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A CARDIAC REHABILITATION PROGRAMME offers, among many other things, exercise in a supervised setting, and counselling to help you to manage your condition. (FP)



COTED key to fighting regional illicit tobacco trade

IN THE CARIBBEAN, the illicit trade in tobacco has created an uncontrolled and unregulated black market which feeds corruption. Consequently, the regional coffers are losing millions in tax revenue. Evidently, the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) appears to be oblivious to this situation.

Earlier in July the United Nations hosted in Geneva the third session to resume the drafting of a protocol set to counteract the global illicit trade in tobacco products. Governments who are parties to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Treaty on Tobacco Control were invited to send delegates who were drawn from health, trade, customs, and finance, along with law enforcement agencies, to engage in the negotiation. Unfortunately, CARICOM countries were poorly represented.

WHO indicated that the illicit trade in tobacco products contributes to the global rise in tobacco consumption by making cigarettes cheaper and more accessible particularly to young people.

Contraband cigarettes not only defraud governments of tax revenue but increase tobacco related deaths; the problem is further compounded particularly in the developing world because governments are confronted with the additional burden of financing treatment for tobacco induced diseases.

In Barbados, cartons of cigarettes restricted only to duty-free sale are often sold as single packs from non-duty free outlets. Suitcase traders and some entrepreneurs legally buy popular brands such as Benson & Hedges, from cheap sources outside of Barbados. Subsequently, these find their way on to the local market minus the payment of custom duties and VAT.

Last year the Commissioner of Customs in Jamaica, Danville Walker, warned that the contraband cigarette trade was competing unfairly with the legitimate local cigarette market and the Jamaican Government was losing millions of dollars annually as a result.

Duties on cigarettes often account for a large percentage of their price, thereby making them appealing to smugglers. With Guyana's history of subterranean commercial activities, it is a haven for the contraband cigarette trade. As unregulated vendors openly ply their trade through informal distribution networks, the Guyanese Revenue Authority continues to bleed from lost revenue.

In Trinidad, one Chinese producer of cigarettes who is eager to establish long-term win-win business partnerships with cigarette sellers even if it entails counterfeiting popular brands already has a presence in that market.

Since the illicit trade in tobacco is not isolated in the Caribbean, it has cross-border implications that hinge on both health and economic factors. Hence, if an effective protocol is implemented, the potential benefits would include savings to local healthcare systems and the averting of premature deaths.

The regional governments could strategically address this common problem through regional action and cooperation. By working through the COTED and the Council for Human and Social Development, a regional position to tackle this problem could be developed and negotiated before the WHO drafting process is completed in 2010.

CARDIAC REHABILITATION (cardiac rehab) is a professionally supervised programme to help people recover from heart attacks, heart surgery and percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) procedures such as stenting and angioplasty.

Cardiac rehab programmes usually provide education and counselling services to help heart patients increase physical fitness, reduce cardiac symptoms, improve health and reduce the risk of future heart problems, including heart attack.

Who needs a cardiac rehab programme?

Many people of all ages who have heart conditions can benefit from a cardiac rehab programme. You may benefit if you have or have had a:

- Heart attack
- Heart condition, such as coronary artery disease (CAD), angina or heart failure
- Heart procedure or surgery, including coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), including coronary angioplasty (balloon angioplasty) and stenting, valve replacement, or a pacemaker or implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD)

Services offered by the HSFBC Cardiac Rehab Programme?

- A medical evaluation to determine your needs and limitations. The medical staff uses this information to tailor a rehabilitation programme for you and help you set goals.
- A physical activity programme tailored to your needs. Training often starts in a group setting where your heart rate and blood pressure are monitored during physical activity. You may work with a physical therapist, exercise physiologist or other healthcare professional. You learn how to check your heart rate and your level (intensity) of activity. Later, you work up to more intense aerobic activity on a treadmill or exercise bike.
- Counselling and education to help you understand and manage your condition. You may work with a dietitian to create a healthy eating plan. If you smoke, you may get counselling on how to stop. Counselling may also help you cope with depression, anger and stress during your recovery.
- Support and training to help you return to work or your normal activities and help you learn to manage your heart condition.

Length of programme.

Your rehabilitation plan is designed to meet your needs. You may need six weeks, six months or longer to learn how to manage your condition and develop healthier habits. Some programmes last only three months, but some continue for years.

Benefits of a supervised programme?

- Regular physical activity helps your heart and the rest of your body get stronger and work better. Physical activity improves your energy level and lifts your spirits. It also reduces your chances of future heart problems, including heart attack.
- Counselling and education can help you quit smoking, eat right, lose weight, and lower your blood

What is cardiac rehabilitation?

pressure and cholesterol levels. Counselling may also help you learn to manage stress and to feel better about your health.

- You have the advice and close supervision of healthcare professionals to help you improve your health and lower your risk of future problems. These professionals can also communicate with your primary care doctor or cardiologist.

How can I find out about the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Barbados Programme?

Your doctor must refer you to our programme so you can ask your doctor or nurse for a recommendation. Or you can call **437-3312** for more information on our programme.

Our Services

EMERGENCY CARDIAC CARE (ECC)

If someone at your home or workplace collapses with a stroke or a heart attack would you know what to do?

Learn to activate the chain of survival



Learn CPR and give your family and friends the chance of life. Also available are everyday first aid care which additionally identify the early warning signs of heart attack and stroke

REGISTER NOW!

Please note that there will be an Instructor's Course on January 9, 2010
CALL 437-3312

A GYM WITH A DIFFERENCE

Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Rehabilitation Programme (CDP&R)

If you have had a heart attack, heart surgery or are at risk of a cardiac event or stroke, or if you just want to maintain a healthy lifestyle, then the "Gym with a Difference" is the place for you.

Give us a call at 437-3312

Just remember you will need to be referred to us by your medical practitioner