



## HEALTH PRIORITIES FOR 2017-18

For the Ministry of Health the September 2017 Throne Speech put a strong emphasis on health promotion and prevention. The Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes Act 1999 will be amended to improve standards, sanctions and expand regulations that will protect vulnerable persons in the care homes. Work is well underway on these amendments and we hope to introduce the legislation in this session. The Health Insurance Department (HID) provides affordable health insurance through HIP and FutureCare, which will be amended to cover radiation therapy locally. In addition, the Ministry will begin reviewing options for



a Sugar Tax and consultation on the potential options. This initiative will be part of the Ministry's continued efforts to promote healthy living and reduce the habits that lead to high incidence

of chronic diseases on the Island. Stay tuned for more announcements and updates as we continue the important work of protecting the public's health.

## STRATEGIC VISIONING WORKSHOP



As part of the Ministry of Health's development of a 3 to 5-year Long Term Care Strategy, the Ministry and BHB held two visioning

workshops on Intellectual Disabilities in June and August this year. These are preliminary steps to develop a coordinated vision for services for people with intellectual disabilities and identify some immediate actions. To do this, the workshops reviewed the existing resources and services, documented the gaps, identified long-term goals, and established immediate, short-term

actions. Some of the immediate goals include the review or development of existing day programmes, transition team, disability rights information, person-centred passports, a disability register and a public awareness campaign. The results from these workshops will be an expansion of the LTC Strategy and deliverables on the specific, immediate actions. Reports on the development will be forthcoming.

## HEALTH IN REVIEW

Coming soon will be the much anticipated Health in Review report update. Last published in 2011, Health in Review 2017 compares Bermuda's health to other high income countries and documents the island's health trends. Some of the areas reviewed will be social determinants of health, health status, quality of care and health workforce.

## COVER YOUR COUGH

We're entering flu season so be prepared. Washing hands is the number one way to reduce the spread of disease. Other means for prevention include covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or coughing into your upper sleeve (not your hands). Make sure you also get your flu shot, especially for those persons who are most vulnerable e.g. seniors, pregnant persons and children.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

We are the Ministry of Health and while our title does not reflect Seniors, our Ageing and Disability Services will remain with us. So will the Department of Health, Health Insurance Department, Office of the Chief Medical Officer, the two Quangos (Bermuda Health Council and Bermuda Hospitals Board), and 26 other Boards and the Committees that make-up the Ministry. While the 8th September Throne Speech provided us with some new initiatives, most of the actions documented in the Bermuda Health Strategy and the Ministry's Roadmap 2017 – 2019 will also continue. We look forward to continuing our hard work in enhancing the public's health.