



PRESS RELEASE

April 26, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Balaclava Health Centre Resumes Adolescent Health Clinic

The Balaclava Health Centre in St. Elizabeth has resumed its adolescent health clinic, for youths aged 10 to 19 years.

The adolescent health programme, which was operational from as far back as 2013, through the Ministry of Health & Wellness Adolescent Standards and Criteria. It became inactive due to the COVID-19 pandemic but has re-started with the purpose of helping adolescents to manage their health and development.

Services offered at the clinic include: HIV counselling and testing for adolescents 16 years and older, mental health screening and counselling, drug abuse counselling, nutritional counselling, oral health services, medical check-up, counselling for interpersonal conflicts and assistance with homework.

The clinics will be held every fourth Friday monthly, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., for adolescents in schools, while unattached adolescents can access the services from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Assistant Medical Officer of Health at the Balaclava Health Centre, Dr. Carol Hamilton explained that with the challenges that adolescents face at this time, it is important for this safe space to be provided for them.

“Our aim is to ensure that our adolescents are catered for. You know these are formative years of their lives and they have a lot of things coming at them at this age. They have different changes, psychological, mental health and physical changes so we as healthcare workers will assist them in adjusting to these changes. So, at the clinic, we will be providing a friendly environment. We will also be partnering with external stakeholders to provide recreational activities” Dr. Hamilton explained.

Adolescence is a period characterised by rapid physical, cognitive and

(more)

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social changes, including sexual and reproductive maturation. Adolescents are generally healthy, but their risk-taking behaviours pose challenges to their health and development. Issues, including sexual identity and dealing with one's sexuality, add to the dynamism of the period and cannot be overlooked by any service that provides for their needs.

Picture 1



Assistant Medical Officer of Health at the Balaclava Health Centre, Dr. Carol Hamilton.

(more)

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Picture 2



Some of the adolescents listen to the different presentations at the re-launch ceremony.

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