

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-2023



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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ACRONYMS

AHC	Area Health Centres	MHO	Medical Health Officers
BSMHCC	Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre	MIH	Mauritius Institute of Health
CDCU	Communicable Disease Control Unit	MOHW	Ministry of Health and Wellness
CHC	Community Health Centre	NAS	National AIDS Secretariat
EEG	Electroencephalography	NBTS	National Blood Transfusion Service
EHEU	Environmental Health Engineering Unit	NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
ENT	Ear, Nose and Throat	NHA	National Health Accounts
FY	Financial Year	NHPRU	NCDS, Health Promotion and Research Unit
GAD	Government Analyst Division	OAW	Orthopaedic Appliances Workshop
ICOPE	Integrated Care for Older People	OPD	Outpatient Department
JNH	Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital	PHC	Primary Health Care
HIEC	Health Information and Education Unit	PHFS	Public Health and Food Safety
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	SBEH	Subramania Bharati Eye Hospital
HSSP	Health Sector Strategic Plan	SSRNH	Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital
LIMS	Laboratory Information Management System	VBCD	Vector Biology Control Division
MCH	Maternal and Child Health	WHO	World Health Organization

FOREWORD

In line with the requirement of the Finance and Audit Act, the Annual Report on Performance of the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) for the Financial Year (FY) 2022-2023 underlines the unwavering commitment to enhance the quality of care and service delivery in the Public Health Sector.

To give furtherance to Government's social development policy, the MOHW has the overarching responsibility of ensuring that equitable health services are accessible to the entire population at all times. Accordingly, the Ministry has to keep pace with new health technologies, implement the strategic directions and actions as approved by Government, sustain progress and address health challenges.

During the period under review, some of the innovative measures undertaken by the MOHW are in regard to the introduction of the new National HIV Testing Services and Policy to ensure all citizens can easily access quality HIV testing services and the full paraphernalia kit for Injecting Drug Users. Moreover, Central Medical Procurement Authority Bill was introduced to Parliament in April 2023 to bring a reform in the procurement function.

It is also the first time that an action plan has been introduced to address the healthcare needs of our elderly population, namely the National Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) Strategic and Action Plan 2022-2026 comprising 7 Strategic Objectives and 55 activities. Additionally, this Ministry has clearly enhanced the 24/7 specialised care in hospitals. As from 1st August 2022, paediatricians, gynaecologists and anaesthesiologists are physically present in each regional hospital to ensure that they can attend to any high-risk cases. This 24/7 coverage has helped to improve deliveries and reduce maternal mortality.

In view to upscale our specialised services, costly surgeries such as renal transplant and cochlear implants have been introduced free of charge for citizens. Other important surgeries such as Primary Percutaneous Coronary Interventions, Spinal Surgeries and Cataract have been freely sustained during the FY 2022-2023. As announced in the recent budget, children diagnosed with cancer will henceforth benefit from financial assistance for the full costs of cancer care and treatment in foreign hospitals or local private hospitals with the best expertise.

In parallel, significant investment in the construction of new public health infrastructure and the upgrading of existing ones have been ongoing in order to scale up the provision of advanced healthcare services to the population as well as reinforce the primary health care service delivery at community level. During FY 2022-2023, infrastructural works for the construction of the National Cancer Centre have been completed. Primary Health Care has been reinforced with the opening of a Mediclinic at Coromandel and three Community Health Centres at Grand Bay, Pointe Aux Sables and Trou d'Eau Douce.

For undertaking all the above-mentioned endeavours, the contribution of all local stakeholders and development partners involved in health especially the World Health Organisation have been instrumental. I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation towards all MOHW staff for their continuous efforts and commitment. I am confident that I can rely on their support and professionalism in achieving our future goals and targets and also in the delivery of quality healthcare service to the Nation.

Dr the Hon Kailesh Kumar Singh JAGUTPAL
Minister of Health and Wellness

MESSAGE FROM SENIOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I am pleased to present the Annual Report on Performance of the Ministry of Health and Wellness for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023, showcasing financial and non-financial performance, whilst highlighting the numerous challenges faced as well as achievements made during the preceding financial year, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine-Russia war.

For the period under review, Government's allocation to health care was Rs 14.7 billion amounting to a per capita Government expenditure on health of Rs 11,611. In spite of globally rising health costs, Government through this Budget and the preceding ones, has been sustaining its investments to shore up public health systems so that it can continuously provide free and quality healthcare to the population.

Sticking to our commitments in charting the way forward to address critical and long-standing health care challenges for our citizens from pre-conception to old-age, a number of National Action Plans and Policy documents have been elaborated. These comprise a National Action Plan for Tobacco Control (2022-2027), a National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) (2022-2025), a National Action Plan for Oral Health (2022-2027) and a National Breastfeeding Action Plan (2022-2027). Additionally, new action plans have been introduced, namely a National Action Plan on Integrated Care for Older People (2022-2026), a National Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Sexually Transmitted Infection (2023-2027), a National HIV Action Plan (NAP) (2023-2027) and National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy.

During the year, healthcare and related legal framework have also been reviewed to introduce Directly Assisted HIV Self-Test, HIV Self-Test, and Medicinal Cannabis as a therapeutic item as well as for the establishment of a Drug Users Administrative Panel for diversion of substance abusers from the criminal justice system towards treatment, rehabilitation and reinsertion in society.

The Decentralisation Programme of Medical Specialist services in the South and North regions remains of undeniable benefits for the population at large as it aims at providing better and quality specialist services at the doorstep of our citizens. In addition, costly surgeries such as renal transplant and cochlear implants have been introduced free of charge for citizens during the period under review. Other important surgeries such as Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI), spinal surgeries and cataract have been freely sustained.

In a bid to deliver a continuum of health promotion, preventative, curative, rehabilitative and palliative services appropriate to the needs of our population, investment in the infrastructure and the upgrading of existing health centres have been continued. The Mediclinic at Coromandel, and Community Health Centres at Grand Bay, Pointe Aux Sables and Trou d'Eau Douce were completed in the FY 2022-2023.

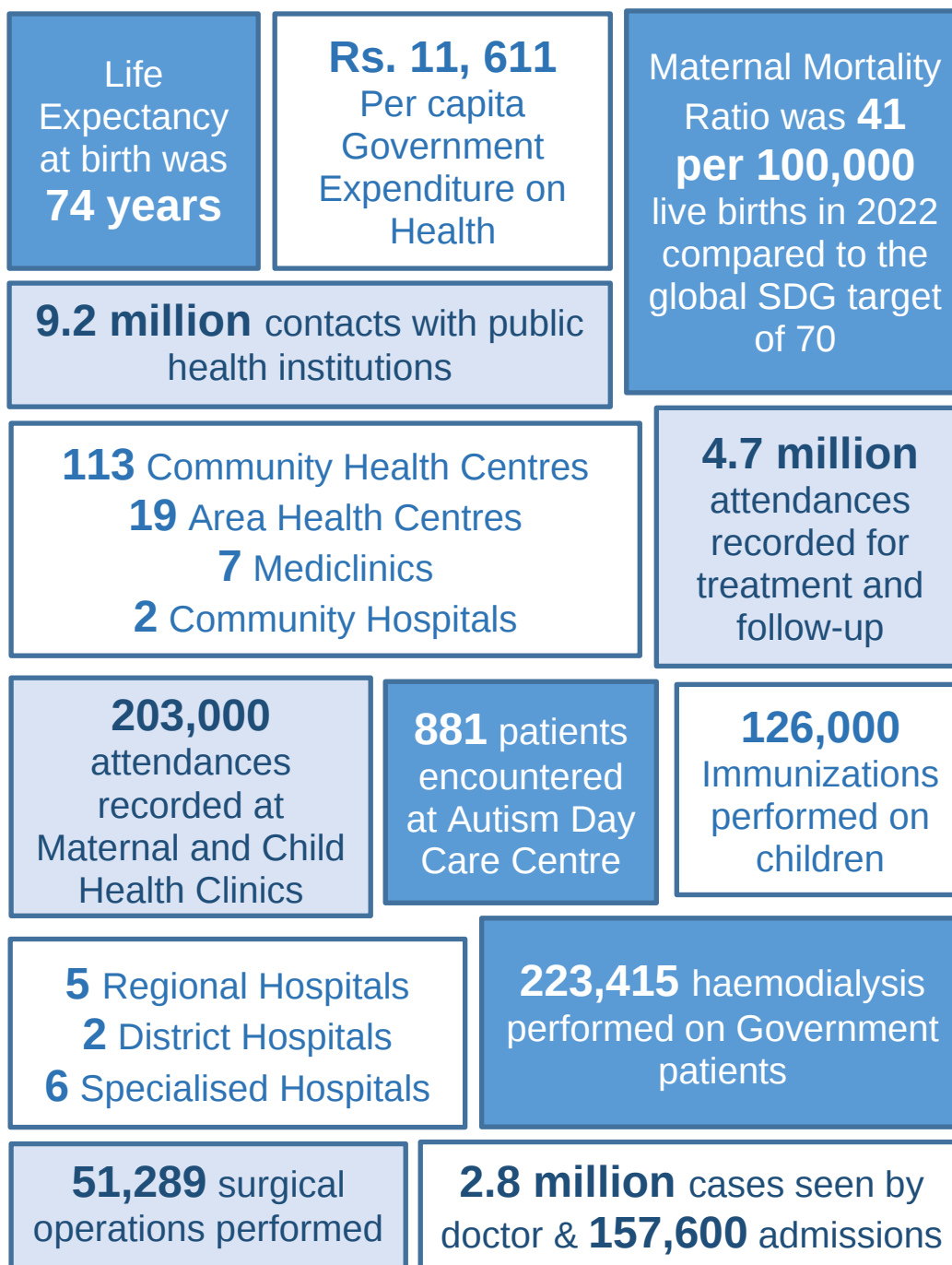
I remain confident that my Ministry will continue to build on the health gains already achieved and will continue to work towards protecting what matters most, that is, healthcare and well-being of all our citizens.

Timely implementation of its policies, programmes and projects within the resources allocated and in line with its strategic direction would not have been possible without the active participation and valuable contribution of all our staff and stakeholders. I take this opportunity to put on record my appreciation for the deep commitment and hard work of all the staff of the Ministry, including those in the health regions throughout the year. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the World Health Organization which has been consistent in its support and guidance on all matters relevant to the health of our population.

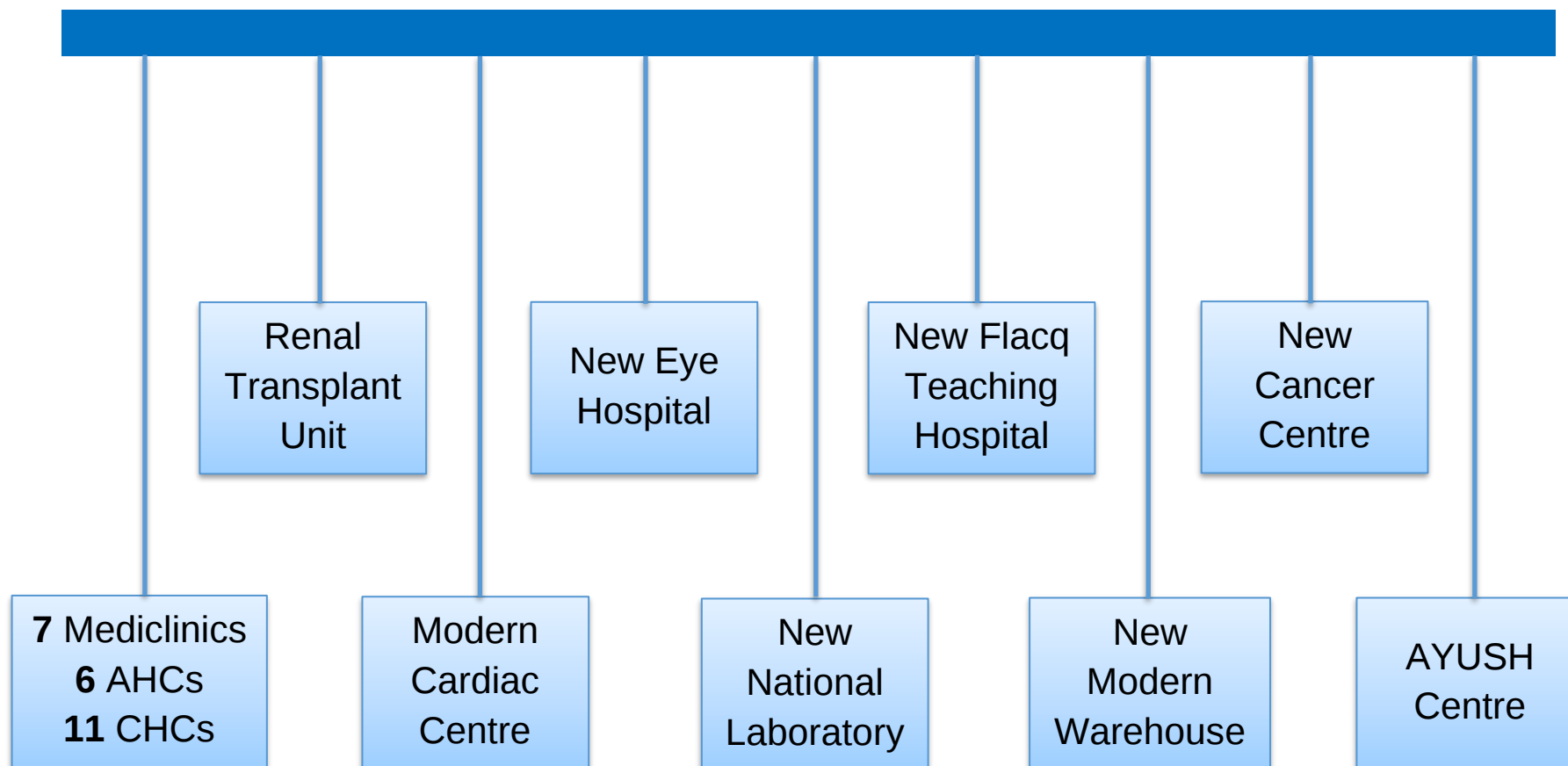
Last but not least, I extend my appreciation and also sincerely thank the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness for his vision, perseverance and guidance. The Ministry of Health and Wellness has made significant progress, and we will continue to strengthen our health-care system and strive towards Universal Health Coverage. I am confident that with the continued support and determined efforts of one and all, we will forge ahead towards the achievement of our organisational goals and objectives.

