



# PUBLIC HEALTH STRENGTHENING IN GUYANA

A Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) – funded bilateral project between the governments of Canada and Guyana executed by the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH) in collaboration with the Guyana Ministry of Health



Guyana's health care system was well-designed and structured to emphasize primary health care. However, at the turn of the 21st Century, Guyana faced a major health crisis due to the rising incidence of both HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, which was exacerbated by limited financial resources, both a shortage and a skewed distribution of health care professionals in the country, and weak capacities to collect, analyze, and utilize health indicator data at both the local and national levels. The Public Health Strengthening in Guyana Project was designed to help abate this crisis. The Project's goal is to improve and maintain the health of Guyana's population by supporting an integrated approach to disease prevention, diagnosis, management, and control at both the national and regional levels. This necessitates both the provision of additional resources and an increased institutional capacity to support interventions throughout Guyana. The Project's purpose is to strengthen the public health system by enhancing the capacity of the Government of Guyana to better manage, deliver, and monitor disease prevention and control programs in the areas of STI/HIV/AIDS and TB, and effectively plan, manage, and evaluate health care services. The Project has recently completed the third year of its four year duration; it is scheduled to end in June of 2007 at a cost of \$5.6 million, including in-kind contributions made by CSIH of over \$0.9 million.

## HIV/AIDS



CSIH consultant delivers a lecture on HIV/AIDS at UG

### Expected Results

- A national program for the diagnosis, prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in selected centres in regions 3, 4, 6 and 10 in accordance with national and international standards
- Support Guyana's National AIDS Programme Secretariat (NAPS) to develop and adopt National guidelines for the clinical management of HIV/AIDS, including cases of co-infected patients
- Strengthened capacity to deliver and sustain the prevention and management of HIV/AIDS

### Accomplishments to Date

- ✓ National Guidelines for HIV/AIDS developed in collaboration with CDC
- ✓ Training and mentoring on the clinical management and care of HIV/AIDS patients for all levels of health professionals, health care workers and community members
- ✓ Manuals, training sessions and workshops address gender issues to foster better prevention, counselling, treatment and care interventions; a two day workshop on gender was also delivered to the University Health Sciences staff
- ✓ Service delivery has been enhanced through the use of surveys, clinic organization, staff retreats and training, and counsellor evaluation training
- ✓ A course on STI/HIV/AIDS/TB in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Guyana developed, implemented, and adapted into a seminar course for members of the general public
- ✓ Work with the Guyana MOH Division of Health Sciences Education and Research professional associations to upgrade HIV/AIDS training, including the training of nursing tutors and continuous training and mentoring of health professionals in the four Project regions
- ✓ Collaboration with ILO's "HIV at the Workplace" project and training of BC trainers from over 15 trade unions
- ✓ Educational and training sessions in the area of HIV/AIDS provided to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Health Sector Development Unit, UNICEF, and the UNDP
- ✓ Research study of access to health care for commercial sex workers and men who have sex with men carried out in collaboration with PAHO

## Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)



STI training for technologists from six STI sites and the University of Guyana

### Expected Results

- A national program for the diagnosis, prevention and control of STI in selected centres in regions 3, 4, 6 and 10 in accordance with national and international standards
- National Guidelines for the institutional management of STI and for contact tracing developed and adopted
- A strengthened capacity to deliver and sustain the prevention and management of STI
- Strengthened laboratory capacity to support the diagnosis and treatment of STI

### Accomplishments to Date

- ✓ National Guidelines for STI developed and adopted
- ✓ STI baseline pathogens study designed and underway; the results will inform the future review of Guidelines
- ✓ National STI Strategy drafted and adopted
- ✓ Modules for STI management by different levels of health professionals drafted and implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Health's Division of Health Sciences Education
- ✓ STI diagnostic capacity strengthened with the set-up of 5 STI laboratories; the Central lab has the ability to carry out cultures, and the laboratories have been networked and linked to CAREC, where confirmation and drug sensitivity tests are carried out
- ✓ Regional clinic staffs trained in the treatment and diagnosis of STI
- ✓ Nurse-led management of STI cases implemented for the first time in Guyana
- ✓ STI Manual for Nurses and Patient Information leaflets drafted

## Tuberculosis (TB)



Consultation at Chest Clinic with NTP Director, Nurse and CSIH consultant

### Expected Results

- A strengthened capacity to deliver and sustain the prevention and management of TB
- Strengthened laboratory capacity to support the diagnosis and treatment of TB
- Enhanced NTP capacity to provide essential TB services to Regions 3, 4, 6, and 10
- Implementation, evaluation, and review of National TB Guidelines and DOTS in Regions 3, 4, 6, and 10

