



Ministry of Health, Wellness and Elderly Affairs

May 14th, 2024

Press Statement

SLNA 2024 Address: Our Nurses. Our Future. The economic power of Care

The St. Lucia Nurses Association is a silver award-winning association proudly representing a membership of over three hundred and fifty caring, vibrant, educated and committed nurses. Together with nurses around the world we celebrate Nurses week in commemoration of the birthday of Florence Nightingale, (The lady with the lamp) the founder of Nursing. This week nurses are in the spotlight not just for the care that we provide but the economic value that we offer to our country. The celebrations commenced on May 5th where we observed International Midwife Day, and will culminate on May 12th as we observe International Nurses Day under the theme "Our Nurses. Our Future. The Economic Power of Care." The celebrations began with a spirit-filled and inspirational Nurses church service as we joined in worship at the Augier Evangelical Church.

To bring into perspective the topic under which we celebrate we will host several professional development sessions to include topics such as "Who Cares for the Carer" and a radio talk show that highlights the economic value that nurses continue to contribute to this country. May is also a month of many other celebrations, among which is Mother's Day and our famous jazz festival. Therefore, due to competing interest our celebrations continue into the rest of the year with activities such as Sip and paint, and a meet and greet event for our retired nurses. We will also be gifting every member with tokens of appreciation for their contribution to the health care of St. Lucia. Additionally, we invite the public to join us for our premier "Walk with your Nurse" event planned for July 2024 in partnership with the Government of St. Lucia's St. Lucia Moves Campaign, St. Lucia Wake up and Run and various local and international businesses. We look forward to your support and participation.

In reference to the Theme: Our Nurse, Our Future. The economic Power of Care, this year our focus is to improve the socio-economic welfare of our nurses. We are currently in negotiations with the Government of St. Lucia to make decisions on financial and non-financial investments in Nursing. In addition, we wish to partner with all business places in St. Lucia to make every nurse a permanent valued customer through the provision of year-round discounts once they remain members of the St. Lucia Nurses Association on presentation of our membership card. We are looking forward to a positive response to realize this goal on behalf of our members.

In the Prime Minister's Statement on Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure on March 27th, 2024, he highlights "The 2024-2025 Estimates will lay the foundation for sustainable growth in the economy, and

will provide real hope for our people, hope that will provide investment and employment opportunities across all major sectors of the economy. "The International Council of Nurses (ICN) (2024)summary

on Our Nurses. Our Future. The Economic Power of Care. emphasizes "The World Health Organization (WHO) challenges countries to increase expenditure on primary health care by approximately 1% of their gross domestic product (GDP) to lessen the glaring coverage gaps and meet health targets agreed in 2015. As every country strives to rebuild and strengthen their health care systems and economies post the Covid- pandemic and achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) intentional investment in nursing emerges as a fundamental pathway to achieving sustainable growth and resilience. We continue to remain in dialogue with the Minister of Health, Wellness and ElderlyAffairs, Permanent Secretary on the Ministry of Health, and the various boards and Chief Executive Officers at our local health institutions to emphasize and action the economic value of our nurses through our quarterly meetings and whenever the opportunity presents itself.

We call on all stakeholders to save money by ensuring safe care and safety of nurses, compensate nurses fairly for their scope of practice and advance practice skills, capacity building of the nursing workforce to achieve UHC and optimizing the use of resources to improve our health system's effectiveness. We are grateful for the support we received last year during our Nurses week celebrations. Significant to highlight are the financial and social contributions of the Ministry of Health Wellness and Elderly Affairs, the St. Lucia General Nurses Council, and companies such as Simaie Insurance, Lubeco, Trophy Centre, Cepal holdings, Dr Richard Burt, Dr Castro, Sandals Halcyon, Digicel, Flow and Fast Cash. Additionally, we wish to recognize the Office of the Prime Minister, the Taiwan Embassy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor, the Pan American Health Organization, the Trade Union Federation, Millennium Heights Medical Complex, St. Jude Hospital, and local companies such as Bank of Saint. Lucia, Coconut Bay Resorts, My Kind of Travel, Coco Palm Hotel, and our families who provide financial support to the nurses attending the ICN Congress in Canada in July 2023. We look forward to a more vibrant and productive 2024. Happy International Nurses Day to all nurses and Happy Mother's Day to all nurses who are mothers.