



25TH ANNIVERSARY THANKSGIVING SERVICE & EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY



Jubilee celebrant Ms. Marina Milton (center), flanked by general director Mr. Kees Klarenbeek on left and members of management team, Ms. Bonnie Dekker and Mr. Antonio Pantophlet.

The St. Maarten Medical Center celebrated 25 years of service to St. Maarten and neighboring islands on Thursday the 17th of March 2016. Employee appreciation day was celebrated as its first year and will be celebrated every year on the anniversary. As part of the first employee appreciation at SMMC, staff was presented with gifts including an anniversary pin. The hospital boasted a colorful display at the main entrance. A Thanksgiving service was held on the grounds near the main entrance. Attendees consisted of SMMC employees past and present retirees and other members of the SMMC family.

The mistress of the ceremony was Educator and Nurse at SMMC Ms. Brunilda Illidge. Ms. Illidge, a matriarch of the SMMC welcomed all guests who came to celebrate the milestone. The service began with a song of thanksgiving and a scripture reading by retired, former HR manger, Wally Havertong. Director of the Medical Center, Kees Klarenbeek, delivered a special anniversary message and presented the 25th Anniversary video to the audience.

The SMMC choir shared a warm rendition led by Ms. Angie Pantophlet to the audience. Key
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FAMILY FUN & SPORTS DAY

Children, young people and their families took part in a family fun and sports day in celebrating St. Maarten Medical Center's 25th anniversary. The event which took place at the Little League Ballpark on March 20th was organized by SMMC as an opportunity to celebrate with the friends, family and community.



Many fun activities were organized for adults and children of all ages; a bouncy castle, a water slide, face painting and many traditional and sports games to name a few. The traditional games and activities were organized with the aid of Les Brown and LAB Sports Academy who delivered a wide range of fun sporting games. Winners were awarded with medals as recognition of their victories.

The action was commented by SMMC employee Elehandro Fleming, a delightful and particularly entertaining individual. He kept the crowd engaged and amused with the progress of all games played accompanied with the fun local disk jockey DJ Fabulous who provided the crowd with musical entertainment.

Everyone was treated to a special performance courtesy of the Generation New Status STM Drum Band.

SMMC departments came out at the second half of the day to demonstrate their depart-

ment's team spirit in friendly competition. Two highlights of those games were the tug of war game and the sled run game. Both enabled all employees to come together and display their sportsmanship and represent their various departments.

The day ended with the dunking of supervisors from three departments. Employees working under the various supervisors were given a rare opportunity to get the enjoyment of seeing or even being the one to dunk their boss. In the end all three supervisors were dunked to the cheers of the crowd.

The St. Maarten Medical Center would like to express a thank you to the Mr. Les Brown and the LAB Sports Academy, the Generation New Status STM Drum band, Funtopia, FunShaq, DJ Fabulos and all of the food vendors. A special thank you goes out to the Little League Ballpark and SMMC volunteers who gave their time to help and make sure that the day was a success and of course to those who attended, thank you for making the day memorable and fun.



Mr. Kees Klarenbeek, General Director

OUR PRIDE

Dear reader,

We are thrilled to present you with this newsletter to connect our message of caring with you.

On our Care Connect radio program, every Monday in January through March we brought to our radio listeners a series of different health topics to help our people learn more about their health.

We will continue to share these health topics with you within this newsletter. We trust you would find them beneficial to you and your loved ones.

We take pride in what we do at the SMMC. With the patient at the center of our care, we do not do anything for our own interest.

It is always about the patient, and in a wider scope, our patient community.

Our greatest satisfaction in our 25 years history, is knowing that we have met the satisfaction of our patients.

And who can best tell our story than the individuals whom we have cared for. So we are sharing with you some of these experiences that tell our story of serving caring and healing.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter we have written with you in mind.

Kees

WORLD HEALTH DAY 2016: BEAT DIABETES

Every year, the World Health Organization chooses a topic of primary concern for our global population. On April 7th, 2016, World Health Day theme is Beat Diabetes.