### Accomplishments to Date

- ✓ 27 DOTS workers trained, 17 of these were funded by the Project in regions 3, 4, 6 and 10
- ✓ DOTS Manual drafted
- ✓ National TB Manual developed and distributed to professionals caring for TB patients throughout Guyana
- ✓ First two Annual Conferences on TB held in collaboration with the NTP and the Guyana Chest Society, an NGO that the Project helped to reconstitute
- ✓ Technical assistance provided by Project Consultants in the drafting of a National TB Plan for 2006 – 2011
- ✓ TB diagnostic capacity strengthened with the set-up of three TB laboratories; the Central lab has the ability to perform cultures, and the laboratories have been networked and linked to a reference laboratory at CAREC, where confirmation and drug sensitivity testing are done, as well as to the National reference laboratory in Canada, where second line drug sensitivity testing is done
- ✓ Several Operational Research Studies designed and underway with the NTP and MOH: these include a study of the impact of nutritional supplements on treatment outcomes in TB patients in collaboration with the Guyana Chest Society, a study on TB and adherence, a TB defaulters study, a study of the Prevalence of MTB and resistance patterns of MTB, and a study of the Predictors of TB smears positive

## Health Information Systems (HIS)



NetCorps Intern teaching GUM Clinic staff how to use the new HIS

### Expected Results

- Implementation of an adaptable and expandable electronic health information system to collect, process and communicate disaggregated health data on STI, HIV/AIDS and TB in agreed-upon sites, which will contribute to national health policy and planning
- Data collection and processing services for STI/HIV/AIDS/TB clinical needs developed, implemented, and evaluated, and an MOH network designed and set up
- Provision of basic computer and network training, as well as health information science education
- Quality information and statistics made available by data collection and processing services used for evidenced-based decision-making

### Accomplishments to Date

- ✓ The comprehensive and custom-made for Guyana PHC database is being completed; Version 0.75 (out of the final 1.0) is currently being piloted; it was designed conforming to specifications and feedback received from users and stakeholders of the initial prototypes at Project networked clinical and laboratory sites
- ✓ Regular feedback continues to be collected from five clinics and three labs in three Regions, and will be used to design the final prototype
- ✓ 92 individuals trained in database applications, and 95 trained in basic computer skills; training and mentoring of health professionals, technologists and workers is ongoing
- ✓ The MOH has also been networked, and most of its employees have been trained
- ✓ In addition to Clinical Modules, the HIS was expanded to include modules for Home and Palliative Care, Drug Inventory, Pregnancy, and Human Resources; it also includes electronic TB and HIV/AIDS registries designed according to National and WHO specifications
- ✓ Two Regional Health Officers completed their MPH degrees at UWI through the Project

## Community Health Development and Care



The first Project home visit

### Expected Results

- Establishment of a home and community-based training program for the care and support of HIV/AIDS and TB clients in Linden, Georgetown and New Amsterdam
- Nursing Guidelines for Care in the Home and Community adapted and disseminated
- Home and Palliative Care training modules developed for use by trainers
- Trained home-based care trainers who will train and educate community resource persons, volunteers and family caregivers using training modules developed by the Project

### Accomplishments to Date

- ✓ Guidelines for Care in the Home and Community for Home and Palliative Care developed and disseminated
- ✓ 54 individuals from three Project regions trained as trainers who so far, taught more than 100 sessions on caring for HIV/AIDS patients reaching over 1400 community members
- ✓ Seven training modules have been finalized: Adult Education, Control, TB, HIV/AIDS, Home-Based Care, Gender, and Palliative Care; all of the modules are being used in training sessions
- ✓ The Project has been instrumental in assisting the MOH/NAPS design and implementation of the GFATM-funded HBC Strategy; has trained the HBC coordinator, supervisors, and over 60 volunteers
- ✓ HBC trainers trained on gender based analysis, especially in re HIV/AIDS clients
- ✓ The Project continues to assist in the development of educational materials and manuals, including the preparation of a Supervision Manual, and the training of HBC volunteers



Outreach worker on way to see a patient



Developing Nursing Guidelines for Care in the Home and Community



Laboratory technicians in the new TB Suite of the Central Medical Laboratory

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World TB Day 2006: DOTS Workers with Project-donated motorcycles



Computer and database training at Chest Clinic with CSIH NetCorps intern



Nurse demonstrating HBC training