobago;
- vii. The plans in place to outfit the Couva Children's Hospital with the amount of staff required;
- viii. The shortage of medical doctors, in particular senior specialists, at the SFGH;
- ix. The reporting relationship between the Board of Directors and the Ministry of Health;
- x. The measures implemented to develop a more data-driven approach to decision making within the SWRHA;
- xi. The number of complaints resolved over the past four years;
- xii. The reporting process after a complaint is lodged by internal and external clients/stakeholders;
- xiii. The reasons SWRHA recorded the second highest rate of infant mortality over the last 4 years;
- xiv. The increase in purchases of property, plant equipment, maintenance, medical equipment repairs and maintenance equipment;
- xv. The need for technological advancements to allow for proper analysis of maternal care and neo-natal care during the gestational period to reduce the number of maternal and infant mortalities;

- xvi. The need for increased training of doctors in modern care, standardised techniques and public observatory.
- xvii. The delay in the occupation of two floors at the SFGH assigned to the University of the West Indies for conducting training.
- xviii. The dysfunctional equipment at the SFGH and the impact it has on the standard of health care provided;
- xix. The cost to repair/restore and purchase equipment and the maintenance programme in place;
- xx. The main issue(s) impeding delivery of quality care to the public;
- xxi. The Ministry of Health's role in alleviating the human resource issues at the SFGH;
- xxii. The intention of the Ministry of Health to formulate a ten year human resource plan to address the number of vacancies within the RHAs;
- xxiii. The expected standard of care in the delivery of services at the hospital and whether this is measured against established and document local and international standards;
- xxiv. The systems in place to inform the public about the standard of service they ought to receive at the hospital;
- xxv. The SWRHA applies international, regional and local benchmarks to its operations;
- xxvi. Plans of the Ministry of Health to collaborate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to negotiate another bilateral agreement with the Chinese government for technical assistance in the area of neurology;
- xxvii. The implementation of an automated system to record the medical history of patients.
- xxviii. The average waiting time for a patient to receive surgery and the backlog of patients awaiting surgery;
- xxix. The SWRHA's plan to deal with the shortage of pharmaceuticals;
- xxx. The shortage of drugs for cancer patients;
- xxxi. The cost incurred when drugs are allowed to expire;
- xxxii. The protocols in place to prevent Hospital Acquired Infections (HAI) at the SFGH.
- xxxiii. The importance and availability of medical doctors who specialise in emergency medicine;
- xxxiv. The systems in place for a patient to be informed about a doctor's history in medical practice;
- xxxv. The need for a policy on foreign nationals accessing local health facilities;
- xxxvi. The potential drain foreign nationals may be placing on health care resources.
- xxxvii. The potential of the SFGH as an attraction for medical tourism.
- xxxviii. The availability of Hospital Management Specialists at the SWRHA.
- xxxix. The reasons for the number of vacancies plaguing the SWRHA.

### **View the Hearing**

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube channel via the following link:

<https://youtu.be/o0Y1LYki698>

**Contact the Committee's Secretary**

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at [jsclascsa@tparliament.org](mailto:jsclascsa@tparliament.org) or 624-7275 Ext. 2283

*Committees Unit*

*June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016*