

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY
Professor George Maxwell Richards

The UWI Telehealth Programme has assisted over one hundred and seventy families whose children needed medical treatment not available in Trinidad and Tobago. Fourteen children with complex congenital defects of the bowel had corrective surgeries which were performed at no cost to the parents and were sponsored by the Herbie Foundation, SickKids Foundation, Canada, to the extent of approximately US \$903,280.

The programme has also conducted a number of community outreach activities. In 2009, members of the Oncology Department of SickKids Hospital, visited the Children's Hospital at The Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex to raise awareness of childhood cancers in Trinidad and Tobago and to update health care providers in modern techniques in the diagnosis of cancers. This visit was sponsored by Atlantic.

In November 2008, UWI Telehealth sponsored the first ever Advanced Burn Life Support Course of the American Burn Association to be held outside continental USA. The trainers were recruited from the Jackson Memorial Hospital Burn Centre, University of Miami. Thirty-six health care providers - doctors, nurses and emergency medical service personnel - from both the public and private sectors were trained in the management of acute burns.

The programme is now in its seventh year of operation and will be hosting activities which focus on disorder development in children. While there are no official national figures, unpublished data suggest that 5-10% of the child population have some form of this problem, about 20% of them being mentally retarded. By way of networking, this outreach project will link and give support to families who deal with their children on a day to day basis.

As patron, I congratulate the UWI Telehealth Programme and thank the University of the West Indies, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Atlantic, SickKids Hospital and all other stakeholders for their unstinting support over the past seven years and look forward to their continuing involvement in this innovative and truly worthy project.

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President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

