



## THE AGENCY FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

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### **LEGISLATION FOR PROTECTION AND CARE OF ELDERLY SOON TO COME INTO EFFECT**

A Draft Bill for setting standards for the delivery of care and support to the elderly is being formulated.

This comes from a number of consultations held nationwide since May this year.

On Friday August 18, 2023, the Ministry of National Mobilization hosted another consultation at the NIS Conference Room to take a closer look at the findings drawn from the earlier stakeholder discussions and gather greater consensus on matters related to elderly care.

Particular attention has been focused in this area since the issue took center stage during the eruption of the La Soufriere in 2021, when a considerable number of elderly persons were abandoned by family members and consequently become wards of the state.

At the event Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Mobilization, Marissa Finch-Burke noted that since April 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 Cabinet approved a Public/Private Agreement, where two lead local Elderly Care Organizations were officially commissioned to account for shortfalls and provide care for the abandoned older persons at the cost of the Government.

“Since we have started the remote support and services at the district level, we have found additional elderly people that have either been abandoned or living alone without help, recommended by our home help care providers and supervisors, and or the Ministry of Health,” Burke said.

During his remarks Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment Hon St. Clair Prince said that the issue of elderly care has “snowballed” in recent years and now commands the attention of all stakeholders. Minister Prince added that the Ministry of Health shares responsibility with the Ministry of National Mobilization for providing key social services to the nation, of which there is a targeted National Geriatric Health Services Program.

“We have experiences in this; we moved the geriatric facility from Glen to Montrose at the old Nurses Hostel where we are trying to allow them to retrieve some dignity and independence at that particular facility, and we will continue to improve because we have in the pipeline a new geriatric centre – a new Lewis Punnett Home at Glen facilitated by the Maria Holder Memorial Trust,” Minister Prince said.

Among the provisions that are expected to be included in the Older Persons (Care and Protection) Bill are the penalties that may be levied on those who perpetrate abuse against the elderly.

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