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NHI LAUNCHES HEALTH PROGRAMME ON GLOBAL WELLNESS DAY – JUNE 9

Official 'Launch Party' takes place after a competitive 'Walk-Relay'

Road Town, Tortola, April 30, 2018– The National Health Insurance of the Virgin Islands (NHI) is promoting health and happiness with its official launch of the Disease Management and Wellness Programme on Saturday, June 9 to celebrate Global Wellness Day.

The programme, being endorsed with the slogan: "Be Healthy, Be Happy BVI!", includes the close monitoring and counselling of NHI beneficiaries with chronic diseases; promotion of healthy lifestyles; and health education activities.

The official launch of the programme, the 'Be Healthy, Be Happy Launch Party', takes place at 6:30 a.m. at the Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Park. After a brief ceremony, participants will be treated to Zumba, Socarobics and Yoga demonstrations.

The launch party takes place after the 'Walk-Relay for Global Wellness Day'. The walk-relay begins at 5:00 a.m.

Walkers will begin at QEII Park, up the hill behind Peebles Hospital, then they will turn right and walk further up the hill to the Paul Wattley Road junction, and then down the hill to the Joe's Hill junction. From there, walkers will turn left and make their way past the Sunday Morning Well, past the police station, take the pathway between the Cultural Centre and Multipurpose Complex, cross the highway, then make their way back to QEII Park.

To make this even more fun, persons may organize teams of four (4) who will do the route 'relay-style' and have a member at each check point: at the QE II Park, the top of the hill behind the Peebles Hospital, the junction at Paul Wattley Road and outside the Festival Village. Individual walkers will walk the entire route.

For persons who are unable to walk the longer route, there will be a 10,000 step challenge that will take place along the walking path in the QEII Park.

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Prizes will be awarded to the first/ second/ third place teams and individuals in the walk-relay; best dressed teams and individuals; and first person to complete the 10,000 step challenge. Persons wishing to participate should send an email to aglasgow@vinhi.vg with your name and/or the name of your team and of your teammates.

Deputy Director of the Social Security Board (with responsibility for NHI), Mr. Roy Barry said, “The programme’s overarching goal is to encourage healthy lifestyles and create a culture that fosters a healthier population in the long term. The intention is also to bring much needed attention to chronic disease prevention and management. This is why we have chosen to launch the programme with a fitness activity.”

The World Health Organization lists **cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes** as the main types of chronic or non-communicable diseases.

Programme coordinator and Medical Director for NHI, Dr. Harlan Vanterpool said, “The programme seeks to curb the development of chronic diseases and ensures that persons with high risk for developing same, are exposed to concepts of wellness and disease management.”

He added, “Our intention is also to provide our beneficiaries with the tools and access to various support systems locally. Essentially, we want to make it easier for our beneficiaries to do the right thing when it comes to their health.”

One key aspect of the programme is the Health Risk Assessment. The assessment is a survey to determine the common lifestyle behaviours of NHI beneficiaries that may contribute towards the development of a chronic disease. These behaviours range from activity level, alcohol and tobacco consumption, and mental health awareness.

Dr. Vanterpool said the assessment is a major component of the programme, adding, “It will provide invaluable health care data that is essential for health planning and other national decision making for health care.”

The medical director encouraged beneficiaries to complete the assessment when it is made available to the public via NHI’s social media pages and website.

Beneficiaries are encouraged to like and follow @NHIBVI on Facebook and @BVINHI on Twitter for updates about the programme.

National Health Insurance is designed to improve health outcomes and provide financial risk protection by ensuring that every resident of the Virgin Islands will have affordable access to the health services they need.

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Notes to Editor(s): Photographs and flier are attached.

1. NHI Medical Director Dr. Harlan Vanterpool. **(Photo credit: NHI/ April Glasgow)**
2. BVI SSB Deputy Director with responsibility for NHI Mr.Roy Barry **(Photo credit: NHI/ April Glasgow)**

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