

## PRESS RELEASE

Message from the Minister of Health- Dr Frank Anthony

### **International Nurses' Day 2021**

Theme: Nurses a Voice to Lead, a Vision for Future Health Care

Today, Guyana joins the rest of the world to observe International Nurses' Day 2021 under the theme, "**Nurses a Voice to Lead, a Vision for Future Health Care**". Every year on May 12, nurses worldwide observe the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, who is credited with professionalizing and modernizing nursing.

Florence Nightingale was a British nurse, social reformer and statistician best known as the founder of modern nursing. She established St. Thomas' Hospital and the Nightingale Training School for Nurses in 1860. Her efforts to reform healthcare have dramatically influenced the quality of care in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Each year the International Council of Nurses (ICN) commemorates this day with the production and distribution of promotional and educational materials. These materials are intended to emphasize the dedicated and innovative work performed by nurses worldwide, which is vital not only for improving patient's health but also for the advancement of health care on national and international levels.

In Guyana, nurses have joined with their colleagues worldwide to reflect on the challenges and accomplishments over the past year. Indeed, this pandemic year has been one of the most challenging year for nurses. Many nurses on the front line have gone beyond the call of duty to care for patients and comfort the family of patients in the hospitals. In addition, their actions over the past year have provided much needed relief to many patients. The Government of Guyana, through the Ministry of Health, will like to acknowledge the role that nurses play in caring for patients, especially during this pandemic, and to thank them for all their hard work and sacrifices, as we work together to bring an end to the COVID 19 pandemic.

To protect our hardworking nurses, the government has ensured that adequate personal protection equipment is always available to protect our nurses from this disease. The government has also made available safe and effective COVID 19 vaccines to all healthcare workers, including nurses; we are optimistic that on this nursing day that those nurses who have not yet taken their vaccines will make a special effort to be vaccinated so that they can reduce the risk of COVID 19 infection, reduce the chance of hospitalization and the

possibility of dying from COVID 19. Let us continue to encourage our colleagues, friends and family members to get vaccinated.

On International Nurses' Day, we salute our nurses for their years of service to Guyana's health sector, I say a big "THANK YOU". As you help us navigate this pandemic, we look forward to brighter days when our country will achieve herd immunity and we can return to a state of normalcy. Indeed with your collective voice and leadership, the future of health care can be COVID 19 free.

Happy International Nurses' Day!!

END