In 2008, an estimated 347 million people in the world had diabetes and the prevalence is growing, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

In 2012, the disease was the direct cause of some 1.5 million deaths, with more than 80% of those occurring in low- and middle-income countries. WHO projects that diabetes will be the 7th leading cause of death by 2030.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs either when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin, a hormone that regulates blood sugar, gives us the energy that

we need to live. If it cannot get into the cells to be burned as energy, sugar builds up to harmful levels in the blood.

There are 2 main forms of the diabetes. People with type 1 diabetes typically make none of their own insulin and therefore require insulin injections to survive. People with type 2 diabetes, the form that comprises some 90% of cases, usually produce their own insulin, but not enough or they are unable to use it properly. People with type 2 diabetes are typically overweight and sedentary, 2 conditions that raise a person's insulin needs.

Over time, high blood sugar can seriously compromise every major organ system in the body, causing heart attacks, strokes, nerve damage, kidney failure, blindness, impotence and infections that can lead to amputations. (World Health Organization 2016)

WORLD HEALTH DAY ACTIVITIES

On the island, health care organizations in the private and public sector, Collective Preventative Services, Social Health Insurances, Diabetes Foundation, Dr. Zamora Perez, Dr. Grace Spencer and SMMC has teamed up to educate our population about Diabetes.

Along with information kits, newsarticles and videos, two events are also organized in recognition of world health day.

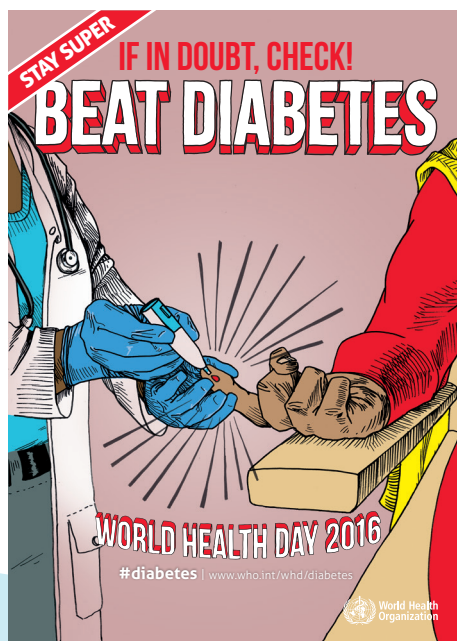
LUNCH WITH YOUR DOCTOR

SMMC Medical Specialists sits at round table with patrons to discuss a particular health topic. April 7th, 2016. 12:00pm-1:30pm. Belair Community Center. Ticketed \$10.

COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS

SMMC Dietician Ms. Jeshneila Carti in collaboration with Diabetes Foundation of St. Maarten giving free healthy cooking demonstrations on Saturday April 9th. Breakfast demonstrations 10.00am to 11.00 a.m. and lunch demonstrations from 11.00am a.m. to 12.00 noon. At Le Grand Marche on the Bush Road.

Free Glucose testing/blood pressure measuring also possible that day.



THE DIABETIC FOOT



IN HOLLAND, DR. MENNO MISSET WORKED ON THE HOSPITAL CARE TEAM FOR DIABETIC FOOT CONDITIONS. WHEN HE CAME TO THE SMMC IN 2014, HE WAS TAKEN ABACK BY THE LARGE VOLUME OF DIABETIC FOOT CONDITIONS HE WOULD TREAT ON A REGULAR BASIS. "WITH DIABETES AS ONE OF THE LARGEST HEALTH PROBLEMS GLOBALLY, AND ON ST. MAARTEN IN PARTICULAR, THIS PROBLEM NEED A LOT OF ATTENTION" HE SAYS.

What is meant when you hear the term Diabetic Foot?

Diabetic foot is wounds or other condition on the feet that is caused by chronic elevated sugar levels in the blood.

