

## **THE STANFORD UNIVERSITY CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP**

On Saturday July 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 Barbados officially embarked on a series of workshops with the bold objective to train persons with chronic conditions in self-management techniques so that they could assist themselves in improving their health status.

There were four workshops running simultaneously and led by three trainers namely Dr. Tomo Kanda of the PAHO office and Katrina Norville and Tyrone Lowe from the Diabetes Association of Barbados. Out of an initial registration of 45 persons, specifically targeted because of their known chronic condition such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma, some 37 persons attended weekly. Each workshop was a six (6) week program in which participants were expected to meet once per week for a 2 ½ hour session. Participants were guided with the use of a text book entitled "*Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*" and taken through thirteen (13) self-management tools. These tools included:-

1. **Physical Activity**
2. **Medications**
3. **Decision-Making**
4. **Action Planning**
5. **Breathing Techniques**
6. **Understanding Emotions**
7. **Problem Solving**
8. **Using Your Mind**
9. **Sleep**
10. **Communication**
11. **Healthy Eating-**
12. **Weight Management**
13. **Working with Health Professionals**

The concept of self-management is supported by PAHO through whom the training of the leaders were facilitated. The workshops, now being introduced to Barbados, thanks to the accomodation of the Ministry of Health through Dr. Kenneth George, and through PAHO, are being seen as a welcomed addition in the control of chronic disease and their complications. It is an activity under License Agreement between the Pan American Health Organization and Stanford University for Stanford Self-Management Programme-Multiple Programme License.



The typical participant must be someone who is actually living with a chronic condition or someone who takes care of another person with a chronic condition such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension, kidney failure, stroke and Alzheimer, etc.



Although the Diabetes Association is the local NGO that has been exposed to the training it is anticipated that workshops will be held with participants from other NGO's such as the Heart & Stroke Foundation, The Kidney Association and the Cancer Society. The workshops are also expected to be conducted at Polyclinics across Barbados in association with the Ministry of Health. In addition patients from private doctors and referrals from nurses, pharmacists and other medical practitioners are expected to join the workshops and lend to its sustainability.

It is believed that as workshops grow in popularity and as a network of presenters is developed that there will be a tremendous improvement in the self-management of chronic conditions and a keen sense of wellbeing among the total population.

*Prepared by Tyrone Lowe - The Diabetes Association of Barbados*

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