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PRESS RELEASE

Mission in Belize to Conduct Initial Review for Feasibility Studies Targeting Hospital Infrastructure and Equipment

Belmopan. April 26, 2022. 5:05 p.m.

The Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) approved a US\$1,049,750.00 technical cooperation grant to finance initial reviews and feasibility studies of hospital infrastructure and equipment projects in Belize. The funds stem from both CABEI's own resources and the Republic of Korea within the framework of the Korea-CABEI Single Donor Trust Fund (KTF).

The overall objective of the mission is to support the Government of Belize in improving the quality of national healthcare services. This involves conducting studies for the construction, adaptation and/or refurbishment of facilities, deployment of national digital health information systems, and strengthening of hospital management and administration capacities. The cooperation will assist the Ministry of Health & Wellness in modernizing healthcare infrastructure and reinforcing the institutional, technical, and operational capacities of hospital administrators and physicians. These efforts will pave the way for Belize to become a leading medical tourism destination in Latin America through benchmarking South Korean medical knowledge, technologies, and policy approach.

These initial reviews will facilitate the preparation of the project profiles and documents that allow feasibility studies to be carried out for the construction and equipment of hospitals in Belmopan, Orange Walk Town, San Ignacio, Dangriga and Punta Gorda towns.

CABEI contracted the services of Consultora Multiprofesional Sociedad Anonima to carry out the feasibility studies. The consultants will undertake their first technical mission in Belize from April 25 to 29, 2022. Dr. Osmond Martinez, CEO for Economic Development, and Dr. Julio Sabido, CEO for

Health & Wellness, welcomed the technical team and offered the government's support for the duration of their stay in Belize.

The team will hold meetings at all five hospitals to inform hospital authorities of the activities that will be carried out under the project. The team will also conduct an evaluation of existing infrastructure and equipment for each of the hospitals. In addition, the team will initiate focus group discussions with the following groups: medical and paramedical staff to learn about the current challenges being faced by each hospital and their expectations for the future; management and administrative staff to gauge their perception of the hospital network and IT management system; and representatives of the social and labor sectors to determine their perception of current health services offered and what progress they envision for the future.

The technical team is comprised of the following persons:

1. Dr. Miguel Zea, Team Leader
2. Mr. Edgar Zea, Technical Specialist
3. Dr. Glenda Martinez, Public Health Expert
4. Dr. Victor Rosado, Health Expert
5. Dr. Ingrid Gamboa, Health Expert
6. Mr. Osmar Velasco, Expert in Disaster Risk Management
7. Mr. Daniel Mazariegos, Architect
8. Mr. Juan Leal, Expert in Evaluation of Social Projects
9. Mr. Javier Ruiz, International Affairs

Ends

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Dr. Julio Sabido, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Health & Wellness at ceomohw@health.gov.bz