Is the diabetic foot a symptom of diabetes or a result of diabetes?

In the majority of cases, an individual with a diabetic foot condition has been diagnosed with diabetes. If an individual present with such a condition and is unaware of having diabetes, there may have been other symptoms.

Are all diabetics at risk of diabetic foot?

A diabetic can be at risk to a diabetic foot condition if his or her diabetes is untreated. Too high sugar levels in the blood can cause serious complications and the feet are at risk to diabetic neuropathy and peripheral vascular disease.

What is Diabetic neuropathy?

Chronically high sugar levels damages the nerves and this affects the ability to feel pain and temperatures. As such, someone may not notice a wound or other problem with the feet. Nerve damage also affects the muscles in the feet and this can cause

changes in the alignment of the foot.

What is peripheral vascular disease?

Diabetes is also associated with insufficient blood flow. This hinders the quick healing of wounds. As a result, foot ulcers can develop and sometimes this gets worse and lead to terrible conditions such as gangrene, a severe infection.

What treatment is provided by the general surgeon at the SMMC?

The first step in treating a diabetic foot condition is to treat the diabetes by getting the sugar level under control. The patient should comply with taking medication; this is especially necessary at this stage.

The goal is to help the patient regain the best use of his or her feet. In order to heal, daily foot care is necessary; cleaning and dressing.

The patient is taught to do this on his or her own; some patients have support from the White and Yellow Cross and in the SMMC, nurses in the general surgery outpatient clinic provide wound care if the foot needs special attention.

If there is an abscess, the abscess can be drained in the clinic, or in the operating room.

If the infection is severe and the wound cannot be healed than an aggressive course of action must be taken to prevent infection from spreading throughout the body. This would mean amputation-cutting of a toe, forefoot, below the knee or above the knee.

Can a diabetic foot recover? How long does this take?

With on-time treatment a severe diabetic foot condition can recover. The process is long and difficult and requires a lot of effort by the patient. The key to managing a diabetic foot condition is regular management and keeping the sugar levels within an acceptable range.

What can someone with diabetes do to prevent a diabetic foot conditions?

- Awareness. Persons living with diabetes should be aware of diabetic foot conditions.
- Every day, persons with diabetes should check their feet for any small cuts.
- The feet should be washed daily to prevent dirt from staying between the toes and entering any cuts or scrapes.
- Toenails should be trimmed regularly.
- Wear socks and shoes-special footwear can give better protection.
- Protect your feet from too hot or too cold temperatures.

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guest speaker, retired head nurse, Ramona Illidge shared a detailed history of the St. Maarten Medical Center; from the day the SMMC opened its doors on March 17th 1991 until the present day. With 25 years of history to share her speech was one that engaged the audience with memories, the tribulations, accomplishments and the growth of the SMMC into what we see today.

Employees celebrating jubilees were given recognition for their extensive years of service to the hospital. Nurse Hollis Park-Botswain a general RN ObGyn celebrated 12 ½ years of service. General RN on the surgical ward, Carmelita Lichtenberg-Boyd, HIS Census clerk, Theresina Rogers-Lake and Coordinator of House-keeping and Phylis Stanley all celebrated 25 years of service. General RN of Blood Bank Ivy Evers Gumbs and Food Services assistant Marina Milton both celebrated 30 years of service. Food Services assistant Albertha Philbert Glasgow celebrated 40 years of service, a milestone for her as an employee and for the hospital.

The Thanksgiving Service was a continuation of the yearlong celebration by the Medical Center. The celebrations continued with a radio program and will continue with the community and employees through various activities like the Family Fun and Sports day, a lunch with SMMC doctors, a cocktail and much more.



I LOVE THE PEOPLE HERE

Ruben Jacobus lives by the philosophy that life is to be enjoyed. When he traveled to Spain to visit his sister, he had such a delightful time, that he would like to return for another visit again this year!

Before Ruben could travel, the dialysis department made all the travel arrangements for him to receive hemodialysis treatment at a hospital in Spain.