C. R. Seewooruthun (Mrs)
Senior Chief Executive
Ministry of Health and Wellness

HIGHLIGHTS



PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE



PART I

ABOUT THE MINISTRY



1.1 VISION AND MISSION

OUR VISION

- *A healthy nation with a constantly improving quality of life and well-being.*

OUR MISSION

- *Reinforce our health services into a modern high performing quality health system that is patient- centred, accessible, equitable, efficient and innovative.*
- *Improve quality of life and well-being of the population through the prevention of communicable and non-communicable diseases, promote healthy lifestyles and an environment conducive to health.*
- *Harness the full potential of Information and Communication Technology to empower people to live healthy lives.*
- *Ensure that the available human, financial and physical resources lead to the achievement of better health outcomes.*
- *Facilitate the development of the Republic of Mauritius into a medical and knowledge hub and support the advancement of health tourism.*

1.2 ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

The Ministry of Health and Wellness has the overall responsibility of ensuring that quality and equitable health services are accessible to the entire population at all times, while also promoting healthy lifestyle. Its policy is to continually improve the delivery of health care by promoting greater efficiency and effectiveness while laying emphasis on customer satisfaction.

The role and functions of the Ministry of Health and Wellness are to:

- *Develop a comprehensive health service in order to meet the health needs of the population;*
- *Investigate the influence of physical environment and psychosocial domestic factors on the incidence of human diseases and disability;*
- *Plan and carry out measures for the promotion of health;*
- *Institute and maintain measures for the prevention of diseases including Non-Communicable Diseases and the epidemiological surveillance of important communicable diseases;*
- *Provide facilities for the treatment of diseases, including mental disease by maintenance of hospital and dispensary services;*
- *Make provisions for the rehabilitation of the disabled;*
- *Control the practice of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and allied health professionals;*
- *Provide facilities for the training of Nursing Officers, Midwives, Ancillary Hospital and Laboratory Staff and Health Inspectors;*
- *Advise local government authorities regarding their health services and to inspect those services;*
- *Prepare and publish reports, statistical data and other information relating to health;*
- *Implement a Family Planning, Maternal and Child Health Programme;*
- *Initiate and conduct operational bio-medical health studies of diseases of major importance in the country.*

1.3 GENDER STATEMENT

In Mauritius, Government provides free affordable quality health services, from primary care to specialised services to the population, without any discrimination based on their income, **gender**, race and religion.

The needs and concerns of all the population are considered in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and projects on health. The Ministry is also committed to a gender-inclusive, equitable workplace and encourages a culture that enables all employees to thrive, irrespective of gender. The informational approach to gender equity is to demonstrate that the government health delivery system caters equally for men and women.

The foundation for health and well-being throughout the life course is being laid through the necessary provision of maternal, neonatal and child health services. The Ministry also acknowledges that women and girls have specific health needs throughout their lifespan, including emotional, sexual, maternal and reproductive health, prevention of cancers, menopause and pathology of ageing.

Maternal Mortality Ratio was 41 per 100,000 live births and lower when compared to the global target of 70. The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel was 99.8% in 2022. Life expectancy at birth was 70.2 years and 77.2 years for male and female, respectively in 2022. Available statistics indicate that, in 2022, 53 % of admissions in government hospitals and 51% of first attendance at primary health care centres consisted of girls and women.

A comprehensive set of actions has been identified to improve the health of women and children under the Health Sector Strategic Plan 2020-2024. In addition, the Ministry has elaborated a National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy 2022 and an Implementation Plan 2022 – 2027, the emphasis being on Sexual and Reproductive Health. One of the focuses of the strategies is to improve Women's Health through various activities such as screening, awareness and sensitisation. Promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights will help promote, protect and support Women's Rights. The Ministry is also emphasizing on gender related clinical conditions such as breast cancer, cervical cancer, menopause, preconception care and safe motherhood.

The focus is also changing from treatment to prevention and to health promotion through more awareness campaigns. The aim of these campaigns is to empower women with scientific and sound information so that they can make the best health decisions for them and their families.

1.4 OUR PEOPLE



Dr The Honourable Kailesh Kumar Singh Jagutpal,
Minister of Health and Wellness



Mrs. Devi Chand Anandi Rye Seewooruthun
Senior Chief Executive



Mrs. Zaheda Bibi Lallmahomed
Permanent Secretary



Mr. Dhanraj Conhye
Permanent Secretary



Mr. Doonunjoy Dassaye
Permanent Secretary



Dr Bhooshun Ori
Director General Health Services

Dr The Honourable Kailesh Kumar Singh Jagutpal is the Minister of Health and Wellness since 12 November 2019. The Honourable Minister has a rich experience in the Health Sector. He was the Vice-President of the Mauritius Psychiatric Association from 2015 to 2016 and he also served as the ex-Chairperson of the Medical Council of Mauritius from February 2016 to May 2019. As Minister of Health and Wellness, his portfolio comprises of: Medical and Public Health Services, all matters concerning quality of life, population wellness, population planning, licensing of Private Health Institutions, the National AIDS Secretariat, the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care and the Mauritius Institute of Health.

The Senior Chief Executive is the head of the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) and is accountable for the overall administration and general supervision of all Departments and Bodies falling under the purview of the Ministry. The Senior Chief Executive is assisted in her functions and duties by three Permanent Secretaries, the Director General Health Services and five Directors, Health Services.

Other personnel of the Ministry include officers from Medical Cadre, Administrative Cadre, Analyst Cadre, Health Promotion and Research Cadre, Statistical Cadre, Health Records Cadre, Pharmacy Cadre, Human Resources Management Cadre, Financial Operations Cadre, Procurement and Supply Cadre and other technical cadres as well as officers belonging to the general services grades.

The health workforce in Mauritius is composed of medical doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists and other paramedical professionals. In addition, non-medical staff provides administrative support for the day-to-day running of the health services. Around 15,000 officers in 375 different grades are employed by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, of whom 85% are technical staff who are responsible for delivery of services and 15% are support staff. Skilled personnel are available in a variety of medical specialities.

In 2022, there were 3,800 doctors in the country, out of whom 1,660, including 400 specialists, were working in the public sector. The number of doctors per 10,000 population was 30.1 in the country. The number of dentists per 10,000 population stood at 3.5 in 2022. There are 566 pharmacists registered as at end of 2022, out of whom 33 were working in the public health institutions and 533 were practicing in the private sector. The number of pharmacists per 10,000 population was 4.5.

Qualified nurses and midwives working in the public sector in 2022 numbered 3,782. Other paramedical personnel in the public sector included 2,138 Attendants (Hospital Services) (on shift) and Senior Attendants (Hospital Services) (on shift), 1,190 Health Care Assistants (General), 231 Medical Laboratory Technologists, 210 Pharmacy Technicians (including Store Manager) and 365 Health Records personnel.

During the FY 2022-2023, there was recruitment/promotion of more than 1,100 officers from different cadres including 1 Medical Superintendent, 1 Director-Laboratory Services, 15 Consultants in Charge, 32 Specialists/Senior Specialists, 12 Medical Health Officers/SMHOs, 4 Dental Surgeons/SDS, 7 Dental Assistants, 2 Directors, Nursing, 1 Deputy Director, Nursing, 1 Regional Nursing Administrator, 8 Nursing Administrators, 37 Nursing Supervisors, 27 Ward Managers, 116 Charge Nurses, 43 Trainee Medical Imaging Technologists, 3 Specialised Nurses, 145 Trainee Nurses, 1 Specialised Health Care Assistant, 22 Health Care Assistants/SHCA, 3 Senior Midwife (on shift), 72 officers from Pharmacy Technician cadre, 32 officers

from Health Records cadre, 16 officers from Public Health and Food Safety Inspectorate cadre, 17 General workers, 118 Attendants (Hospital Services) (on shift) amongst others.

In that particular period, some 217 officers have retired from different cadres including, 12 Consultants in Charge, 1 Specialist/Senior Specialist, 5 Medical Health Officers/SMHOs, 2 Regional Dental Superintendents, 5 officers from Medical Laboratory Technologist cadre, 2 Directors, Nursing, 1 Nursing Administrator, 19 Nursing Supervisors, 24 Ward Managers, 11 Charge Nurses, 1 officer from Medical Imaging Technologist cadre, 3 Health Care Assistants/SHCAs, 13 officers from Health Records cadre, 2 General workers, 5 Attendants (Hospital Services) (on shift) amongst others.

The percentage of public health workforce in terms of gender is 45% Male and 55% Female. Further classification of the workforce by gender across hierarchy levels is as follows:

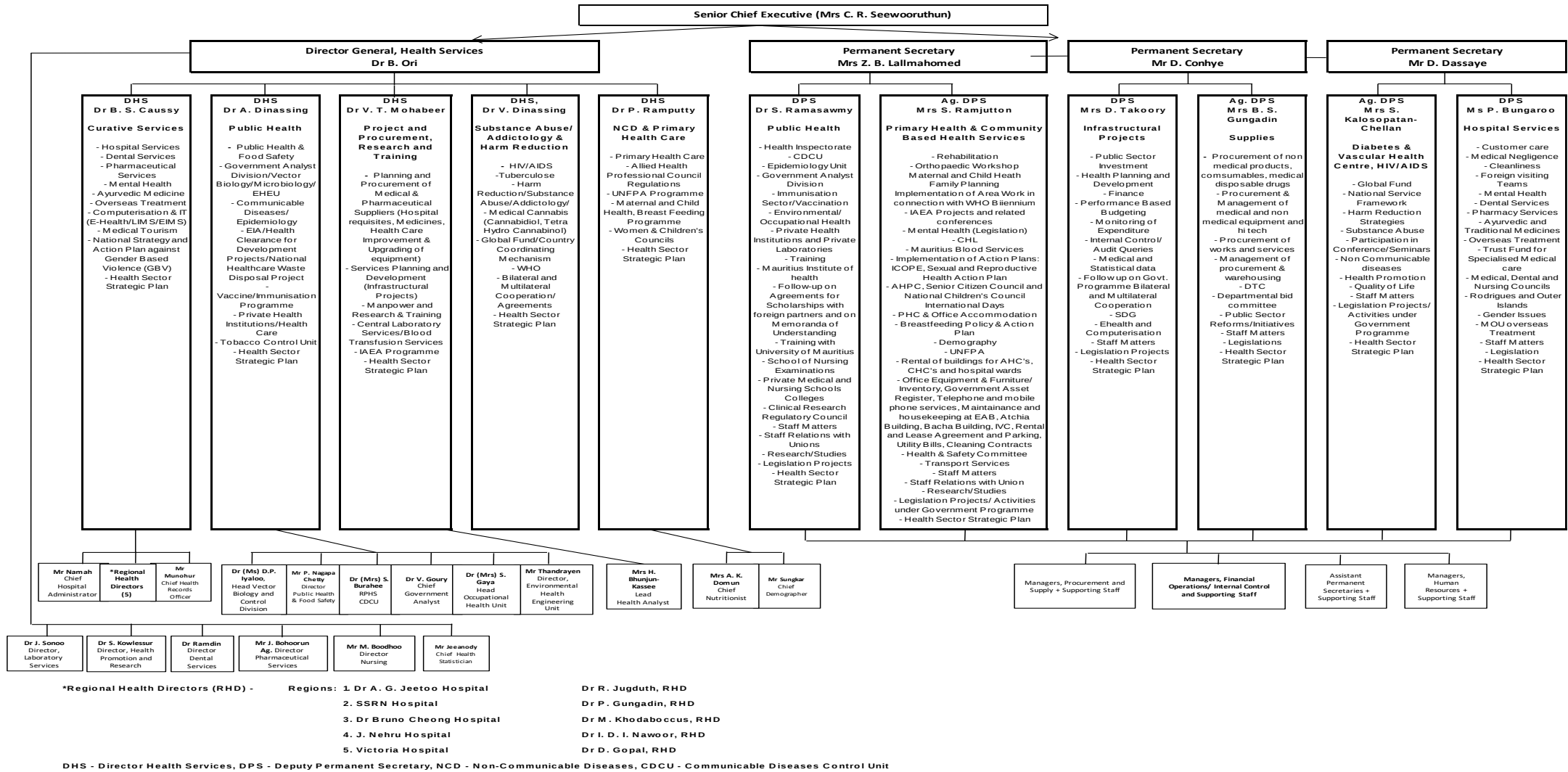
Staff in Post (FY 2022/23)	Number		
	Male	Female	Total
Top Management (Salary $\geq$ Rs110,000)	79%	21%	77
Middle Management (Rs47,000 $\leq$ Salary $\geq$ Rs100,000)	52%	48%	2,577
Support (Salary $<$ Rs47,000)	43%	57%	10,301
Overall	45%	55%	12,800

Source: MOHW Budget FY 2023-2024



1.5 ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Ministry of Health and Wellness - Organisation Chart (FY 2022-2023)



1.6 KEY LEGISLATIONS

- Public Health Act 1925
- Pharmacy Act 1983
- Mauritius Institute of Health Act 1989
- Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicine Act 1989
- Private Health Institutions Act 1990
- Trust Fund for Specialized Medical Care Act 1992
- Mental Health Care Act 1998
- Dental Council Act 1999
- Medical Council Act 1999
- Dangerous Drugs Act 2000
- Nursing Council Act 2003
- Dangerous Chemicals Control Act 2004
- HIV and AIDS Act 2006
- Mauritius Blood Service Act 2010
- Clinical Trials Act 2011
- Pharmacy Council Act 2015
- Allied Health Professionals Council Act 2017
- Mauritius Family Planning & Welfare Association Act 2018
- Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) Act 2018
- Quarantine Act 2020
- Optical Council Act 2021
- Food Act 2022 (Not yet proclaimed)
- Mauritius Food Standards Agency Act 2022 (Not yet proclaimed)

1.6.1 AMENDMENTS AND NEW LEGISLATIONS - FY 2022-2023

A. Amendments brought through the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2022

- (i) **The Medical Council Act 1999:** The Medical Council Act 1999 was amended at section 22 to allow for a non-citizen to register as a general practitioner to allow foreign medical graduates to undergo pre-registration training in Mauritius, provided that he holds a diploma in medicine from a medical institution in Mauritius.
- (ii) **The Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicines Act 1989:** The Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicines Act 1989 was amended at section 2 to broaden the definitions by including the term AYUSH, meaning Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy Systems of Medicine.
- (iii) **The Nursing Council Act 2003:** The Nursing Council Act 2003 was amended at section 21 to provide for mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses or training programme for registered nursing professionals.
- (iv) **The Pharmacy Act 1983:** The Pharmacy Act 1983 was amended at section 6 to include the composition of the Education Committee. Moreover, a new provision was added in the Pharmacy Act 1983 for the setting up of manufacturing plants for pharmaceutical products through a technology transfer agreement.
- (v) **The Pharmacy Council Act 2015:** The Pharmacy Council Act 2015 was amended at section 17 to cater for the term AYUSH, meaning Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy Systems of Medicine.
- (vi) **The Private Health Institutions Act 1989:** The Private Health Institutions Act 1989 was amended at section 2 to broaden the definition of “clinical laboratory” to include collection points for clinical samples. In the same vein, section 11 was amended to empower the Minister to make regulations to lay down the standards to which collection points should abide.

B. Amendments to the HIV and AIDS Act 2006 - The Act, mainly Sections 2, 5, 7, 11, 14, 15, and 16 have been amended to introduce Directly Assisted HIV Self-Test and HIV Self-Test and to cater for inclusion of paraphernalia kit to be distributed under the Needle Exchange Program.

C. Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act 2022 - Amendments to the Dangerous Drugs Act (DDA) has been amended in 2022, specially, concerning section 34. A person in possession of illicit substance according to the DDA for personal use was liable for prosecution. Following amendment of the DDA and the establishment of a Drug Users Administrative Panel (DUAP) substance abusers intercepted by police in possession of drugs for personal use will be diverted from the criminal justice system and directed toward treatment and rehabilitation. This will give them the opportunity to obtain a clean certificate of character.

D. The Central Medical Procurement Authority Bill - was introduced to Parliament in April 2023. It provides for the setting up of a Central Medical Procurement Authority which will, inter alia, be responsible to manage the overall procurement, warehousing, supply and distribution of medical supplies, ensuring that the stock level of medical supplies is maintained and are available at all times in all public health institutions in Mauritius.

1.7 PACKAGE OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES

(i) Primary Healthcare Level

Services at Community Health Centres (CHC)	Services at Area Health Centres (AHC)	Services at Mediclinics
▪ Diagnosis and treatment of common diseases and injuries ▪ Follow up of referrals from hospitals ▪ General nursing care including wound dressing referred from hospitals ▪ Maternal and Child Health: ➤ Antenatal clinics ➤ Post-natal clinics ➤ Pre-conception clinic ➤ Well baby clinics ➤ Cash gift scheme ▪ Expanded Programme of Immunisation for children aged up to 5 years old ▪ Sexual and reproductive health clinic including Family Planning ▪ NCD Clinics ▪ Community health rehabilitation services ▪ Cancer Screening Clinics (cervical, breast, colon) ▪ Health education and promotion ▪ Nutrition education and counselling ▪ Tobacco Cessation Services ▪ Records keeping and dispensing of medications are done by Nursing Officers	▪ All services as provided at CHC level with the following additional services including: ▪ Dental Clinics ▪ NCD Screening for: ➤ Eye ➤ Diabetic foot care clinic including podiatry ▪ Food Handlers Clinics ▪ Specialist Clinics: ➤ Diabetic and Endocrinology ➤ Paediatric ➤ Gynaecology and Obstetrics ▪ School Health ▪ Records Clerk for filing of patients' files ▪ Pharmacy dispensing	▪ All services as provided at AHCs including ambulance services ▪ X Ray facilities ▪ Laboratory services ▪ More Specialist Clinics: ➤ General Medicine ➤ Orthopaedics

(ii) List of Hospital Services

▪ Accident & Emergency	▪ HIV and AIDS Services
▪ Autism	▪ Harm Reduction
▪ Cardiology/Cardiac Surgery	▪ Paediatrics
▪ Diagnostic Laboratory Investigations	▪ Oral and Maxillofacial surgery
▪ Dermatology	▪ Oncology and Radiotherapy
▪ Diabetes/Endocrinology	▪ Ophthalmology
▪ Ear, nose and throat services	▪ Dental services including: ➤ Endodontics ➤ Orthodontics
▪ Neurosurgery	
▪ Neonatology	
▪ Neurology	▪ Orthopaedics
▪ General Surgery including Renal Transplant	▪ Paediatric Surgery
▪ Gastro-enterology	▪ Plastic Surgery
▪ General Medicine	▪ Psychology
▪ Gynaecology and obstetrics	▪ Psychiatry
▪ Imaging facilities including CT scan & MRI	▪ Respiratory Medicine
▪ Intensive Care Services	▪ Rheumatology
▪ Physiotherapy	▪ Social Care Services
▪ Nephrology services including Renal dialysis	▪ Ayurvedic Medicine
▪ Anaesthesia	▪ Occupational Medicine
▪ Geriatric Services	▪ Occupational Therapy
▪ Spinal Surgeries	▪ Neonatal Intensive Care Services
▪ COVID-19 Testing and Treatment Centres (Provisional services depending on the pandemic situation)	▪ Bariatric Surgeries
	▪ Endovenous Laser Varicose Vein Surgeries
▪ Breast Clinic (SSRNH)	▪ Minimally Invasive Surgeries
▪ Chest Unit	▪ Fertility clinic

1.8 MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Government's philosophy is to provide free universal access to quality health care services to each and every citizen in the Republic of Mauritius. In this vein, during the FY 2022-2023, Government, as in preceding years, stood guided by one sole objective that is, putting the health and the wellness of our citizens as a top priority. Public investments have been sustained to ensure accessibility and affordability to quality health care services from primary to specialized care to the population, regardless of income, gender, race and religion.

Government spending on health has increased by nearly 60% over the past nine years, from Rs 9.2 billion in 2014 to Rs 14.7 billion for FY 2022-2023. Subsequently, Per capita Government expenditure on health which was Rs 7,292 in 2014 has increased to Rs11, 611 in FY 2022-2023. Government's allocation to health as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product was around 3.2%.

Moreover, the MOHW has to ensure that the provision of medical services alongside other key functions, such as sustaining the right health infrastructure and the procurement of drugs and medical equipment, are carried in the most efficient manner to ensure the enhancement of health sector development in the Republic of Mauritius.

The major achievements for FY 2022-2023 are as follows:

Formulation and Implementation of National Action Plans: Financing is being provided to MOHW for the implementation of various action plans and policies including a National Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol (2020-2024), a National Action Plan for Tobacco Control (2022-2027), a National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) (2022-2025), a National Action Plan for Oral Health (2022-2027) and a National Breastfeeding Action Plan (2022-2027). During the period under review, new action plans have been introduced namely, a National Action Plan on Integrated Care for Older People (2022-2026), a National Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Sexually Transmitted Infection (2023-2027), a National HIV Action Plan (NAP) (2023-2027) and National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy. Relevant Steering Committees have been set up to monitor implementation of these Action Plans in collaboration with private stakeholders and the civil society.

Introduction of new policies: One of the innovative measures being initiated by the MOHW is in regard to the introduction of the new National HIV Testing Services and Policy. The vision encapsulated in the Policy is to ensure an enabling environment where all persons living in the Republic of Mauritius can access quality HIV testing services. Additionally, the High-Level Drugs and HIV Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, has decided to offer the full package of consumables to the Needle Exchange Programme clients. In addition to syringes and needles, a full paraphernalia kit will also be given to Injecting Drug Users on a daily basis.

Upscaling of health services: In Mauritius, Government provides significant consideration for the health of women, new-borns and children. The MOHW is aiming to reduce morbidity and mortality rates among children under five years to one digit similar to those of developed nations and also to further reduce perinatal and maternal morbidity and mortality rate. In this respect, during FY 2022-2023, 24/7 services by specialists in Gynaecology for women, Paediatrics and Anaesthesia were introduced at Regional Hospitals. Obstetric Units in the hospitals are equipped with brand new echography machines, cardiotocography (CTG) machines, cardiac monitors, doppler sets, and foetal doppler sets to provide optimal care to women. It is worth noting that the

number of maternal deaths in Mauritius has decreased from 8 in 2000 to 7 in 2021 and 4 in 2022. Moreover, all Regional Hospitals have Level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Units as per the American Academy of Paediatrics and are equipped with 44 neonatal ventilators.

Furthermore, affordability of healthcare services is of utmost importance. The Ministry is striving to make healthcare services and essential medicines affordable for every citizen and to improve financial risk protection of patients. In this context, an additional Fertility Clinic has been set up at the Victoria Hospital in August 2022. Moreover, costly surgeries such as renal transplant and cochlear implants have been introduced free of charge for citizens during the period under review. Likewise, other important surgeries such as Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI), Spinal Surgeries and Cataract have been freely sustained. Besides, in collaboration with foreign teams, Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) and Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy (CRT) have been introduced at the Cardiac Centre in Pamplemousses.

