



News Release
May 21, 2009
Kingston Jamaica

Scotiabank Foundation donates \$5 million to fund heart surgeries for children

Scotiabank Jamaica Foundation is donating \$5 million to fund heart surgeries for 50 children at the Bustamante Hospital for Children.

Executive Director of the Scotiabank Jamaica Foundation, Joylene Griffiths Irving said the Scotiabank Foundation was responding to a plea from the hospital for funding to perform heart surgeries for over 200 children on a waiting list. She said, “Once we heard that approximately 100 children are diagnosed each year with congenital heart defects and are placed on a waiting list until funding is provided by various groups and organizations, due to lack of money within their families, our Foundation decided to play a role in saving the lives of the children and to bring hope to the families.”

Dr. Lambert Innis, head of the Intensive Care Unit at the hospital says the surgeries which will begin immediately should be completed within the next 18 – 24 months. “I think it is wonderful and fantastic to know that we have friends in corporate Jamaica who are willing to make a difference in the lives of the kids. It is heart rending to see how the children who have this condition suffer. They can’t thrive, they can’t grow or feed and they are frequently hospitalized and have no semblance of a normal childhood.”

He added that the children in need of surgery are mostly from the corporate area, St. Catherine and Manchester and that the hospital is hoping in the future to conduct research into the incidents of congenital heart defects in these parishes.

The hospital has a cardiac clinic which is supported by two major international medical agencies, the Caribbean Heart Menders and the Congenital Heart Institute from Florida. These agencies provide the supplies for the surgeries and surgeons to assist the local medical staff in conducting the surgeries each April.

Since the start of the year, the ScotiaFoundation has contributed over \$9 million to support three hospitals – the University of the West Indies, Port Antonio Hospital and the Cornwall Regional Hospital. Since its inception in 1996, the Foundation has contributed \$276 million to support the health sector through initiatives such as Accident and Emergency Care, Renal Care, Cancer Care, and Scoliosis Care.

-End-

For more information, contact:

Simone Hull
Public Relations Specialist
Public, Corporate & Government Affairs
Scotiabank Centre
Tel: 932.0549
Mobile: 322.3233

or

Joylene Griffiths Irving
Director
Public, Corporate & Government Affairs
Scotiabank Centre
Tel: 932.0565
Mobile: 909.5211