

PRESS RELEASE

Tel: (284)468-2730

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First BVI Care Certificate Programme Graduates 19 New Care Professionals

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The first BVI Care Certificate programme graduates 19 care professionals as the Ministry of Health and Social Development continue to advance its efforts to enhance quality care across the Territory.

This historic occasion marked by a graduation was filled with Ministry representatives including Minister for Health and Social Development Honourable Vincent Wheatley who congratulated the participants on their health service changing achievements.

The 19 graduates which accounted for 14 females and five males came from diverse care settings.

- **BVI Health Services Authority** (8 participants)
- **Adina Donovan Home for the Elderly** (4 participants)
- **Rainbow Children's Home** (2 participants)
- **Virgin Gorda Home for the Elderly** (2 participants)
- **Social Development Department's Home Care Programme** (3 participants)

Chief Nursing Officer and Programme Coordinator Ms. Jascinth Hannibal said during the ceremony. "Today, we do not simply celebrate achievement. We celebrate the birth of a new era in caregiving. You, our graduates, are pioneers in a programme created to instill excellence and affirm the dignity of service. Care is not just a task. It is a calling and your journey has only just begun."

According to Ms. Hannibal the collective experience of the graduates' spans from under 5 years to over 30 years of service, enriching the training process with a wealth of shared knowledge and real-world insights. "The exchange of experiences within this group was nothing short of inspiring. I've learned as much from you as you have from the programme," Ms. Hannibal said.

Participants underwent a rigorous training and assessment process, supported by facilitators, assessors, and the Ministry of Health and Social Development.

Ms. Hannibal cautioned graduates not to drop the ball. "Graduation does not mean you drop the ball. It means you are now held to a higher standard. You may even

be called upon to guide and mentor others, or to serve as future assessors.”

The Ministry commends the hard work and dedication of all involved and looks forward to the continued development of a skilled, compassionate, and certified care workforce in the Virgin Islands.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development is committed to ensuring that all aspects of the environment with the potential to negatively impact the health of the population are managed efficiently to enable all persons in the BVI to attain and maintain optimal health and well-being.

Today marks the completion of the first Cohort of the BVI Care Certificate training.

The care certificate is an identified set of standards defining the knowledge skills and behaviours expected of healthcare professionals in their daily work. It was developed jointly by Skills for Care, Health Education England and Skills for Health and has been adapted by the UK Health Security Agency's UK Overseas Territories Public Health Strengthening Programme for use in the UKOTS. The course was conducted over 16 weeks commencing on January 20. Modality consisted of a weekly 2-3 hour face-to-face and online sessions followed by self-learning, demonstration, and reflection. Candidates were assessed through direct observations by the assessors or role-play and exercises to ensure their grasp of the standards. It is envisaged that the Care Certificate will become the baseline requirement for non-regulated persons entering health and care services throughout the Territory.

Candidates will receive the Care Certified Badge and a Certificate authenticated by the Ministry of Health.