The MOHW has embarked on the Decentralised Programme of Medical Specialities in the North and South Health Regions during the FY 2022-2023 in view to improve healthcare accessibility and enhance quality of healthcare services for inhabitants from these regions.

Participation in SIDS Pooled Procurement for cost efficiency: The MOHW is also participating in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Pooled Procurement Programme for Medical Products. The MOHW has contributed a lot in this initiative including exemption from the Public Procurement Act. The primary advantage of Pooled Procurement is cost reduction through economies of scale and collective negotiation for more accessibility and affordability. In addition, for the period under review, significant work has been undertaken for the preparation of relevant legislation for the setting up of the Central Medical Procurement Authority under the aegis of the MOHW for the procurement of medical supplies, including drugs, vaccines, equipment, consumables and medical disposables for public health institutions in Mauritius.

Enhancing Accessibility through investment in health infrastructure: Accessibility to healthcare services is being clearly enhanced. Massive investment in the construction of new public health infrastructure and the upgrading of existing ones are ongoing in order to scale up the provision of advanced healthcare services to the population as well as to reinforce the primary health care service delivery at community level.

For FY 2022-2023, some MUR 2.2 billion were budgeted for health infrastructural construction and upgrading projects totalling MUR 19.2 billion as Project Value in all five Health Regions. The construction of the National Cancer Centre, the Mediclinic at Coromandel, and Community Health Centres at Grand Bay, Pointe Aux Sables and Trou d'Eau Douce were completed. Existing health infrastructures were upgraded and renovated under the Economic Recovery Programme.

Moreover, the ongoing public health infrastructure projects include the construction of the New Flacq Teaching Hospital, the New Eye Hospital, 7 Mediclinics, 6 Area Health Centres and 11 Community Health Centres. Other major projects in the pipeline include the construction of Renal Transplant Unit at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital, a Modern Warehouse for the storage of Pharmaceutical Products and other Medical Consumables, a National Health Laboratory Services Centre and a State-of-the-Art Cardiac Centre on a "Design, Finance, Build and Maintain" model at Côte D'Or, respectively.

Progress on Digitalization of the public health sector: With regard to the digitalisation of the public health sector, the Ministry has since progressed with the implementation of e-Health with the support of the United Nations Development Programme. The e-Health solution, the legal drafting of a Digital Health Law, the formulation of a long-term digital health strategic framework, the institutional assessment for the operationalisation of a Digital Health Office and a site readiness assessment for eHealth have been initiated.

Proactiveness for the Management of NCDs and Communicable Diseases: Decisive actions are being taken at the level of MOHW to further address Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and their risk factors. In this respect, revision of current policies and amendments to legislations on tobacco and alcohol were made. The development and implementation of the National Integrated NCD Action Plan (NINAP) (2023–2028) are underway. There is ongoing NCDs surveillance system, expansion of the screening services for early detection of NCDs, including mental health and cancer, implementation of the Tobacco Control Action Plan 2022-2026 and the National Cancer Control Programme 2022-2025 amongst others. The MOHW has also been proactive to tackling risks associated with infectious diseases like monkeypox. Central Health Laboratory of the MOHW had already received reagents to carry out PCR tests for Monkeypox. A Protocol for Monkeypox at the Airport and Seaport was devised and necessary vaccines were ordered.

Besides, the Ministry has effectively integrated the Strategic Tool for Assessing Risks (STAR), which enables evidence-based assessments of public health risks and streamlines the planning and prioritization processes aimed at strengthening health emergency preparedness and disaster risk management.

Favourable Health Indicators: As far as utilization of the public health services is concerned, some 9,152,301 visits took place at the essential public health service points from 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 meaning that 25,006 cases were handled on average per day.

Around 4.7 million attendances were recorded at the 141 primary health care institutions for the treatment of common diseases, minor injuries and follow-up in 2022. A total of 2.8 million cases were seen by doctor at the public hospitals and some 157,577 patients were admitted for treatment in FY 2022-2023. It is worth noting that for every 10,000 population, Mauritius had a workforce of 30.1 doctors and 34.9 nurses, respectively, in 2022.

Investment in health has paid rewarding dividends mostly in terms of an enhancement in the health status of the population. Mauritius has already achieved some of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals targets set for 2030. Neonatal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births was 8.9, under 5 Mortality Rate was 16.5 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births was 41 in the year 2022. The percentage of the population with access to affordable medicines and vaccines on a sustainable basis is close to 100.

According to the recent joint publication of the WHO and the World Bank- “Tracking Universal Health Coverage 2023 Global Monitoring Report”, the UHC Service Coverage Index for Mauritius was 66 in 2021. Mauritius is ranked 3rd in the Southern African Region with Seychelles and South Africa in the 1st and 2nd place respectively. Key Factors Responsible for Achieving UHC in Mauritius include the following: (i) Sustaining Public Health Financing for better services; (ii) Investment in public health infrastructure, human resources and medicines; (iii) Provision of free essential health services and (iv) Addressing the Socio-Economic Determinants of Health.

1.9 MAJOR CHALLENGES

Despite the noteworthy health achievements accomplished, Mauritius still faces existing and emerging challenges in the health sector. These include high incidence of NCDs such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases (like heart attacks and stroke), cancers, and chronic respiratory diseases. There are also the complex health needs of the ageing population, rising healthcare costs, the growth of personalized healthcare and rising expectations of patients for more patient-centred and improved quality of care amongst others.

Addressing the Incidence of NCDs: According to the Mauritius NCD Survey 2021, improvements have been observed in the status of NCDs and their risk factors as compared to the situation in 2015. Nevertheless, NCDs remain a major public health problem in Mauritius and require constant attention. The NCDs and the chronic conditions associated with them are responsible for the largest share of morbidity, mortality and disability which present a major challenge to the health of the nation and to the health system at large. NCDs account for 85% of all deaths. Unhealthy habits among the population such as smoking, alcohol abuse, poor eating habits and a sedentary life style have contributed to the high prevalence of NCDs in the country.

Yet, there is a strong political commitment to tackle NCDs and a number of fiscal measures and regulatory frameworks are in place. Regular surveys on NCDs and their risk factors are conducted and National Action Plans with multi-sectoral involvement have been developed and are being implemented. The main challenges include strong inter-sectoral coordination, behavioural change through community empowerment, increasing awareness on dietary habits, healthy lifestyle and enforcement of regulations on tobacco and alcohol.

Containing the propagation of infectious diseases: Like many countries in the world, the country is not spared from the resurgence of infectious diseases and emerging ones which remain continuous threats to the country. New COVID-19-related interventions led to higher unpredicted costs in this sector. Thus, preparedness and increased public health vigilance for containing the propagation of infectious diseases such as COVID-19, dengue, malaria, chikungunya, monkeypox, amongst others are crucial. According to the Vector Biology Control Division (VBCD) unit of the MOHW, there is a high risk of Mauritius to be invaded by the malaria vector *Anopheles stephensis* and vector surveillance and control at point of entry should be further strengthened.

Moreover, small islands like Mauritius are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change on health. The need for a well-prepared public health unit to address these challenges in real time, has been strongly felt since 2020. In this context, the Ministry is working on a National Action Plan on Public Health Security to be implemented over 2 years. This action plan will cost about USD 9.6million. However, only some 43% of the funds needed have been identified. The Ministry is also envisaging to set up a Public Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) for addressing emerging and re-emerging diseases.

Sustaining Life-Course Health Approach: It has been observed that Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) increased to 14.7 (per 1,000 live births) in 2022 as compared to 13.6 in 2021. The number of infant deaths in 2021 and 2022 was 165 equally whereas the number of live births significantly decreased from 12,108 to 11,223 in the same period. The MOHW is implementing strategies to reduce the Infant Mortality Rate. As from 01 August 2022, one Paediatrician, one Gynaecologist and one Anaesthetist are physically present in each Regional Hospital to ensure that they can attend to any high-risk cases of delivery and ensure a better delivery of maternal health services.

Moreover, Adolescent Health is becoming a high priority as most of the social ills are picked up at this age. The establishment of adolescent ward in each of the 5 Regional Hospitals is becoming a necessity and accompanying this group by a dedicated paediatric team till the age of 16 years. The Ministry is also working on National Strategy for Adolescent Health (2023 - 2028).

The Ministry is striving to address the healthcare needs of the ageing population through the implementation of the National Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) Strategic and Action Plan 2022-2026, comprising 7 Strategic Objectives and 55 activities.

The Harm Reduction Unit is upscaling its programmes and adopting new regulations for the prevention of substance abuse and rehabilitation of victims of all ages. Another upcoming challenge is the sustainability of the HIV Expenditures as the country is in a transition period with regard to the Global Fund (GF) Grant and eventually new sources of financing will have to be determined with the phasing out of this grant. Moreover, the “Loss to Follow up (LTFU) HIV/AIDS Cases” also represent a challenge to the Ministry. Stigma is one of the major barriers contributing to the LTFU cases. The AIDS Unit is continuously tracking patients not attending Day Care Centres for Immuno-suppressed (DCCIs) so that they can be re-engaged for treatment and care.

Provision of adequate infrastructure, manpower, training and digitalisation: Many departments have highlighted the disruption in the workflow due to shortage of trained staff. It was also pointed out that lack of space and inappropriate infrastructure may also affect health and safety norms. Thus, there is the continuous need to ensure the maintenance of health infrastructure (Building and Equipment) and improve implementation rate of new infrastructure projects, to fill-in vacancies, to build further the capacity of the health workforce and to expedite the digitalisation of health services to meet the new demand of the public health sector.

Improving procurement and management of inventories to avoid wastages: A number of persistent issues and challenges have been encountered with regard to the procurement of medical supplies. These include inadequate procurement planning and execution, delays in procurement exercises, poor stock management leading to frequent over-purchase and wastages, lack of effective contract management as well as poor monitoring and reporting system, possible collusion and governance issues. These result in near out of stock situations for critical and lifesaving items. At the level of the Ministry, a WhatsApp group has been created with the involvement of top management and pharmacists from different service points to communicate and resolve supply chain discrepancies. More important, Government is envisaging the setting up of a Central Medical Procurement Authority to address the matter and ensure timely supply of medicines, equipment and medical disposables.

Addressing Primary Drivers of Health care costs: Healthcare costs in Mauritius will continue to rise as the country is highly dependent on the importation of goods, including pharmaceutical products, vaccines, hospital consumables, Personal Protective Equipment and medical equipment. In addition, fluctuations in the foreign exchange rates negatively impact healthcare costs. The high prevalence of NCDs and long-term treatment for chronic diseases, increasing demand for geriatric services and advances in medical technologies are also considered as the primary drivers of increasing health care costs in Mauritius. The Ministry is implementing measures to control healthcare costs, adopt more efficient and transparent procurement systems, promote digitalization and explore innovative funding models.

1.10 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HEALTH SECTOR STRATEGIC PLAN (HSSP) 2020-2024

The development of a Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) for the period 2020-2024 in close collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), conforms to Government's policy in the health sector, which aims at achieving the highest standards of good health among the population.

The main objective of the HSSP 2020-2024 is to ensure the enhancement of health sector development in the Republic of Mauritius, including Rodrigues and the Outer Islands, in order to further improve positive health outcomes for the individual, the family, the community and the economy at large. The Plan contains 26 Strategic Goals and some 362 Strategic Actions to be implemented under the following 21 thematic areas:

Thematic Areas under HSSP 2020-2024	
1. Integrated Primary Health Care Services	10. School Health
2. Community Empowerment	11. Emergency Preparedness and Response
3. Hospital and Allied Services	12. Occupational Health
4. Quality Healthcare	13. Health Information System
5. Non-Communicable Diseases and their Risk Factors	14. Health Research
6. Mental Health	15. Human Resources for Health
7. Substance Use and Addiction	16. Access to Quality Medicine and Health Technologies
8. Communicable Diseases: Vector-Borne, HIV and AIDS, Hepatitis C and Coronavirus, COVID-19	17. Food Safety
9. Health through the Life Course ((i) Maternal Health, (ii) Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health, (iii) Women Health, (iv) Family Planning Services, (v) Vaccination, (vi) Elderly Care)	18. Healthcare Financing
	19. Intersectoral Collaboration and Public Private Partnership
	20. Governance
	21. Medical Hub

The implementation of the HSSP 2020-2024 is receiving commitment at the highest level through the progress monitoring by a Ministerial Committee and the presentation of a progress report to Cabinet. In this context, 21 Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) have been set up at the level of the Ministry for the implementation of the HSSP 2020-2024. Some 26 Operational Plans have been worked out with more than 600 activities identified by the different TWGS.

