



PR#041-22

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Ministry of Health & Wellness Observes World Cancer Day 2022**

*Belmopan. February 3, 2022. 2:50 p.m.*

Belize joins the international community to observe World Cancer Day on February 4, 2022, under the theme, 'Close the care gap.'

According to the World Health Organization, cancer is the second leading cause of death globally. While the burden of cancer is felt worldwide, about 70% of deaths are registered in low- and middle-income countries.

The Epidemiology Unit of the Ministry of Health & Wellness reports that as of 2018, cancers of the breast, cervix and uterus, colon and rectum in women and prostate in men are the leading causes of cancer and death in the adult population. In Belize, as in other developing nations, specifically those in the Caribbean, the aging and expansion of the population in cities increases the prevalence of cancer risk factors such as smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness and its partners continue the fight against cancer. Three key interventions from among others are:

The Ministry of Health & Wealth and its partners continue the fight against cancer. Three key interventions among others are:

1. Adolescent Cancer Prevention Program with the HPV vaccine administration done at public health facilities and schools
2. Early detection of breast and cervical cancers at primary health care facilities
3. Early detection of prostate cancer available at primary health care facilities

The ministry continues to partner with all stakeholders, including the private sector, to finalize the National Comprehensive Cancer Control Strategic Plan. The ministry thanks and encourages its partners to remain steadfast

as the ministry moves forward in its focused attempt at preventing cancers; and promoting wellness through healthy lifestyles that decrease existing risk factors that stimulate the development of cancers.

The public is encouraged to get regular medical check-ups that can lead to early detection and increase the chance of successful treatment. Also, during this COVID-19 pandemic, persons living with cancer, cancer survivors and families of cancer patients are strongly encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine and to continue to practice all public health and social measures implemented to reduce the risk of becoming infected as well as the severity of symptoms.

## **Ends**

For more information, please contact:  
Policy and Planning Unit  
Ministry of Health & Wellness  
Belmopan