

TRHA: NO TRUTH TO HARVESTING CLAIMS

“Misleading and damaging” is how the Tobago Regional Health Authority has described the suggestion that there is an organ harvesting ring on the island.

The Authority has unequivocally dismissed the idea, first presented to the media by the political party Tobago Forwards.

In contrast, TRHA medical chief of staff Dr. Nathaniel Duke confirmed the Tobago medical system is not even equipped to harvest organs. This process is done by ISO certified US-based company International Sight Restoration, which must go through a rigorous process according to international standards before it can harvest corneas and supply them to a surgeon.

Tobago has so far had nine corneal surgeries done in 2015, all successful.

It was also suggested that the medical team may have been “incentivised”. However, Dr. Duke revealed that Dr. Deo Singh, the main surgeon who performs the implants, has done all nine in Tobago without charge. With the surgeries costing \$70,000 per eye in Trinidad and Tobago, it means the TRHA has saved “close to \$1 million”, Dr. Duke said.

The TRHA said it “has no wish to be drawn into any political agendas by any political entities and politician”, and added that its mandate is to “provide quality medical services to the people of Tobago”. The Authority said it is open to addressing any “legitimate concerns” raised that impact the TRHA. It dismissed the Tobago Forwards as making it up as they go along.

GREATER FOCUS ON DEVELOPING FAMILIES

Greater emphasis will be placed on supporting Tobago’s families, with the Family Development Programme. The new initiative will combine the various social assistance and developmental aspects of programmes of the Division of Health and Social Services, according to the Division’s manager of the Children’s Family Unit, Dr. Derrick Forrester.

“It’s an all-inclusive pro-

gramme,” Dr. Forrester said. “It’s not geared towards just one aspect. For example, in the Division of Health and Social Services we have different units. We have CSU Community Social Services Unit, we have Children’s Family Services Unit, and we have Gender, all kinds of programmes, so the Family Development Programme is the umbrella. All of those units now fall within that body.”

Dr. Forrester hopes the public will buy into the programme.

“Families all across Tobago will understand that we’re seeking to achieve and to give your full co-operation because at the end of the day this programme is not for us. It’s for the public and families; they matter, and we believe that if we put this mechanism in place it will be for families to cash in on it.”

LAPTOP KIOSKS LAUNCHED AT SCARBOROUGH LIBRARY



NEW SYSTEM: A patron checks out a computer from one of Scarborough Library Facility’s new automated laptop kiosks.

Tobago is enjoying another technological first—automated laptop kiosks.

The two kiosks were officially launched at the Scarborough Library Facility on Monday (May 18, 2015), the first time such technology is being used in the Caribbean. This follows the opening of the state-of-the-art library facility in February.

The service was developed and installed by US-based company LaptopsAnytime. The kiosks not only dispense the

computers for the use of patrons at the library; they can each also store, recharge and wipe clean six laptops as well.

According to Head of Tobago Library Services Helen Johnson, the service is in keeping with the library’s mandate to lead the way in cutting edge library technology.

“We aim to remove barriers between technology and users and the launch of these kiosks are a result of our continued efforts to ensure that this goal is realised,” Johnson said.