

PRESS RELEASE

Health Council Invites Innovative Ideas to Address the Burden of Chronic Disease

(Hamilton, Bermuda 7th August 2019) – The Bermuda Health Council (“Council”) is gearing up to launch a Chronic Disease Innovation Programme (“Programme”) which will provide support for innovative solutions to address Bermuda’s high rates of non-communicable chronic diseases and associated disability.

Health professionals, community leaders and groups know what is needed to support and strengthen the health of the population. Given this existing knowledge, there are valuable resources within the community that are in an ideal position to propose interventions that align with Bermuda’s national strategies for improving public health. During this initial stage in the Programme development, all members of the public are invited to complete [a short online survey](#) where they can submit ideas for health interventions. Based on an initial set of suggestions, invitations will go out to submit formal proposals for support from the Programme.

With the passing of the Health Insurance Amendment Act 2019, this year’s Standard Premium Rate (SPR) includes a transfer of \$3.40 from the Mutual Reinsurance Fund (“MRF”) to the Programme for a total of \$2M within the fiscal cycle. All funds will be used to support public health interventions that consider local context, are derived within the local environment, and can complement the health system in addressing this major health system issue of chronic disease. The Council will provide Programme oversight, and all reporting of the use of awarded funds and outcomes resulting from the funded initiatives will be made public.

Dr. Ricky Brathwaite, Acting CEO / Director, Health Economics comments, “Within the scope of other health system change, there has been an intentional shift to find solutions for better prevention and management of chronic disease. We are thinking about long term investments in our communities and expecting improvements in health and cost reductions. Over time, there have been some really great ideas that have been brought forth by members of the public, and we are excited that we now have an opportunity to empower our communities.”

The ability to obtain funding will be based on the evidence to support the proposed innovation, the scale of impact, the projected and supported return on investment, and sustainability of the benefit. Evidence-based interventions (or enhancements to existing interventions) and initiatives will also be considered based on their ability to address risk factors that are common across chronic conditions. For example, proposals can focus on areas such as smoking cessation, forming healthy habits, increasing physical activity, supporting emotional well-being, combatting obesity, etc.

Tiara Carlington, Project Manager, Public Health Research and Programmes, adds, “In some way, we are all impacted by the growing burden of chronic disease in Bermuda; whether as patients, friends, family members, employers, health insurers or health providers. However, we are not of the belief that the status quo is the only pathway to the future. We indeed imagine that through a collaborative approach



we can do much better and enable better health for all. This Fund creates an opportunity for the system to explore new ways of reducing the burden and improving the health of the population.”

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About Bermuda Health Council

Established by the Bermuda Health Council Act 2004, the Bermuda Health Council (“Health Council”) is tasked with regulating, coordinating and enhancing the delivery 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.