

# **RESPONSE FROM THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

## **Third Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an Examination of Existing Arrangements and Possible Options for Regulating Geriatric Care Facilities/Old Age Homes**

### **BACKGROUND**

Standing Orders 100(6) and 110(6) of the Senate and House of Representatives respectively, require the Minister with responsibility for the Ministry/Body reported on by a Joint Sector Committee (JSC) to present to each House, a paper responding to comments and recommendations contained in the Report. The findings and recommendations of the Committee as it concerns the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government are outlined on pages twenty-nine (29) and thirty (30) of the Report as follows:

- That both the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Social Development Family Services (MoSDFS) collaborate and assume a more proactive approach as it concerns the oversight and monitoring of all Old Age Homes in Trinidad;
- Furthermore, that both Ministries seek assistance from and engage in discussions with the Regional Corporations to devise initiatives that can expand the role of Corporations in the oversight and monitoring of Geriatric Care Facilities/Old Age Homes in Trinidad; and
- That both Ministries engage and collaborate with the THA's Aging Unit, regional corporations, and other stakeholders to assist in strengthening policies to maintain, monitor and evaluate homes throughout Trinidad and by extension Tobago.

The Committee's recommendations specifically with respect to the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government are at bullets two and three above.

### **RESPONSE**

- **Recommendation:**

That both Ministries (MOH and MoSDFS) seek assistance from and engage in discussions with the Regional Corporations to devise initiatives that can expand the role of Corporations in the oversight and monitoring of Geriatric Care Facilities/Old Age Homes in Trinidad.

- **Response:**

In accordance with the Municipal Corporations Act 1990, Part XII Section 232(c), Regional Corporations are charged with the responsibility of the maintenance and control of homes for the aged established by the Corporation. However, there are no homes for the aged established by any Regional Corporation. All homes for the aged within each region are established by private owners

or Non-Governmental Agencies. Nonetheless, two (2) Regional Corporations have been involved in the maintenance and control of homes for the aged within their Region in the following manner:

- The Chaguanas Borough Corporation has assisted the Senior Citizen's Home located at Beckles Street, Chaguanas in the past by covering an outstanding utility bill and continues to assist the Home by maintaining the lawn premises; and
- The Arima Borough Corporation has indicated that the Old Age Homes within its region are monitored by its Public Health Department with regards to the general condition of the buildings, the kitchen, toilets, room size, the number of clients that they can accommodate, water storage and sanitation.

The Ministry has not included within its Reform Policy any areas to expand the role of the Regional Corporations in accordance with the Municipal Corporations Act 1990 PART XII Section 232(c). Notwithstanding, the Regional Corporations have indicated their willingness to have dialogue with the MOH and MoSDFS as recommended, in order to improve the oversight and monitoring system of Geriatric Care Facilities in Trinidad.

▪ **Recommendation:**

That both Ministries (MOH and MoSDFS) engage and collaborate with the THA's Aging Unit, regional corporations, and other stakeholders to assist in strengthening policies to maintain, monitor and evaluate homes throughout Trinidad and by extension Tobago.

▪ **Response**

The Regional Corporations are prepared to join forces with the MOH and MoSDFS in order to strengthen their existing policies to maintain, monitor and evaluate homes throughout Trinidad and by extension Tobago.