

## **Scotiabank and USAID/ GHARP team up to fight HIV/AIDS**

Scotiabankers all across the Caribbean region are participating in some shape or form in combating the spread of HIV and AIDS as per a mandate by the president and CEO of Scotiabank, Rick Waugh. The increase in the number of cases annually, especially in Guyana, continues to be a matter of concern for policy makers and businesses in general as this may have a negative effect on productivity.

Scotiabank Guyana has partnered with the USAID, Guyana HIV/ AIDS reduction and prevention project (GHARP) to assist in the dissemination of information and technical assistance to build awareness for HIV and AIDS.

The partnership was launched with a media briefing on May 4<sup>th</sup> at the GHARP office, Main Street. His Excellencies, the US ambassador to Guyana, Mr. Roland Bullen; Canadian Ambassador, Mr. Bruno Picard, the Honorable Minister of health, Dr Leslie Ramsammy, Country Manager, Scotiabank Guyana, Mr. Ian Cooper were in attendance and gave remarks. GHARP Chief of Party and executives, USAID Chief of Party and executives, Representatives of Centre for Disease Control and representatives of various media also attended the launch.

Mr. Cooper outlined Scotiabank Guyana plans and activities to assist in the fight against HIV and AIDS and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ambassador Bullen on behalf of USAID GHARP.

In his remarks Ambassador Bullen said that he was heartened that Scotiabank, in true Private Sector fashion has accepted the challenge to fight the pandemic in Guyana and has formulated short and medium term goals and comprehensive activity plans to achieve the goals.

Scotiabankers from all across Guyana successfully completed the first dress down day on May 26<sup>th</sup> and distributed education material in the branches. This was very well received by customers and the media alike. This information session will continue very last Friday of the month. There are also plans afoot to train Scotiabank volunteers as peer consellers and to formulate a programme to assist orphans and vulnerable children affected by the epidemic.