During the FY 2022-2023, a second round of progress monitoring was undertaken and on 9th September 2022, Cabinet was accordingly apprised of the status and progress achieved on the respective activities. A dissemination workshop on HSSP Implementation Progress was organized in collaboration with the European Union Commission on 30th November 2022 mainly with TWGS members.

A third round of progress monitoring is underway and has revealed that during the FY 2022-2023, new action plans/policies have been introduced namely, a National Action Plan on Integrated Care for Older People (2022-2026), a National Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of

Sexually Transmitted Infection (2023-2027), a National HIV Action Plan (NAP) 2023–2027 and an updated National HIV Testing Services and Policy.

Construction of new state-of the-art public health infrastructure and upgrading of existing ones have been ongoing. Expensive surgeries such as renal transplant and cochlear implants have been introduced free of charge. Other important surgeries such as Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI), Spinal Surgeries and cataract have been sustained freely.

The HSSP 2020-2024 also caters for the Island of Rodrigues with 12 Strategic Goals. Due to sanitary restrictions, the Ministry was unable to provide optimal support to the Commission for Health and others of Rodrigues to develop their respective Operational Plans. Thus, a team from the Ministry proceeded to Rodrigues from 22-25 May 2023 to support in the setting up of Thematic Working Groups and expedite the development of Operational Plans for the implementation of activities under these 12 Strategic Goals for Rodrigues.

PART II

ACHIEVEMENTS BY HEALTH SERVICES





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3:
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all
at all ages



PART II - SECTION A

HOSPITAL AND SPECIALIZED

SERVICES



2.1 HOSPITAL AND SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Curative services of Public Health Institutions are provided by 5 Regional Hospitals, and 2 District Hospitals. They are supported by 6 specialised hospitals, namely, one psychiatric hospital, one for chest diseases, one for eye diseases, one for ear, nose and throat (E.N.T.) diseases, one Cardiac Centre and a new Cancer Hospital.

Services include emergency cases which are handled by the SAMU service and the Accident and Emergency departments of hospitals while chronic cases are seen at the Unsorted OPD of hospitals and primary health care centres. Specialised services are available on appointment provided by more than 23 specialties.

Accident and Emergency Departments of hospitals have catered for some 3,057 patients per day amounting to 1,118,800 visits for the whole financial year. Sorted outpatients on appointment arose to 1,011,659 visits followed by 661,183 unsorted visits without appointment. Hospitals have thus catered for 7,648 outpatient cases per day.

Cases handled by individual hospitals during FY 2022-2023 are as follows:

Regional Hospitals	Accident and Emergency Department	Sorted OPD	Unsorted OPD	Flu Clinics	Admissions	Surgeries
Dr A.G. Jeetoo	195,588	156,655	95,966	49,242	32,192	7,729
SSRN	140,365	161,711	78,090	32,489	27,691	5,788
Dr B. Cheong	111,011	115,161	96,576	6,973	24,558	5,024
J Nehru	120,632	111,108	41,968	38,359	24,871	4,699
Victoria	150,297	261,966	133,511	55,959	33,897	8,612
TOTAL	717,893	806,601	466,111	183,022	143,209	31,852

*23,497 unsorted OPD cases were also handled by Mahebourg Hospital

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022 and Health Records Department

District and Specialised Hospitals	Accident and Emergency Department	Sorted OPD	Admissions	Surgeries
Mahebourg	41,167	17,757	2,518	-
Souillac	77,621	30,333	5,914	3,128
Brown Sequard	14,596	15,708	3,399	-
S Bharati Eye	107,494	63,910	7,711	8,019
ENT Centre	71,494	8,752	2,149	7,085
Poudre D'or- Chest	-	7,656	384	
Cardiac Centre	-	21,974	4,190	1,205
Long Mountain	46,138	10,051	-	-
Yves Cantin	42,455	3,130	-	-
New Cancer Centre	-	25,787	2,663	-
TOTAL	400,965	205,058	28,928	19,437

A wide range of Support Services provided professional back-up to doctors which included Audiology and Speech Therapy, Clinical Psychology, Hydrotherapy, Hyperbar, Medical Social Service, Diet and Nutrition, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Foot Care, Occupational Health Service, Orthopaedics Workshop, Retinal Screening and Smoking Cessation Clinics among others. They have catered for some 370,728 cases and the main ones are highlighted hereunder.

Services	Number of Cases
Audiology	14,131
Speech Therapy	10,815
Clinical Psychology	15,781
Medical Social Service	27,490
Nutrition service	31,145
Occupational Health Service	9,331
Occupational Therapy	35,865
Orthopaedic Workshop	11,585
Physiotherapy	138,713
Podiatry	1,430
Foot care	40,265
Retinal Screening	31,907
Smoking Cessation Clinics	2,144

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022

As at June 2023, 157 wards were available in public hospitals with 3,584 available beds including 60 intensive care beds for adults and 29 for neonates. 157,577 admissions were registered in the FY 2022-2023. Overall bed occupancy has gone up to 71.6% with the highest of 82.4%, 75.5% and 74.1% at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre, Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital and Victoria Hospital respectively.

At the hospital level, the nursing staff plays a crucial role in the efficient and effective administration of the ward, maintaining a high standard of nursing care to patients, evaluating patient responses to care, close monitoring of vital parameters and promptly alerting doctors to any deviations from the normal parameters, assisting doctors, surgeons, and other paramedical personnels in the care process, and timely tracing of investigations and blood results, among others.

Regional Hospitals, Souillac Hospital, S. Bharati Eye Hospital, ENT Centre and the Cardiac Centre have carried out 51,289 surgeries. These included 1,059 open heart surgeries, 8,091 cataract surgeries, 869 lithotripsy and 654 arterio-venous fistula cases. Additionally, 6,477 cardiac angiographies/angioplasties were carried out.

Minimally invasive surgeries are routinely carried out at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital and SSRN Hospital. Moreover, Renal transplants are presently performed locally and 8 transplants were performed in 2022.

The Laboratory Service has reported on 16 million tests for the period 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. The Radiology Department has carried out 767,692 X-ray examinations including 35,233 CT-Scans and 5,742 MRIs in 2022.

Some other examinations and tests conducted are as follows:

Type of Tests	Number of Tests
Chemotherapy	15,564
Electroconvulsive Therapy	229
Electroencephalography	1,468
Endoscopy	11,852
Laser (Ophthalmology)	4,767
Nuclear Medicine	1,550
Pacemaker implant	339
Stress Test	4,973

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022

As at 30 June 2023, 42,694 positive cases of COVID-19 were detected in Mauritius. All necessary treatments were provided to these patients and 40,952 recoveries were recorded as at the same date. The total number of persons in the Republic of Mauritius who had received the first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines as at 30 June 2023 stood at 1,029,589 and 992,761, respectively.

The achievements of the different units of care for the FY 2022-2023 falling under the Curative – Hospital and Specialised Services have been elaborated in this part of the Report.

2.1.1 INTERNAL MEDICINES

The unit addresses a broad spectrum of medical needs to patients facing acute and chronic diseases. There is dedicated medical wards and ICU to cater for in-patients suffering from acute medical issues. Simultaneously, the unit extends its services to out-patients whereby new and follow up cases with chronic medical conditions are seen. Moreover, during normal, after working hours and public holidays the unit handles emergencies from various specialties, including acute diabetic crises, renal emergencies, oncological cases, and rheumatological conditions, often necessitating admission.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Decentralization of the medical services to Medclinics and AHCs.
- Providing coverage for management of COVID-19 cases at ENT hospital.
- Regionalization of management of COVID-19 cases /other infectious diseases in different Regional Hospitals.

- Setting up of Neurology Clinic for providing care for Neurological disorders.
- Setting up of a Clinic for Management of Thalassemia and other Haematological disorders with a standardized guideline in different Regional Hospitals.

2.1.2 GENERAL SURGERY

The General Surgery Department within a hospital plays an indispensable role in diagnosing and treating a wide spectrum of medical conditions through surgical interventions. It encompasses a wide array of services, ranging from routine elective surgeries to critical emergency procedures, making it an essential component of patient care.

Its core functions and services include pre-operative evaluations, performing diverse surgical procedures, overseeing inpatient, out-patient and emergency care, consulting patients and their families for informed decision-making, and managing postoperative recovery. Moreover, the department contributes to the education and training of both paramedical and medical officers.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The implementation of protocols and guidelines has led to higher surgical success rates, lower complication rates, reduced infections, fewer readmissions, and shorter hospital stays.
- Minimally Invasive Techniques used in the department is gradually improving.
- A new method for treating Varicose Veins without surgery, known as Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA) therapy, has been introduced on a day care basis.
- Patient satisfaction has been achieved through the delivery of quality care, effective communication, and fostering positive patient experiences.
- The gradual elimination of surgery waiting lists is being ensured by providing surgery dates to all patients requiring surgery procedures.

2.1.3 CARDIAC SERVICES

Cardiology

Cardiovascular disease is one among the major causes of death globally. The public health institutions offer a wide range of treatments for the different heart conditions.

There are cardiology units operating at Regional Hospitals' level for the provision of daily cardiac care to inpatients as well as extensive outpatient services. These units offer diagnosis and treatment of all cardiac diseases and a full range of diagnostics such as echocardiography, 24-hour Holter-ECG monitoring and stress test on a daily basis. On the inpatient side, permanent

pacemaker implantation is also being performed in the catheter lab for those suffering from rhythm disturbance (bradycardia).

The units also handle emergencies such as acute myocardial infarction and cardiac arrests. Life-saving interventions like defibrillation and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) are performed. This includes medication management and lifestyle counseling.

For interventional procedures such as angioplasty and stent placement to open blocked arteries, as well as surgical procedures like Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (CABG), patients are referred to the Cardiac Centre at Pamplémousses.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 576 vascular surgeries have been undertaken.
- Significant progress made in the field of angiography and angioplasty by reducing the waiting time.
- The Cardiology units have contributed to improved survival rates and better long-term outcomes for patients with heart diseases. Advances in treatments, early intervention, and rehabilitation have increased the chances of a successful recovery for many patients.

Cardiac Centre

The Cardiac Centre under the Trust Fund for Specialized Medical Care (TFSMC), is a tertiary medical institution where cardiac surgeries are conducted. Patients from all over the island who are referred from the 5 Regional Hospitals and Rodrigues attend the Cardiac Centre whereby adult cardiac surgeries are performed daily. Moreover, paediatric and congenital cardiac cases are conducted by foreign teams.

Additionally, the Cardiac Centre has an attached angiography department whereby cardiology procedures such as primary PCI, diagnostic angiography, angioplasty, permanent pacemaker implantation among others, are being offered.

Achievements FY 2022-2023

- A total of 1,207 Cardiac Surgeries were performed (including 917 Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG), 31 Mitral Valve Replacement (MVR), 40 Aortic Valve Replacement (AVR) among others).
- As of Cardiology procedures, a total of 3,474 procedures were performed out of which there were 549 Angioplasties (PTCA), 2,571 diagnostic angiographies, 12 Permanent pacemaker implantations, among others.
- In collaboration with foreign teams, Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) and Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy (CRT) have been introduced at the Cardiac Centre.

2.1.4 SPINE UNIT



Spine unit is a relatively new unit where treatment of scoliosis/congenital abnormality, infective and traumatic cases are given. It requires high precision and accurate diagnostic imaging by particularly MRI and CT scanning.

The Unit has been set up to treat patients needing spine surgery from all over the island. The majority of cases having complications have been referred to the unit as the referral centre.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- No. of cases of spine surgeries performed including scoliosis: 143 cases
- All these cases were previously being sent to India whereas now all these cases are being performed at the Spine Unit which benefits the Ministry in terms of costs saving.

2.1.5 RENAL DIALYSIS SERVICES AND RENAL TRANSPLANT

Renal Dialysis Services

Dialysis treatment is provided free of charge to all patients requiring the treatment in the Public Health Institutions. Some of the patients who cannot be accommodated in the Government Hospitals are referred to the Private Clinics with whom this Ministry has entered into agreement to provide the service against payment. The Private Clinics are provided with the dialysis consumables kit required for the dialysis sessions.

Presently, the treatment is available in seven Government Hospitals and in six Private Clinics. The patients are provided transport facilities to attend their treatment at the Government hospitals, and the Private clinics and back home.

