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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Ministry of Health & Wellness Extends Contracts for Hemodialysis Services**

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On April 12, 2021, the Ministry of Health & Wellness signed contracts with four service providers for the extension of its hemodialysis program for patients with end-stage renal failure.

Hon. Michel Chebat, Minister of Health & Wellness, and Dr. Deysi Mendez, CEO in the Ministry, signed contracts with La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital, Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital, Dialysis Del Caribe, and Ramona Linda Dialysis Clinic. The contracts will provide coverage to 96 patients countrywide, with each service provider offering two hemodialysis sessions in addition to laboratory testing weekly per patient.

The Ministry was able to renegotiate rates with the service providers, which resulted in the expansion of the program and the addition of nine patients who were on the waiting list. The Government of Belize has invested \$1,565,300 for the contracts, which are valid until September 14, 2021.

Dialysis is needed when kidneys stop functioning properly and cannot remove waste from the body commonly caused by diabetes and high blood pressure. The number of individuals with end-stage renal failure has been increasing continuously. One of the Ministry's responses is to expand the dialysis coverage to patients who are struggling to meet the high cost of hemodialysis treatment.

**Ends**