"I had nothing to worry about, the nurses and doctor organized everything," he said.

Having a permanent nephrologist on staff at the dialysis department is a big plus for Reuben's patient experience. When he started dialysis three years ago, visiting nephrologists worked on a rotation basis at the hospital. He is also no longer on medication and feels to be in good health.

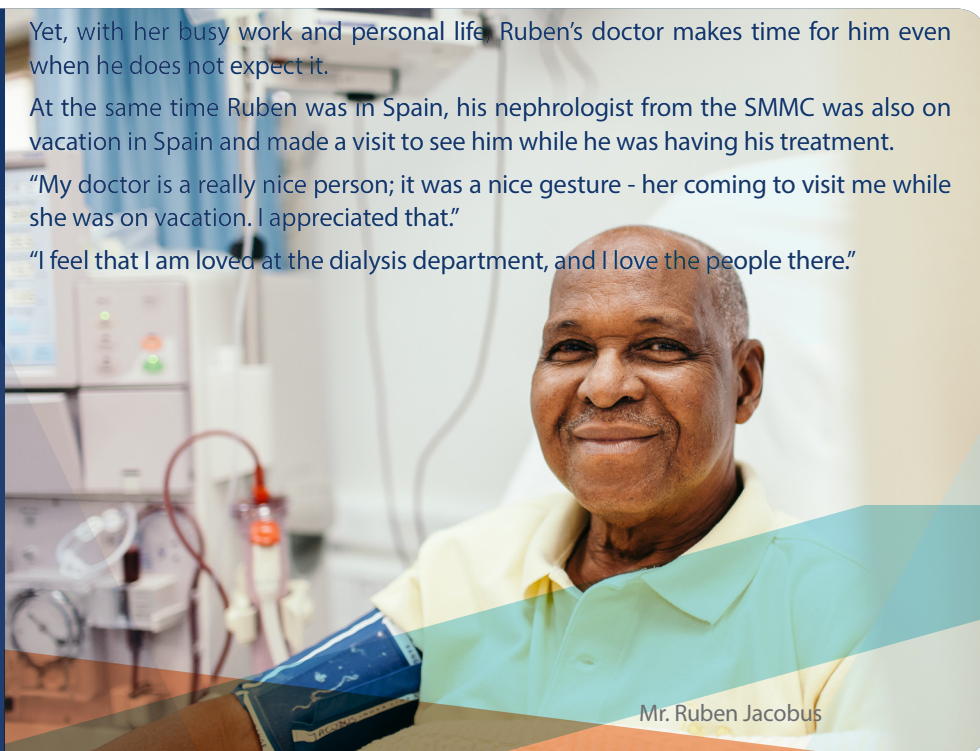
"It is really good that we have our own nephrologist now, though she is often so busy with the growing list of patients."

Yet, with her busy work and personal life, Ruben's doctor makes time for him even when he does not expect it.

At the same time Ruben was in Spain, his nephrologist from the SMMC was also on vacation in Spain and made a visit to see him while he was having his treatment.

"My doctor is a really nice person; it was a nice gesture - her coming to visit me while she was on vacation. I appreciated that."

"I feel that I am loved at the dialysis department, and I love the people there."



Mr. Ruben Jacobus

CONNECTING DIABETES WITH KIDNEY DISEASE

NEPHROLOGIST DR. MAITE GIL-GONZALEZ HAS BEEN WORKING AT THE SMMC FOR THE PAST YEAR. HAVING WORKED IN SPAIN, SHE BRINGS TO THE SMMC 17 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN KIDNEY DISEASE, OF WHICH SHE ANSWERS QUESTIONS IN THIS ARTICLE.

What is the role of nephrologists?

A nephrologist is the kidney doctor, the medical specialist who diagnoses and treats kidney diseases.

What is the main function of the kidney?