The policy of the Ministry is to expand further the dialysis facilities in all hospitals in a view to integrate fully the service into the public hospitals without having recourse to the private in future. Hence, new Dialysis Units were set up, additional new equipment was procured and installed in all hospitals during past years, improving the quality of the service.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- As at June 2023, a total of 1,476 patients were undergoing dialysis treatment. There were 1,267 patients on dialysis in the Government hospitals and 209 who are referred for the treatment in the private clinics.
- A total of 223,415 dialysis sessions were performed in FY 2022-2023, as follows:
 - In Government Hospitals: 188,551 sessions
 - In the Private Clinics: 34, 870 sessions
- The table below provides the number of haemodialysis performed for Government hospital patients for the period 2019 – 2022.

Table I: Haemodialysis Sessions Performed for Government Hospital Patients

HOSPITAL/CENTRE	NUMBER OF HAEMODIALYSIS PERFORMED			
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Dr A.G. JEETOO	38,317	41,802	41,373	42,046
SSRN	34,679	36,264	29,858	27,983
FLACQ	31,661	32,387	33,395	32,900
J. NEHRU	20,555	24,825	30,128	29,027
VICTORIA	29,324	27,346	24,645	24,432
SOUILLAC	13,199	11,090	12,169	13,394
LONG MOUNTAIN	-	-	10,719	16,532
SUB TOTAL	167,735	173,714	182,287	186,314
PRIVATE	41,139	42,206	42,394	35,492
TOTAL	208,874	215,920	224,681	221,806
Number of new patients put on dialysis	731	758	674	731

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022

- The Dialysis Unit at Souillac Hospital has been renovated, expanded and is now equipped with 30 dialysis machines to cater up to around 150 patients as compared to 80 patients in the past. There are other projects for expansion of the Dialysis Services in the pipeline, namely at Victoria Hospital, SSRN Hospital, New Flacq Hospital, as well as at Bel Air and Quartier-Militaire Mediclinic.
- The project for the construction of a full fledge Renal and Transplant Unit, at J. Nehru Hospital through assistance from Government of India has already started with a project value to the tune of Rs 557m.
- 2 Dialysis machines and 1 portable Water Treatment Plant costing around Rs 1.9m have also been procured and being installed at the New Cancer Centre.
- 3 portable Water Treatment Plants and 3 Haemodialysis machines, amounting to Rs 4.7m have been donated by WHO through United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funding for SSRN, new ENT, and Souillac Hospitals respectively.

- As far as Rodrigues is concerned, the Dialysis Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital is equipped with 10 dialysis machines, where 49 patients are undergoing the treatment. Regular visits are carried out by our Nephrologists to Rodrigues. Request has been made for the setting up of a second Dialysis Unit, to be located at La Ferme, Rodrigues.

Renal Transplant in Mauritius

A kidney transplant is often the treatment of choice for kidney failure, compared with a lifetime on dialysis. Since October 2017, 47 patients as well as their compatible kidney donors were sent to India to have their renal transplants with all costs borne by the Ministry. Renal transplant has resumed in Mauritius as from October 2022 and these are being undertaken by 2 Transplant Surgeons from abroad.



Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 18 renal transplants have been carried out at Victoria Hospital during October 2022 to April 2023 by the visiting team. (One Transplant Surgeon from Chennai, India has carried out 3 renal transplants and another Transplant Surgeon, from Guys Hospital UK, has carried out 15 renal transplants).
- With the introduction of the new Human Tissue Removal, Preservation and Transplantation Act of 2018, the then existing legislation of 2006 has been repealed in view to: (i) allow renal transplants to be also carried out from nonrelated donors, (ii) promote transplantations of other human organs and tissues, and introduce organ transplantations from cadaveric donors in future. In this context, new regulations concerning the above have been approved by Government and necessary arrangements are being made for promulgation of the remaining sections of the law with assistance of the State Law Office.
- The official launching of the Renal Register was done in March 2023. This register will help for the collection of data, for better planning, management and care of all patients suffering from renal impairment at different stages of the disease, those undergoing dialysis treatment and the transplant patients.

- One Consultant in Charge Nephrology and 5 Specialists Nephrologists, as well as 3 to 4 MHOs are now posted to each Nephrology department at the Regional Hospitals.
- Training course is available for the Nurses posted in the Dialysis Units with collaboration of the Mauritius Institute of Health (MIH), for them to obtain a Certificate in Nephrology.

2.1.6 ENDOCRINE UNIT

Endocrinology and Diabetology Units have been merged under one roof thus creating the Endocrine Unit to manage endocrine disorders including diabetes. On the 1st April 2022, the Endocrine Unit started to function with ten specialists posted in the five regions of the island. This allowed the decentralization of these services in all the 5 regions both at hospital and primary healthcare levels.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- A work plan was devised to cover several Health points per Health regions, including Regional Hospital, Mediclinics, AHCs and even CHCs, thus health points were better utilised, while the main hospital was decongested.
- Two additional Specialists in Endocrinology/Diabetology have been recruited.
- Improving quality of care by providing Diabetes Specialist Clinics in all Health Regions.
- The Unit has catered for 5,328 admissions related to Diabetes Mellitus during 2022.
- There were 55,298 first attendances for endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases during 2022.

2.1.7 CHEST UNIT

The Chest Unit has been decentralised and operationalised in all Regional Hospitals along with uninterrupted smooth running of activities at Poudre d'Or Chest. These Clinics provide and deliver respiratory care for the patient suffering from Chronic and Acute Respiratory diseases. Some 10% of the activities are dedicated toward the treatment and management of Tuberculosis.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Bronchoscopy service has been introduced at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital, JNH and SSRN Hospital. However, for Victoria Hospital and Dr B Cheong Hospital, same is in the pipeline.
- Spirometry facility and CT guided lung biopsy are available in all 5 Regional Hospitals. Moreover, Oxygen therapy are prescribed in these hospitals.
- Sir Edgar Laurent laboratory has a Tuberculosis P3 unit and Gene Xpert Ultra.

- Strengthened TB/HIV collaborative services.
- Sharing of national roster for COVID-19 coverage by chest physicians.
- Non-invasive ventilation is available at Poudre d'Or Chest Hospital.

2.1.8 ONCOLOGY SERVICES INCLUDING PALLIATIVE CARE

The Department of Radiotherapy at Victoria Hospital and New Cancer Centre (NCC) cater for all cancer patients requiring oncological treatment in Mauritius. The staff include 13 Clinical Oncologists, 1 Medical Oncologist, 9 Medical Health Officers (MHOs), 14 Medical Physicists and 22 Radiation Therapists. The ratio of nursing officer to patients is 1:10. The number of discharges in 2022 was 4,787. The following services are available:

- Radiotherapy
- Chemotherapy
- Targeted therapy and Endocrine treatment
- Novel agents and Immunotherapy have been recently added to the drug formulary
- Palliative care services

The delivery of these services is structured in the following ways:

Facilities	Victoria Hospital (Radiotherapy Department)	Existing Services at the NCC
Number of Beds	16 beds (female ward) and 11 beds (male ward) for radiotherapy and supportive care	53 beds for chemotherapy, supportive and palliative care
Paediatric Oncology Ward	13 beds for chemotherapy and supportive care	
Daily Outpatient Department (OPD)	3 follow up clinics + 3 Radiation clinics 100-120 patients seen daily	3 Chemotherapy outpatients' clinics daily (100-120 patients) 1 Palliative care OPD on Mondays
Radiotherapy	90-100 patients daily	Not available
Chemotherapy	Not available	50-70 patients daily
Pm sessions for new cases	3-4 new cases /day	3-4 new cases /day
Emergencies	Attended in casualty	Off appointments
Other facilities		Basic Laboratory services Radiological services (only x-rays)

Decentralisation of Oncological Services	▪ Chemotherapy outpatient services have been decentralised at 3 Regional Hospitals (Dr A.G. Jeetoo, JNH, SSRNH) on specific days. ▪ Weekly OPDs for follow up and new cases are operational in all 4 other Regional Hospitals (Dr A.G. Jeetoo, JNH, Dr Bruno cheong hospital, SSRNH). ▪ Weekly palliative care OPD (morning sessions) are held in the 3 Regional Hospitals (Dr A.G. Jeetoo, JNH, SSRNH).
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Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The Unit has been working on the future full operationalisation of the NCC. The acquisition and installation of high-tech equipment and planning of facilities/services to be provided at the New Cancer Centre were ongoing.
- The refurbished existing NCC building has been fully functional and the chemotherapy unit has been providing both outpatients and inpatients with chemotherapy treatment.
- Trastuzumab has been made available for all eligible Her2 neu positive breast cancer patients including metastatic patients: 107 patients in 2023.
- Gonadotropin releasing hormone agonist (GNRH) is available for early breast cancer as well as prostate cancer patients: 56 patients in 2023.
- Ongoing implementation of the National Cancer Control Programme Action Plan 2022-2025 and standardization and adoption of treatment protocols (chemotherapy schedules) as per international guidelines.
- Teleconferencing with international Hospitals for complex oncology cases (7 cases from June 2022-October 2022)
- Multidisciplinary team approach for cancer patients is held every Monday at NCC, Dr A.G. Jeetoo, JNH, Dr Bruno Cheong Hospital and SSRNH.
- Daily clinical meetings and introduction of 2 weekly journal clubs.
- Safety Assessment Report (SAR) for imaging and Teletherapy has been finalised and submitted. SAR for linear accelerators needs to be assessed by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expert soon.
- An updated list of novel therapy has been submitted for approval.
- Installation of MRI and works ongoing for setting up of imaging and radiotherapy facilities.

2.1.9 BREAST UNIT

According to the National Cancer Registry publications 2018, 2020 and 2021, breast cancer remains the most prevalent form of cancer among females. According to the Health Statistics Report 2022, the number of new cases relating to breast cancer have increased from 557 to 591 from 2020 to 2021. Likewise, the number of deaths has surged from 184 to 257 over the same period.

At present patients with breast-related health problems attend AHCs, Mediclinics and Regional Hospitals. In view to address the rising incidence of the disease, the Ministry has decided to set up a dedicated Breast Unit at SSRN Hospital with the aim of re-routing patients towards the specialized unit. This unit, will be equipped with mammography machines and high-definition ultrasound machines and is expected to deliver high quality One Stop Breast Diagnostic Services.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- A breast surgeon has been recruited as Advisor in May 2023 to formulate a roadmap.
- Based on the roadmap, a Breast Unit is being set up at SSRN Hospital.
- Primary screening for high-risk patients mainly first-degree relatives of cancer patients have been identified for breast cancer screening.

2.1.10 NEUROLOGY SERVICES

Public hospitals have started providing neurology services since 2010. Victoria Hospital was the first hospital to dispense neurology services in the form of weekly out-patient consultations and inpatient management. These services were then extended to all Regional Hospitals by 2022. There are 3 Neurologists in service as at date providing neurology services in the 5 Regional Hospitals.

Neurology consultations address pathologies are listed below:

Pathologies	
• Headaches and head pains including neuralgias. • Neuro-infectious diseases such as meningitides, encephalopathies, neuro-toxoplasmosis, CNS cryptococcosis, neurocysticercosis amongst others • Management of seizures, spells, and epileptic syndromes • Investigation and management of peripheral neuropathies • Management of Dementias and Delirium	• Management of neuropathies, including diabetic neuropathies • Management of dizziness and vertigo • Movement disorders such as dystonia, tremors, and Parkinson's disease • Myopathies such as muscle dystrophies • Stroke management • Thrombolysis of acute stroke • Other neurological and rare conditions • Neurorehabilitation

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Setting up of a Stroke Unit at Victoria Hospital

Establishment of a stroke/ neurology High Dependency Unit with facilities allowing thrombolysis of acute ischemic stroke cases with Alteplase. Acute stroke patients can benefit from thrombolysis if they fulfil thrombolysis criteria as triaged by the Emergency Physician, Neurologist or Physician.

Out-patient Neurology consultations

All Regional Hospitals have Neurology outpatient department (OPD) consultations as follows:

- a) Victoria Hospital: 2 OPDs
- b) Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital: 2 OPDS
- c) SSRNH: 1 OPD
- d) Dr Bruno Cheong Hospital: 1 OPD
- e) Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital: 1 OPD

Muscular Dystrophy, Myasthenia Gravis, Multiple Sclerosis, Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP) patients, and Dystonia patients are given special attention at Neurology OPD consultation.

Providing assistance for ICU cases in Regional Hospitals

Critical cases requiring neurology consult have been catered for in all ICUs around the island.

Providing assistance to Paediatricians

Our Neurology team has been providing clinical opinion and input to optimize management of challenging neuro-paediatric cases.

