



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Health

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF HEALTH

63 Park Street, Port of Spain

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December 4, 2020

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George
Speaker of the House
The Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration
Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
Parliament Complex
Cabildo Building
St. Vincent Street
Port-of-Spain

Dear Mrs. Annisette-George

The 15th Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an Inquiry into an Examination of Existing Arrangements and Possible Options for Regulating Geriatric Care Facilities/Old Age Homes in Trinidad and Tobago

Your letter referenced Parl.: 4/3/69 Vol. V dated October 28, 2020 on the captioned subject is relevant. In this regard, kindly find the enclosed written response by this Ministry on the recommendations of the 15th Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an Inquiry into an Examination of Existing Arrangements and Possible Options for Regulating Geriatric Care Facilities/Old Age Homes in Trinidad and Tobago.

Sincerely



Terrence Deyalsingh
Minister

cc. Mr. Asif Ali, Permanent Secretary (Ag.), Ministry of Health



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JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The recommendations to the 15th Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an Inquiry into an Examination of Existing Arrangements and Possible Options for Regulating Geriatric Care Facilities /Old Age Homes in Trinidad and Tobago

Update on the Status and response to the Recommendations by the Committee on the following:

1. The revised fee structure under the Third Schedule of the Private Hospitals Act, Chap. 29:03 for Geriatric Care Facilities / Homes for Older Persons

The revised fee structure was sent to the Ministry of Finance for consideration in 2018. The present fees range from \$75 to \$300 per application. The recommended licensing fees for Homes for the Elderly under the Private Hospital Act are detailed below:

Number of beds	Medical or Surgical Hospital	Medical, Surgical and Maternity Hospital	Maternity Hospital	Hospital for the convalescent or chronically III	Home for the elderly	Hospital for any designated or specified Disease, disorder or illness
Less than 30	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
30 but less than 60	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
60 and over	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00

2. The proposal for the establishment of a minor degree programme in Gerontology at the UWI, St. Augustine, inclusive of scholarships in the field of Gerontology

The Ministry of Health submitted Geriatric Medicine as a high priority area to the Scholarship Division, Ministry of Education for consideration. Further, discussions are ongoing with the UWI, St. Augustine for the development of a programme in the field of Gerontology.

3. The MoH must continue to develop and sustain its engagement of all owners/operators of geriatric homes as part of its contribution to the monitoring of these facilities

Following the update of the assessment tool and the formulation of the audit teams to inspect and monitor the operations of geriatric homes, as at October 31, 2020, two national public consultations were held and home owners were invited, where recommendations were made to improve the quality of inspections being conducted.

In 2020, a further meeting was called by the Chief Medical Officer as Chairman of the Private Hospitals Board with all the County Medical Officers of Health (CMO'sH), the Chief Public Health Inspector, the Mental Health Unit and the Quality Managers of the Regional Health Authorities. Towards this end, there was agreement on the establishment of an inspection team with an agreed schedule of Inspections.

It should be noted that for the year 2019, 90 Homes for the Aged were inspected and licenses issued. In 2020, having the new updated Inspection tool and methodology of Inspection, inspections began in all Counties, led by the respective CMOH for the area. Twenty-eight (28) inspections were completed and granted licences.

It is important to note that whereas the Inspection teams could not conduct their inspections because of the restriction implemented on Home owners, the CMOs'H did reach out to all Homes to ensure the quality and care of the patients as well as their safety during this COVID-19 period and once approval is granted, the licences will be granted.

Apart from this the Department of Ageing, Ministry of Social Development and Family Services continues to visit all the homes routinely to ensure quality and standards as well as to ensure there is no elderly abuse.

4. That the licence to operate a geriatric home should remain valid from the date of issue and should expire on the 1-year anniversary of the date of issue as opposed to that currently applied in Section 8 (4) of the Act.

The Act was not amended and as such, the current annual inspection process still applies. As a consequence, if the inspections of homes can be conducted within between the month of December 2020, a license can be issued in January and thereby ensuring full coverage for 12 months.

5. **That the MOH and the MRDLG (and by extension the 14 Municipal Corporations) liaise with the TTRCA to develop a suitable system for the timely collection and disposal of biological, infectious and chemical waste from Geriatric Care Facilities/Homes for Older Persons**

The Ministry of Health will review the existing system for the disposal of items and thereafter, collaborate with the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government to develop a suitable system for the disposal of biological infectious and chemical waste from Geriatric Care Facilities/Homes for Older Persons.

6. **That in the short to medium-term the MOH should accept the MSDFS' proposal for the conduct of an evaluation of the current fee structure for Geriatric Care Facilities/Homes for Older Persons under the Community Care Programme**

The Ministry of Health will review and collaborate with the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services to conduct an evaluation of the current fee structure for Geriatric Care Facilities/Homes for Older Persons under the Community Care Programme by the 2nd quarter of fiscal year 2021.