The main function of the kidney is to filter the blood, eliminating waste products. It also has important functions like maintaining electrolytes and correcting acid-base disorders, secreting hormones responsible for the creation of new blood; activating vitamin D and regulating Calcium-Phosphate metabolism which is responsible for bone-metabolism disorders.

What are some kidney diseases?

A kidney disease is any disorder affecting

the normal functions of the kidneys. Sometimes the patient may be treated by the nephrologist, urologist or internist for:

- Glomerular disease: loss of proteins
- Urinary tract infections
- Kidney stones
- Tumors
- Genetic disorders
- Other diseases that affect the kidneys: diabetes, hypertension, preeclampsia and eclampsia, inflammation of the vessels, lupus and some cancers
- Nephrotoxicity

What are the different types of kidney diseases?

- Acute: potentially reversible, although if experience repeats can result in a chronic damage.
- Chronic: defined as the presence of kidney damage, detected as proteinuria (protein in the urine), or decreased kidney function for at least three months. Divided in 5 different stages according to kidney function with subcategories depending on proteinuria.

When we talk about kidney failure we refer to the end stage of kidney disease.

How is kidney disease diagnosed?

One problem is the lack of symptoms at initial stages. Many times it is discovered by chance, or upon requests of several examinations, if the doctor is suspicious of it. Many times the diagnosis is done by the general practitioner, and referred to us. Some tests conducted are:

- Blood work and urinalysis
- Image tests: abdomen ultrasound
- Other test: urine culture, autoimmune study, electrophoresis-to rule out a tumor, hepatitis serology-to rule out hepatitis, kidney biopsy-to evaluate possible origin for kidney disease.

What is the main reason for kidney disease on St. Maarten?

High prevalence of diabetes and hypertension, the bad regulation and metabolic control, and diet; salty and rich in carbohydrates. There is a high incidence of obesity, which complicates the management of diabetes and increase the proteinuria.

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“Time flies when you love what you do”

– Albeta Philbert Glasgow

I have been an employee here for over 40 years. I know it may seem strange as SMMC has been around for only 25 years but, I can explain. I started working at the St Rose Hospital in 1972 as a kitchen aid and remained there for 19 years until we moved to our new hospital the St. Maarten Medical Center.

I came to SMMC the day she opened her doors on March 17th 1991 and have remained here since, working in the Food Services Department. And that is where I've gotten my 40 plus years.

Many may say that's a very long time, but when you enjoy what you do, time flies. Over the years as an employee I have experienced the good, the bad and the ugly. I have been through our move into the new hospital, the aftermath and devastation of hurricane Luis and several employee strikes. Nevertheless I stuck to my job and give it my best no matter what and that has helped to see me through the years doing what I enjoy to do.

BUILDING A LEGACY OF NURSING

I have been an employee of the St. Maarten Medical Center from the day it opened its doors on March 17th 1991. Before that, I was a nurse at the St. Rose Hospital for four years.

I have been fortunate to work on every Patient Care Department and master these specialties, including working as a supervisor of the HR Department for 2 years. I enjoy looking around at SMMC and seeing the employees in this institution, most of whom I have contributed to their Educational growth.

Throughout my years here at SMMC I have had a great deal experiences; one of which is the creation of our Pioneer's Wall where persons who have worked 10 years or more at SMMC have a plaque placed as a remembrance of their years of service at our hospital.

I must say though one fond memory I have is the day when my daughter, Charline Arrendell, started working at SMMC as a Registered Nurse. That is my delight to know even when I say goodbye to SMMC, part of me will still be part of SMMC's new generation.

Nurse Brunilda Illidge





FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Banana Diabetic Bread

For all the diabetics out there, today we give you a tasty but not too sweet recipe for Banana Bread. This recipe uses Splenda instead of sugar so you can chow down without any worry.