In-patient Neurology

Neurological disorders namely stroke, epilepsies, meningitis, encephalitis, myelopathies, Acute and chronic neuropathies are being seen as inpatient at Victoria Hospital and Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital.

Early Dementia Diagnosis Clinic (EDDC).

Neurology services are also extended to the EDDC Clinics around the island. Neurology will continue to provide a helping hand in the clinics as required.

2.1.11 GASTROENTEROLOGY INCLUDING HEPATOLOGY SERVICES

The Centre for Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital, provides a comprehensive coverage for patients with gastrointestinal and hepatology problems in Region 1 and is also the centre of referral for all patients with complex gastrointestinal and hepatology issues across the island. It consists of two sub-units, namely, (i) Endoscopy Unit and (ii) the Gastrointestinal Out-Patients Department (GIOPD).

The Endoscopic Unit provides coverage for all routine and emergency gastrointestinal problems in Region 1 and nationwide for acute gastrointestinal bleeds, stent placement for palliation of unresectable tumours and other complex endoscopy problems, including placement of biliary stents by Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) service. The purposed built unit allowed expansion of endoscopy services at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital and especially, significant expansion of out-patient endoscopies.

At the GIOPD, patients are assessed and appropriate investigations are planned, including referral for endoscopy, blood and radiological investigations over 12 slots per week – Monday to Saturday with morning and afternoon sessions. It is also the clinical lead for the National Hepatitis C Elimination Programme. The unit works closely with NGO sites, prisons and Methadone Dispensing Sites to approach patients for screening and linking them to treatment and care.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Endoscopy Unit

- 5,397 endoscopy procedures were carried out over the last 12 months – which is a national record. Endoscopies are carried out as per international guidelines. Endoscopy and other procedures are carefully monitored to ensure that internal standards are met at any time point.
- The unit undertakes nationwide coverage for complex cases. This has helped several patients to avoid major surgery and therefore improved significantly morbidity and mortality especially following gastrointestinal cancer diagnoses.
- Organisation of the Conference for Colorectal Cancer Screening: the unit presented the findings of the unit's audit and demonstrated that adherence to guidelines and ensuring high quality of endoscopy to all patients, increases the polyp detection rate by 700% and cancer detection rate by 300%.
- ERCP enables stenting of malignant strictures and relief of jaundice. This allows patients to start their oncological treatments faster. 212 ERCPs were carried out and 52 of which were for malignant strictures.

Gastrointestinal Out-Patients Department (GIOPD)

- On average 15,000 patients are seen annually. Waiting time has been reduced for new appointments from 12 weeks to less than 2 weeks.
- The unit has so far eliminated Hepatitis C in the Dialysis population.
- It is presently working with inmates in Prisons, at methadone dispensing sites and with NGOs to go into communities for screening and linkage to care.
- This has enabled more than 4,000 patients to be screened and 2,000 patients to be treated and cured of Hepatitis C.

2.1.12 SAMU SERVICES



The primary role of the Service d'Aide Médicale Urgente (SAMU) services is to provide on-site pre-hospital medical treatment and stabilize critical and vital emergencies during transport, thus keeping in pace with the concept of the golden hour. The SAMU also performs secondary inter hospital transfers of severely ill patients for CT scans, MRI, Primary and Rescue Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI), etc. as well as aero medical transfers.

The SAMU Control Room **114** which is functional on a 24-hour basis all year round is situated at Victoria hospital. Around 1,200 calls are attended daily and based on an efficient triage system, logistics and a recording system with trained staff, the unit attends to pre-hospital emergencies.

With the specialisation in Emergency Medicine by the Emergency physicians in 2019, a Resuscitation Unit has been added to the Accident and Emergency unit in each of the 5 Regional Hospitals to cater for all vital emergencies including patients with myocardial infarction.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Primary Outings (For Emergency purposes): 10,303
- Secondary Outings (Transfer from one health institution to another): 4,346
- Number of Normal Ambulance Interventions: 23,265
- Number of aero transfers: 85
- Opening of a new SAMU unit at Souillac Hospital in September 2022

- Operational hours of Resuscitation units in Accident and Emergency departments of Regional Hospitals extended to 24 hrs a day and 7 days a week (except at JNH).
- Training of 30 Nursing Officers in Emergency Care by Bordeaux University started in February 2023.
- Participation in simulation exercises with other stakeholders, for example, attending to mass casualties during natural or man-made disasters.

2.1.13 OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY

Obstetrics and gynaecology services are provided to women at both primary healthcare and hospital levels. A Department of obstetrics and gynaecology is operational in each of the 5 Regional Hospitals and takes care of the pregnant ladies and ensures safe delivery and safety of their babies. The Antenatal, Postnatal and child welfare services are provided to the public around the island by trained midwives at AHCs and CHCs. Gynaecologists are also required to offer their services to the population on a 24/7 basis at the Regional Hospitals.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- (i) The number of first attendances for antenatal examinations by the staff of the Maternal and Child Health Care Services (MCH) at Government clinics increased from 7,533 in 2021 to 7,728 in 2022.
- (ii) The number of deliveries (including by caesarean) was 6,957 in 2022.
- (iii) Patients are offered diagnosis and treatment for their infertility issues at all the Regional Hospitals. Specialized service has recently been started at SSRN hospital for more specific treatment that deals with infertility issues.
- (iv) Fetomaternal medicine where screening for foetal anomaly is done at the AHCs and hospitals. Ultrasound is performed using 3D modality to diagnose foetal anomaly and counselling is provided.
- (v) Gynae oncology facility in terms of undertaking complex surgeries dealing with the five main gynaecological cancers are also offered.
- (vi) Urogynaecology and menopause clinic are held and services offered to patient presenting with prolapse and symptoms related to the prolapse occurring after menopause.
- (vii) Counselling done for all associated changes related to sexual and other related aspect of day-to-day life. Contraception Care are also dispensed at the level of Mediclinics and hospitals to help ladies to take control of their fertility.
- (viii) Consultants in Charge in all specialities including Gynaecology and Obstetrics are required to make regular presentations to Management on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on maternal death.

2.1.14 FERTILITY CLINICS

The MOHW is providing two new services at the SSRNH, namely an Assisted Reproductive Technology Centre (Fertility Clinic) and an Epidural Service for women in labour since 14 February 2022. This service has been extended to VH as from August 2022. These Fertility Clinics provide a holistic approach to those couples who are facing difficulties to conceive based on the assessment, diagnosis and treatment modalities.

Regarding Fertility Clinic and Epidural services at SSRNH, Assisted Reproductive Techniques such as Intrauterine insemination (IUI) and in vitro fertilization (IVF) are not available yet. Currently, OPD sessions and diagnostics work up of patients as well as surgical intervention related to infertility management are being carried out. Epidural Analgesia is being provided to willing patients in Labour Ward.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The number of monthly sessions undertaken and attendances recorded at the clinic are as follows:

Month	Sessions	New Cases	Follow Ups	Total Attendances
Jul – Dec 2022	61	105	226	331
Jan – Jun 2023	93	89	304	393
TOTAL	154	194	530	724

2.1.15 DERMATOLOGY SERVICES

The Skin Unit is composed of 8 skin Specialists and one Consultant-in-Charge. The main function of the Unit is to consult patients at outpatient Clinics, attend patients in wards on a daily basis and to cover Primary Healthcare levels such as AHCs, District Hospitals, Mediclinics and Prisons. The staff of the Unit are also involved in the training of new officers, act as resource persons and attend workshops especially on sexually transmitted infections and participate in TV / Radio programmes on different skin topics.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Preparation of a clinical management guideline on Dermatological and venereal diseases.
- Contribution in the elaboration of a National action plan on prevention and control of sexually transmitted infections for years 2023-2027.
- The unit is presently working on the development of a treatment guideline on sexually transmitted infections.
- Participation in training workshop on Sexual Reproductive Health.

2.1.16 OPHTHALMOLOGY SERVICES



Subramania Bharati Eye Hospital (SBEH) is the only public Eye hospital in the Republic of Mauritius. It caters for the needs of the whole Mauritian population in terms of eye care and services. It offers eye consultations at the Accident and Emergency level as well as in specialists OPDs. Furthermore, it offers a whole range of ophthalmic investigations such as: Pentacam, Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT), Ocular Ultrasonography (USG), Perimetry and etc.

SBEH has a 75 beds capacity (male ward and female ward). As far as surgeries are concerned, there are three operation theatres, whereby a whole range of ophthalmic surgeries are being carried out (cataract, vitrectomy, squint, corneal transplant, oculoplasty, etc).

Since 2015, cataract surgeries are also performed at New Souillac Hospital (NSH). There are also four specialists OPDs as well as Laser and OCT clinics at NSH. Ophthalmic services are also provided in all Regional Hospitals as well as at Yves Cantin and Mahebourg Hospital.

Furthermore, every two months an ophthalmic team (Doctors and Nursing staff) is sent to Rodrigues in order to offer ophthalmic services to the residents.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 7,996 major surgeries were performed at SBEH between July 2022 to June 2023.
- 2,897 eye surgeries were performed at New Souillac Hospital in 2022.
- In view to reduce the long waiting list for cataract surgeries, extra sessions for cataract surgeries were carried out from May 2023.
- Two batches of 500 patients each have been outsourced to a private hospital by the Ministry in order to further reduce the cataract waiting list.
- SBEH has changed the procedures and protocols in view of patients' screening on the cataract list. Patients are now being given a date for surgery on the same day, if found fit. Presently, around 1,800 patients have already been given a date for surgery and this measure is expected to reduce the number of unfit patients due for surgery.
- Crosslinking surgeries which is vital to stop the progression for keratoconus, was not being performed since COVID-19 outbreak. The patients scheduled for crosslinking surgery

have been on waiting list for more than two years. They were called in for surgery in December 2022 and by February 2023 the said list was cleared.

- The creation of new space for existing services and the new casualty have considerably decreased the crowd in the existing building which goes back to 100 years of existence.
- Visiting surgeons from Pakistan were at SBEH in October 2022 for complex surgeries in the field of cornea, retina and oculoplasty. Teaching sessions were carried out for our ophthalmologists in these fields. These visiting surgeons operated: 10 cornea patients; 16 retinal patients and 16 oculoplasty patients. Moreover, visiting surgeons from India performed Squint surgeries on 59 patients among which most were children.
- Corneal tissues were donated and corneal grafts surgeries were carried out at SBEH by local ophthalmologists. Agreement has been reached with the Lions Club for a regular provision of corneal tissues during the year. This will enable corneal grafting surgeries to be carried out on a regular basis.
- As from 25 March 2023, Cyclodiode Glaucoma Laser has started at SBEH. This will allow patients suffering from glaucoma to be treated in a more efficient way. Till date, 75 patients have had access to this treatment.

2.1.17 EAR, NOSE AND THROAT (ENT) SERVICES

Specialised ENT services were offered at VH during the period under review. 33 beds were available for these services. The ENT unit provides 24 hours ENT surgical care to the population of Mauritius consisting of: Emergency services, ENT OPD services and ENT (local cases and elective surgical cases).

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 2,152 admissions were recorded in 2022.
- 6,707 ENT related surgeries were performed in 2022.
- There were 71,494 and 8,754 attendances at the Accident and Emergency Department and OPD of the ENT unit, respectively.
- Outpatient specialized clinics in ENT diagnosed 6,903 new cases in 2022
- First Cochlear implant in Mauritius was done on 2nd December 2022 for two twins aged two years.

2.1.18 MENTAL HEALTH INCLUDING ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPHY (E.E.G) UNIT

In Mauritius, Mental Health Care is accessible to each and every one through decentralization. Psychiatric services are dispensed at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre (BSMHCC) as well as in the 5 Regional Hospitals, 25 AHCs and the Mediclinics. The legal framework binding the functioning of the Psychiatric services is the Mental Health Care Act 1998 Amended in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

The services at BSMHCC consist of a 250 bedded facility for the treatment of acute cases and it can cater for around 350 patients in long stay wards. The different services proposed are: Electroencephalography (EEG), Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT), Social Services, Child Psychiatry Services, Psychological Services, inpatient and outpatient services, Laboratory Services, 2 De-Addiction, Rehabilitation Centre for Substance Users, Occupational Therapy and Welfare Services.

