

# Health Minister tours Providenciales local hospital

Minister of Health Hon. Dr. Lillian Boyce earlier this week paid a visit to the Myrtle Rigby Health Complex in Providenciales to become familiar with the facility and listen to the concerns of the staff and patients of the busy medical complex.

Accompanied by Director of Health Services, Dr. Rufus Ewing, Director of Clinical Services of the Myrtle Rigby Health Complex, Dr. Dawn Perry and Senior Nurse Eleanor Hall, the Minister was given a grand tour of the facility.

Issues such as overcrowding and a new wing being installed on the complex were discussed during the walk-around tour and both sides explained what they determined to be pressing issues.

Among areas of concern were the upcoming **CARIFTA** Games and how the complex would cope with a serious emergency, allocation of a possible extra ambulance, a bigger parking lot, having the morgue fully functional and the completion of an extra wing to house more patients.

The Minister said that she understood some of the circumstances to which health workers were dealing with and will do her best to push for better conditions and more money in the upcoming budget to spend on refurbishing the facility.

“I am here to help and to get the ball rolling on making the Myrtle Rigby Complex the best in the island until our hospitals are ready,” said the Minister afterwards as she listened to her professionals in the sector.

The Turks and Caicos Islands are currently in the construction stages of two new hospitals which are scheduled to be completed in 2008.

Dr. Ewing stressed the importance of having certain areas completed before the hospitals in Grand Turk and Provo are ready noting that thousands of persons rely on the Myrtle Rigby Clinic for assistance and medical attention.

This in turn creates a tremendous strain on the facility and its staff as they have to deal with shortages of beds and at times overcrowding of patients waiting to see doctors. “Our health care workers are doing the best they can under present conditions and they are a number of areas which we hope to address this financial year,” said Dr. Ewing.

Dr. Ewing also pointed out that once the hospital in Provo is completed the clinic will continue to function most likely as a treatment facility for the mentally ill and possibly an AIDS hospice for those affected with the dreaded disease.

He also revealed that the current HIV patients are doing extremely well and taking their medication and if by the time that the hospitals are completed, there is no immediate pressure to house those affected by the dreaded disease, they will consider opening the complex to support those persons affected by another chronic disease.

The Minister also said that she intends to pay a visit on each of the clinics in the other islands and be boldly involved and vocal in making sure that the country provides the best medical care it can for its people.