Recipe for 6 people

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup(s) of nuts, chopped
- 1/2 cup(s) Vegetable Oil
- 4 teaspoon(s) butter milk
- 2 tablespoon(s) Splenda
- 1 teaspoon(s) vanilla essence
- 2 cup(s) whole-wheat flour
- 2 whole eggs
- 1 teaspoon(s) baking soda
- 3 large ripe bananas, mashed

DIRECTIONS:

Sift whole-wheat flour and baking soda together. Add Vegetable Oil and Splenda and mix until light and foamy.

Fold in the eggs, mashed ripe bananas, butter milk, vanilla, and nuts.

Scrape batter into a greased loaf pan and bake at 180°C/350°F for 25-30 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

Allow to cool before slicing.

I MADE AN EXCELLENT CHOICE

While on vacation in 2013, Lesley Ablack did surgery to remove a lump in her breast. Without even waiting for the biopsy results she made the decision to return to St. Maarten for her medical care. At the St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) she got her results from the biopsy. It was breast cancer and her treatment begun.

"The insurance company offered me to receive chemotherapy treatment in the Dominican Republic, but I said no. I wanted to be treated at the St. Maarten Medical Center and I think I made an excellent choice."

While receiving treatment I was surrounded by persons in different stages of their chemotherapy treatment and I would invariably have that support-like a sorority," she laughs adding, "even though there was a man in our group."

"People think because they watch television and read articles on the internet, they know what you are going to go through but it was great for me to have that support from persons who have actually gone and were going through the same experiences as me.

A breast cancer survivor would visit every Friday and that meant a lot. When you are going through cancer you never think that you will recover, she reminded me—simply by her presence— that there is an end to this road and that I could make it."

Eventually, I too was giving advice to patients in my group.

"I think it was an invaluable opportunity to do chemotherapy at the SMMC. I would meet with the same team of nurses and they would encourage me. They would answer the phone—and that was really helpful for me!"

When the doctor changed Lesley's medication she did not expect certain side effects—than what she previously experienced. What is going on? she thought. When Lesley called the hospital her nurses were accessible. Her nurse reminded her that taking all her medication—even the

ones to manage side effects that she did not initially feel—was important.

"Peculiar to cancer is that the treatment is sometimes worse than the actual disease," Lesley points out. She developed an unpleasant taste to some foods that she used to enjoy. With the other patients, she would share recipes that would help her enjoy some of those foods by cooking them differently or even learn new ways to eat foods that would give her strength during her treatment.

But one day Lesley did not eat breakfast and during her treatment she started to feel ill. When her nurse asked her if she had eaten breakfast she answered "no" and learnt then that she always needed to eat before coming to the hospital for treatment.

Three weeks later when Lesley sat in the chair, before the nurse started her treatment she asked, 'Did you eat breakfast this morning?'

"That really touched me. To know that with all the patients the nurses treat on a daily basis, they not only remember me but they remember my individual circumstance.

I benefited from receiving my treatment at the SMMC!

Cancer treatment doesn't have to change your life for the negative. I've never claimed the label as a breast cancer survivor."

Many persons did not know that Lesley had breast cancer. She continued with her usual schedule, when she starting losing her hair, she immediately cut it off and wore a wig and her visits to the hospital was always on time which would allow her to return to the office. "The side effects came on the weekend after my treatment on Friday!"

"I am sharing my story not as a breast cancer survivor but as a patient of the SMMC. When I reflect on my experience and my care at this hospital, I know I made the best choice.

GRATITUDE IN GIVING

It is not the most typical patient story.

Linda Narducci made a call to the St. Maarten Medical Center letting us know that in lieu of flowers, she requested that a company make a donation to the hospital on behalf of her late husband.

Mr. Anthony Narducci, her husband, came to the SMMC on referral from his medical doctor. He was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and had to be treated in Columbia where the care was optimal.

"I felt good when my husband said that after the initial treatment in Columbia, he wanted chemotherapy at the St. Maarten Medical Center. This meant that we could be home and in the country we lived in for 25 years, receiving care from the hospital we've known for 25 years."

"We were comfortable with the hospital," says Ms. Narducci. "A few years ago my

husband's cardiologist recognized that he needed a triple by-pass and was able to refer him for treatment abroad. That saved his life!"

