



## Letter from the President...



When **Friends of Islands Initiatives, Inc. (FOII)** was founded in 2017, our primary initiative was to provide impactful grants to Alexandra Hospital and purchase life-saving equipment to treat the medical needs of Nevisians without them having to travel off-island.

Though our support network has since grown to address other economic, social, educational, cultural, and environmental challenges to Nevis and other small island nations, Alexandra Hospital still receives the majority of our financial support. We are dedicating this newsletter to Alexandra Hospital, including an in-depth interview with Hospital Administrator Gary Pemberton.

Over the years, thanks to the generosity of our valued donors, **FOII** has been able to purchase the following items for the hospital:

- Fetal antepartum monitor with cart
- Portable oxygen concentrator
- 2 patient bedside vital signs monitors and carts
- 2 patient transfer stretchers
- 3 portable EKG machines
- Anesthesia Vaporizer
- Portable computer carts

Now, the hospital's greatest needs are for an operating theater bed and an autoclave machine to sterilize medical equipment, two items with a higher price tag than our usual grant.

We are halfway to our goal of being able to purchase one of these necessary items for Alexandra Hospital and ask you for support in reaching our goal by Summer 2023.

**To get us started, a generous supporter has pledged to match the first \$1,000 in donations received by May 31, 2023.**

Can we count on you to give now at [www.islandsinitiatives.org/making-donations/](http://www.islandsinitiatives.org/making-donations/) and help save lives in the Nevis community? On behalf of the all-volunteer FOII Board, I thank you in advance for your support of our crucial mission.

Mark Pinney - President, FOII



## Partner Spotlight: Alexandra Hospital

**Friends of Islands Initiatives, Inc.** works closely with Alexandra Hospital Administrator Gary Pemberton to ascertain the hospital's greatest needs and how FOII can support them.

In mid-March, our Board Member Dr. Raymond Hubbe was able to sit down with Gary to learn more about our valuable partnership. Following are his responses, which have been minimally edited for length and clarity.

### **Q: What is the scope of care Alexandra Hospital hopes to provide the Nevis community?**

The Alexandra Hospital is not a tertiary institution. We provide primary and secondary care to all residents of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis with specific reference to patients on Nevis. We have different specialists on staff. We have pediatricians, a cardiologist, internists, two surgeons, one OBGYN, and trained nurses who assist with providing the best possible care with the resources that they have available on Island. We are now in a position to offer CT scans as part of the services available at the hospital.

### **Q: What items provided by FOII have proven to be the most useful and why?**

All of the equipment that has been donated thus far by the FOII has been critical in the delivery of our service here at the Hospital, but the vital signs monitors play a very critical role in our patient care because they provide direct monitoring of our patients, especially persons who are critical and need constant monitoring. The vital signs monitors are able to monitor the patients' conditions so the nurses have a better idea as to the progress or what is happening with the patients.

### **Q: How have grants from FOII made a difference in helping Alexandra Hospital serve the community?**

As you are aware, the provision of health is very expensive, and health care in Nevis is heavily subsidized by the government. The contributions by FOII toward the delivery of services at the hospital have been very helpful because we have been able to make good use of the donated items and equipment.



*Alexandra Hospital Administrator Gary Pemberton with a vital signs monitor funded by Friends of Islands Initiatives, Inc.*

We are now able to have more monitors available for patients. The monitors received from Islands Initiatives certainly helped to make it more available and more accessible to patients in the different wards. FOII's contribution has been very impactful in terms of the delivery of service here on Nevis. Health care is very expensive, and most of the equipment that we need to provide quality care for our patients is very, very expensive - and any assistance we can get in terms of donors, we are very much grateful for that assistance.

### **Q: How can we benefit the hospital in small and bigger ways?**

We can benefit from your donations, because health care is very critical and there are a number of small and larger equipment and items that are necessary for us to continue to provide a high level of service. I know that Islands Initiatives has a move afoot to make more substantial donations; however, you may be restricted by your present budget. We are hoping that you would be able to get the support necessary to make greater

donations. This is something we are looking forward to see happen. I know that your group is really anxious to be able to contribute more to health care on Nevis.

We are in need of an operating theater bed and an autoclave machine as well. It is time for the current one to be replaced. I know that it is a little expensive and may be outside of the budget that exists at the Islands Initiatives. I know that there was some discussion that you were hoping to make a larger donation to the Hospital.

### **Q: What are Alexandra Hospital's biggest future needs and aspirations?**

Human resources is always our biggest need. Being a small developing island, there is the challenge of recruiting certain Specialists. We need the right mix of health professionals to be effective in our delivery of care. We have recently installed a brand-new 128-slice CT machine at Radiology, and we are seeking to add a Radiologist to our team. Presently, we have to outsource the reporting service. Having a Radiologist on

staff would allow for the reporting process to be completed in a timely manner. Presently, with the exception of emergencies, the turnaround time could be up to 72 hours to get a report from the Radiologist in St. Kitts.

In terms of the future needs, looking at the laboratory standpoint, we are hoping to add additional services. We have purchased a new chemistry analyzer that will allow us to do PSA, TFTs, and cancer markers. These types of tests presently are being outsourced to St. Kitts. With the commissioning of this machine, we would be able to provide a wider range of services to the general public. Training on the use of this machine will be done shortly with the expectation of making this service available shortly thereafter.

I would like, on behalf of the Alexandra Hospital management team and by extension the entire Ministry of Health, say a big thank you to **Friends of Islands Initiatives, Inc.** for their contributions over the years.

## **Why Alexandra Hospital?**

Our goal for the first six months of 2023 is to purchase equipment in the \$20,000 range for Alexandra Hospital. We need your support now.

Consider these possible scenarios:

- A hotel owner has a guest who has an unexpected accident or medical emergency, or one of his indispensable staff members needs immediate medical intervention.
- A part-time resident or their guest becomes ill. Without medical diagnostic capacity, neither knows whether the condition is serious or not.
- A businessperson is considering a Nevis investment, and up-to-date medical services factors into her decision.

We know many such scenarios where a well-equipped hospital becomes an essential resource for our community. There is often no time to get on a flight to another hospital, and many pre-conditions can prevent a speedy evacuation.

Here's what your support might mean for our community:

- Improved health outcomes during a medical emergency. For example, equipping all ambulances with AED and other emergency equipment.
- Ability to attract international investment and tourism with modern imaging equipment.
- Enhanced preventive life-extending care with a good diagnostic lab.
- An equipped lab to enable technical training for interested science students to find good-paying jobs in Nevis.

Our quality of life on Nevis is enhanced when we all do our part to support our local Alexandra Hospital.

If you know someone who would be interested in the good work we do, please forward this newsletter to them or encourage them to support our cause! [info@islandsinitiatives.org](mailto:info@islandsinitiatives.org)