

## **Scotiabank responds to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic**

There is urgency for action to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS globally. The Caribbean is second only to sub-Saharan Africa in terms of the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. Guyana has the highest reported cases in South America and the Second highest in the Caribbean. This disease poses an unprecedented threat to the social and economic development of our country and the region as a whole.

The spread of HIV/ AIDS in the Caribbean has caught the attention of the leadership Scotiabank as its active involvement in the Caribbean spans the last 117 years. The President / CEO of Scotiabank Group has appointed a task force to look at the Bank's initiatives to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. The countries targeted Guyana, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, The Dominican Republic and Jamaica. Scotiabank Guyana has chosen HIV/AIDS as our community service focus for the fiscal year 2006, with education/ awareness representing the area that fits the bank's core purpose.

Scotiabank is committed to ensuring that our employees, customers and the community at large remain strong and vibrant.

On December 1, 2005 the Bank kicked off its response by initiating a staff dress down day and information session for customers. We also made presentations to AIDS orphans, in collaboration with Lifeline Counseling and attended a Christmas party for orphans and donated gifts. Additionally from staff collection, which was matched by the Bank, we were able to amass a total of G\$218,000.

In an effort to take our response to the next level, with some sustainability, we have set-up a Scotiabank HIV/AIDS Core Committee, comprising volunteers from all of our branches. Each branch will have a small committee which will be responsible for the implementation of the plan of management and the core committee, coordinated by Manager, Sales and Marketing and chaired on a rotating basis by the staff volunteers. The committee will meet at least one monthly to set the overall goals and plans and monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the plans.