

## PRESS RELEASE

### Health Council to Lead Consultation about Affordable Healthcare

(Hamilton, Bermuda 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018) - The Bermuda Health Council announced today that it will consult in the coming weeks to discuss ways to make healthcare more affordable for all and build on the Ministry of Health's initiative to modernize Bermuda Hospitals Board's fees.

A spokesperson for the Bermuda Health Council said: "Healthcare is changing globally and locally and the island's health expenditure has reached breaking point. The mandate of the Health Council is to explore options for better management of the health system, assuring that we spend our health dollars more wisely. We have the technical knowledge and expertise and will assist the Ministry of Health in the calculation of fees and revisions of the fee structure at the hospital. We will facilitate collaboration between the public and the various healthcare leaders to ensure that everyone has access to better healthcare when they need it, and at a price they can afford. Our ultimate goals are to ensure that:

- Everyone receives the care they need without financial hardship
- **Everyone has access** to quality health services

The Bermuda Health Council will also advocate for changes in what we invest in, such as more **comprehensive plans for mental health** and **paying for the prevention** of our most chronic diseases and **not only curative care**. For example - paying for screenings for diabetes and depression, while providing more cost effective healthy life-style options to improve health so that we as a country can spend less on expensive treatment procedures like prescription drugs and amputations."

The consultation will be conducted in three phases:

- Phase 1 begins on **9<sup>th</sup> March** with release of a consultation brief and a consultation period that will seek to align hospital fees with international best practices for better competition and quality of care. This phase also includes a **stakeholder meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March at 5:30pm**.
- Phase 2 will take place between April and July of this year and will focus on maintaining good population health through revising the essential list of appropriately priced health services and reviewing better strategies for insurance coverage.
- Phase 3, which begins in September this year, will focus on providing actuarial modeling and technical guidance from the recommendations stemming from the first two phases in preparation of implementation in 2019.

The spokesperson concluded: "We know people in Bermuda want and deserve to have good quality health services at affordable prices. We also know that in order to fulfil that criteria we

must be open to change – therefore we look forward to gaining valuable feedback during the upcoming consultation.”

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**About Bermuda Health Council**

Established in January 2006, the Bermuda Health Council (Health Council) is tasked with regulating, coordinating and enhancing the provision of health services in Bermuda. Led by a Board representing a broad range of sectors in Bermuda’s community, and staffed by a team of committed professionals, the Health Council works with health system stakeholders towards achieving a quality, equitable and sustainable health system.