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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Commemorates World Tuberculosis Day

Belmopan, March 24, 2023.

Every year, World Tuberculosis Day is commemorated on March 24 to promote public awareness about the health and social consequences of tuberculosis (TB).

This year's theme is "Yes! We can end TB." It aims to inspire hope that collectively we can strive to end the TB epidemic. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of accelerated action plans and multi-sectoral collaboration to combat the TB epidemic.

According to the World Health Organization, despite being curable and preventable, TB is still considered one of the world's leading causes of death with 1.6 million people dying globally of the disease in 2021. While TB can affect various parts of the body, it generally affects the lungs. It can be transmitted when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or spits, which allows the bacterium to become airborne.

In 2022, Belize had 75 reported cases of tuberculosis. The district with the highest number of TB cases is Belize, followed by Cayo and Stann Creek. Out of the 75 cases, 19 were females and 56 were males, demonstrating that the male population is more affected. The age range is between 20 to 59 years. The 2022 trend depicts the general trend noted over the years.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness continues to strive to fight TB by engaging in training and re-sensitization of healthcare workers, scaling up diagnosing and early case detection, and providing standardized treatment for those infected with TB. As a part of commemorating World TB Day, there will be health fairs and educational activities held in each district.

The ministry invites the public to join in spreading awareness about tuberculosis and the burden caused by this global epidemic and to join the fight and efforts in eliminating the disease.

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