When we came back home, we contacted our oncologist. Though he was not in St. Maarten, the doctor made himself available by email."

After some treatment in St. Maarten, the Narduccis returned to Columbia but eventually Mr. Narducci started feeling home sick. He returned to St. Maarten where he spent his last days at home and at the St. Maarten Medical Center.

"The staff at SMMC sent me condolences when my husband passed away. Knowing that they had done their best for my husband, made me want to give back to the hospital.

For the SMMC, I wish that an oncologist



Linda Narducci

would be available every day and that we would have a bigger room for chemotherapy.

My family and myself have been patients at the SMMC for 25 years. We don't look to run anywhere else. This is home for me."



A STORY OF HOPE, HELP AND MIRACLES

When Miguelina Cecilia learnt that she had stage 1 breast cancer she laughed. Yes, she laughed. She could not believe it was true. Disbelief eventually turned to belief but Miguelina says, "I was never scared". She prepared herself physically and mentally for a long journey ahead. Her first surgery at the St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) in July 2012 was followed by another in August. In Curacao, she took radiation therapy and returned to the SMMC for chemotherapy treatment.

It was not until the end of her chemotherapy treatment that the mother of two cried. "I cried because the doctor told me I may not have any more children" says Miguelina. "But I was happy that I was better and that I chose to receive my medical care at this hospital (SMMC). I have made a lot of friends here. Nurse Jasmien Cijntje is my angel and Nurse Bernadette Gumbs is also very loving. Everyone took good care of me."

Two years later, Miguelina care providers were surprised to learn that Miguelina became pregnant! Her cancer treatment was previously shown to have caused egg damage and infertility.

Days after her last child's birth, Miguelina smiles with delight as she says, "Now I have my miracle baby, and I named him Angel."

Miguelina Cecilia and Angel

CONNECTING DIABETES- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

What are some signs and symptoms?

For chronic kidney disease (advanced stage)

- Waking to urinate several times at night
- Lack of appetite
- Fatigue, weakness and anemia
- Itching skin (mainly at night)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Edema

What are treatment options for chronic kidney disease?

The general management of these patients leads to

•Prevent or slow progression of kidney disease.

- Adjust drugs needed, and avoid medication that are potentially toxic to the kidney
- Evaluate and treat the complications derived from the kidney disease and the secondary causes.
- Prepare the patient for future renal replacement therapy.

What is your outlook of kidney diseases on St. Maarten?

Diabetes has a very important weight in the development of chronic kidney disease on St. Maarten, and that we have to think

in planning some educational strategy to increase people's awareness regarding kidney disease, because the referral is sometimes too late.

I can also assure that the dialysis department of the SMMC offers an excellent quality of care, with good facilities, monitors, dialyzers, water treatment room, medication, and dedicated and qualified personnel that makes life easier for those patients who are depending on this treatment that lets them live in good clinical conditions.

SMMC TAKES ACTION TO FIGHT ZIKA



Mosquito trap explained in info graphic above.

The St. Maarten Medical Center Maintenance Department has begun their fight against the Zika virus by incorporating a very interesting mosquito trap, namely the In2Care Mosquito Trap. This unique mosquito product works by attracting female mosquitoes that are ready to lay their eggs and uses insecticides to kill them.

The trap is made of durable plastic that can withstand outdoor environment. Within the trap is a floater that sits in water and serves as the landing/resting site for mosquitoes. Female mosquitoes are attracted to the trap by the attractive odors released in the water reservoir, and land on the floater gauze containing the bio-actives. These bio-actives target not only the mosquito (killing these within 10 days) and its larvae, but also the virus inside the mosquito.

Approximately 25 of these traps have been placed at various locations in and around the SMMC. This is just one of the steps taken by the department to combat the Aedes mosquitoes and reduce the risks of mosquito bites.

Use the QR code to view the video for a visual explanation of how this trap works!



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