



PR#085-22

PRESS RELEASE

World Tuberculosis Day 2022

Belmopan. March 24, 2022. 10:30 a.m.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness is today observing World Tuberculosis Day. The yearly observance is done as a means of creating public awareness of tuberculosis (TB). This year's theme is 'Invest to End TB. Save Lives.'

The theme expresses the urgent need to invest resources to ramp up the fight against TB and achieve the commitments to end the disease. This is especially critical in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that has put 'End TB' progress at risk, and to ensure equitable access to achieving Universal Health Coverage.

The World Health Organization reports that in 2020 about 10 million people fell ill with TB and 464,000 with drug-resistant TB while 1.5 million people died of the disease. In Belize in 2021, there were 73 new cases of tuberculosis, 22 were female and 51 were male. The age groups most affected were between 15 to 54 years following the same trend as seen in previous years. The districts most affected were Belize, Cayo and Stann Creek.

The National TB Program of the Ministry of Health & Wellness continues to engage in activities as part of a TB reduction strategy including the use of the high-quality DOTS (directly observed treatment strategy) to improve early detection and diagnosis and ensure effective drug supply and management at all treatment levels. The initiatives of the National TB Program continue to be supported during these difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic and as well during the global economic recovery.

This year, the ministry is able to host several educational activities and health fairs in the districts to commemorate World Tuberculosis Day. The Central

Health Region staff in Belize City will be at the Battlefield Park today sharing information and educating the public on TB and other health conditions.

Tuberculosis remains one of the world's deadliest infectious diseases. The Ministry of Health & Wellness continues to encourage the public to practice healthy lifestyle habits and to make regular health checkups with their healthcare providers.

Ends

For more information, contact:
Francis Morey
Deputy Director of Health Services
Ministry of Health & Wellness, Belmopan