Psychiatric Services are also available in Rodrigues through inpatient and outpatient services whereby 1 Psychiatrist is posted in Rodrigues.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 29,316 patients were seen at the outpatient department of BSMHCC.
- There was a total of 2,802 admissions out of which 1,619 (57.8%) were Male Adults; 906 (32.3%) are Female Adults and 277 (9.9%) are Children and Adolescent below 18 years old.
- Community Psychiatric Nursing has been extended to 2 more hospitals (JNH and BSMHCC) bringing it to 4 hospitals having this service.
- Early Dementia Diagnosis Clinic is now available at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital, SSRNH, Dr Bruno Cheong Hospital and JNH as from this year bringing it to 5 hospitals.
- One more Psychiatrist has been recruited to reinforce the Addictology Unit bringing it to 5 Psychiatrists posted in this service to cater for the 5 regions.
- Sensitisation Campaign and Prevention through media and the community are ongoing.
- Specialist psychiatric outpatient services have been extended to Coromandel Mediclinic, Floréal Mediclinic, Goodlands Mediclinic, Triolet Mediclinic, Terre Rouge CHC, Petite Riviere AHC and Forest Side AHC.
- One Day Care Centre for children suffering from autism spectrum disorder is fully functional at Triolet and attached to SSRNH.
- Two Psychiatrists have been trained in India for the administration of TMS (Trans Magnetic Stimulation). 120 staff (Nursing Officers, HCAs and Ward Assistants) have already undergone training in "Mental Health" organised by MIH-MOH and BSMHCC.
- New psychiatric medication has been introduced this year for better treatment (Aripiprazol tablet, Flupenthixol depot inj and Zuclopenthixol (Acuphase and depot preparation)).

Electroencephalography (E.E.G) Unit

An Electroencephalography (E.E.G) is a test that detects abnormalities in our brain waves, or in the electrical activity of our brain. E.E.G services are currently being provided at Brown Sequard Mental Care Hospital, catering for both paediatric and adult population. Cases referred from both public institutions including Rodrigues Island as well as private clinics are all catered for, free of charge, in the E.E.G unit. The unit comprised one neurologist, one technician and two Health Care Assistants.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The Ministry has been constantly improving the services over the past 2-3 years, aiming at decreasing the waiting time for patients to undergo their E.E.G test and ensuring a constant reporting of the performed E.E.G.
- 1,599 E.E.G were performed during the period under review.

2.1.19 DENTAL SERVICES

The policy in Oral Health Care is to improve access, quality and delivery of Dental Services by, *inter-alia*, reducing waiting time, putting emphasis on customer care and using latest medical technologies.

As at date, the total number of Dental Clinics is 56 (including Rodrigues) at Hospital and Primary Health Care level providing routine dental care and 14 Specialised Dental Clinics (Oral Surgery, Orthodontics and Endodontics) in 5 Regional Hospitals. At Dr Bruno Cheong Hospital, Oral Surgery and Orthodontic treatment are covered at SSRN Hospital while Endodontics treatment thereat is available since April 2023.



Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Dental attendances

- Dental Attendances for Mauritius for the year 2022 amounted to 227,861 including 23,961 children and 20,200 persons who received specialized dental care such as Oral Surgery, Orthodontics and Endodontics.

Ongoing implementation of the National Plan of Action (NAP) for Oral Health 2022-2027

- Dental Services department has intensified Oral Health Promotion campaigns in primary schools with the distribution of an Oral Health Kit comprising of a pamphlet, bookmark, toothpaste and toothbrush to 61,000 students of all primary schools in Mauritius, Rodrigues and Agalega.
- Dental Services are being availed to the public in mobile dental caravans at: Dubreuil CHC, Chamarel CHC, Pointe aux Sables CHC and Camp Diable CHC. Moreover, a Mobile Dental Caravan was sent to Rodrigues in August 2022 to provide dental treatment to school children and the community.
- Dental treatment and screening are being provided in residential care homes around the island through Mobile dental caravan as part of the Strategic Goal outlined in the NAP Oral Health 2022-2027.
- A comprehensive screening programme has been implemented with the support of the Consultant-in-Charge (Nephrology) and his team to identify and address any dental issues that could pose a risk to the health and well-being of patients undergoing dialysis.
- Formulation of guidelines for dental patients with different medical conditions including pregnancy for immediate implementation.

Upscaling infrastructure, staffing and capacity building for better Dental Services

- Opening of new dental clinic at Coromandel Mediclinic on 06 February 2023.
- Re-opening of dental clinic at Grand Bay CHC on 19 April 2023.
- Recruitment of new dental personnel: 3 Dental Surgeons and 5 Dental Assistants.
- Dr Prof. S. M. Balaji, Craniomaxillofacial Surgeon visited Mauritius on 23 January 2023 along with Dr Prof. Deepak Chandra, Orthodontics who demonstrated the fine nuances of cleft orthodontics to the Orthodontists in the public sector.

Other Initiatives

- Dental Services have actively participated in the Health Promotion campaigns organized by the NCD department and National Empowerment Foundation.
- Requests from various organizations (including sociocultural organisations and Rotary clubs, etc.) for dental check-ups, screening, and Oral Health talks are acceded to.
- Oral Health talks on MBC Radio and TV channels both in Creole and Bhojpuri.

Endodontic Clinics

Endodontic Clinics provide specialized care through advanced and precise interventions, focusing on the diagnosis and treatment of dental pulp and periapical tissues related conditions to preserve the natural teeth. The specialised clinics offer diverse services ranging from root canal therapy, treatment of dental trauma, diagnosis and imaging, pain management, to education and prevention. At present there are six Endodontic Clinics namely at SSRNH, New Jeetoo Hospital, Victoria Hospital, Dr Bruno Cheong Hospital, New Souillac Hospital and Phoenix CHC.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Total number of patients seen across the island: 8,187
- Total number of teeth treated (Root Canal Treatment): 2,279
- Decentralized of services as per HSSP 2020-2024 to Phoenix CHC to cater for patients in upper Plaines Wilhems region.
- Recruitment of one specialist (Dental Services) in Endodontics in February 2023 to cater for Endodontic services in Flacq region.
- Opening of an Endodontic Clinic at Flacq Hospital in April 2023

Orthodontics Clinics

The Orthodontics department specializes in the supervision, guidance and correction of the growing and mature dentofacial structures. This includes addressing conditions that necessitate movement of teeth or correcting malformations in related structures. The department presently consists of a Consultant-in-Charge, 4 Orthodontists, 1 Dental Technician, and 4 Dental Assistants. Orthodontics services are extended to Regional Hospitals in Mauritius and in Rodrigues.

The main responsibilities of Orthodontics Clinics include diagnosing, preventing, intercepting, and treating various forms of teeth malocclusion and associated alterations in their surrounding structures. This is achieved through the use of functional and corrective appliances, ultimately guiding the alignment of dentition and supporting structures to achieve optimum relations in physiologic and aesthetic harmony among facial and cranial structures.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The treatment of protruding, irregular, or maloccluded teeth which addresses psychosocial concerns.
- The successful management of medical issues related to oral function, jaw movement, Temporo Mandibular Joint disturbances, mastication, among others, and
- Assistance to patients with a greater susceptibility of trauma, periodontal disease, and tooth decay due to malocclusion.
- Timely delivery of treatment is ensured in the Orthodontics Clinics.

- Statistics of Orthodontics Clinics in the Republic of Mauritius:
 - (i) Total number of cases seen: 6,277
 - (ii) Total number of impressions done: 826
 - (iii) Total number of functional appliances delivered: 688
 - (iv) Total number of new cases: 698

2.1.20 ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY SERVICES

Oral and Maxillofacial surgery is the speciality of dentistry that includes the diagnosis and surgical and adjunctive treatment of disease, injuries and defect, including both the functional and esthetic aspects of hard and soft tissues of oral and Maxillofacial region

The staff are involved with patient's admission, referral to other units, counselling of patients and relatives and conducting continuous dental education session. Guidance and patient information are provided to dental surgeons, senior dental surgeons and medical officers. Treatment and follow up, attending ward rounds, attending to pathologies of odontogenic origin, facial fractures, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) issues are also carried out.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Collaborated with Dr. Prof. S. M. Balaji, Craniomaxillofacial Surgeon to operate on complex cases such as resection of tumors, cleft lip and palate and reconstructive procedures.
- Planning and preparations for New Flacq hospital which will be equipped with its own oral and maxillofacial unit.
- Patients Statistics VH hospital: 2554 SSRN and Flacq hospital: 2210 JNH: 1449 Jeetoo hospital :1970

2.1.21 PHYSIOTHERAPY

The Physiotherapy Department provides comprehensive care to patients of all ages, from newborns to the elderly. The unit specializes in treating those who are physically impaired, whether as inpatients or outpatients, including referrals from the private sector. The services provided extends to patient assessments, the development of personalized treatment plans, the use modalities for treatment, specific exercise regimens, and health education.

This department caters for different specialized units like Burns, Cardiac, Specialized Baby Care, ICUs, among others. Notably, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, chest physiotherapy was highly recommended for affected patients.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- There were 119,176 attendances registered in the Physiotherapy department for the Republic of Mauritius during 2022.
- Since the opening of the New Cancer Centre, the staff at Victoria Hospital have been regularly assisting patients with a daily average of 15 patients.
- Despite COVID-19, therapists remained active with patients, ensuring a consistent level of engagement in their care and treatment plans.
- There has been consistent patient engagement which plays a vital role in driving the effectiveness of physical therapy practices.

2.1.22 ORTHOPAEDIC SERVICES

Each Regional Hospital has an orthopaedic unit which is run by a Consultant-in-Charge, Specialists, Medical Health Officers and para-medical staff. Orthopaedic services are provided to patients suffering from orthopaedic pathologies and fractures. The unit is supported by the radiology department as far as x-rays are concerned. Moreover, patients are referred for orthopaedic appliances to the Orthopaedic Appliances Workshop by medical practitioners, if needed.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The sorted out-patient attendances at orthopaedic specialised clinics for 2022 was 117,190
- Both planned and emergency surgeries are carried out by the unit.

2.1.23 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT

The MOHW offers Occupational Health Services in the different hospitals whereby health surveillance of workers is carried out. Health Surveillance is important to detect any occupational disease occurring at workplace.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005, the Occupational Health Unit which operates under the aegis of the MOHW, caters for workers employed in the public sector. The Dangerous Chemicals Control Board, the Migrant Worker Section and the PER Section are other sections that fall under the Occupational Health Unit.

The aim of an Occupational Health Service is to have a healthy workforce.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Medical surveillance of workers - Total number of workers medically examined: 13,675
- Medical Examination of Civil Servants - Total number of civil servants examined: 16,242
- Medical Boards - Total number of employees seen to ascertain fitness to discharge duties of their post following injury or disease: 350
- Approval of advance sick leaves for employees of Government Sector and parastatal bodies: 1,167
- Health Quality Laboratory Activities - Total of No specialized tests done: 679
- **Migrant workers Section**
 - The number of applications submitted for Provisional Medical Clearances: 20,701
 - The number of Provisional Medical Clearances issued: 21,255
- **Injuries Committee**
 - Number of Public Officers interviewed following injuries at work: 106
- **The Dangerous Chemical Control Board**
 - Number of Board Meetings: 8
 - Number of Technical Committees: 21
 - Number of Application for licenses to trade in dangerous chemicals: 586
 - Number of Registration of extremely dangerous chemicals: 103
 - Number of Import permits for extremely dangerous chemicals: 718
 - Number of Import Clearances given for dangerous chemicals: 4,509
 - Number of Export Clearances given for dangerous chemicals: 406
 - Site visits to Industrial Premises and Chemical Storage Facilities: 63
- **Introduction of Online Services**
 - **Application for New Licences and Renewal of Licences:** All licences are now being issued online on the National Electronic Licensing Platform (NELS)
<https://business.edbmauritius.org>
 - **Application for Import Permits:** Import Permits are now being issued online on Trade Net Portal of the Mauritius Network Services (MNS)
<https://tradenetmns.mu/>

2.1.24 OVERSEAS TREATMENT AND VISITING FOREIGN TEAM

Overseas Treatment Unit

Complicated cases which cannot be attended locally in public hospitals, are referred abroad for treatment under the Overseas Treatment Scheme. The Overseas Treatment Unit of the Ministry, thus, provides financial assistance and all necessary support to patients who have been recommended for treatment abroad by a Medical Board set up in Regional Hospitals.

These patients also have to meet the income eligibility criteria as set by the Ministry. Presently, the household income ceiling eligibility criteria to qualify for the assistance is Rs 100,000. Arrangements are made for the patients to be admitted in health institutions in India with which the MOHW has signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Overseas Treatment Scheme also provides the possibility for patients to opt for any medical institutions of their choice in other countries. Patients proceeding to hospital of their choices benefit financial assistance based on the lowest quotation received from the above-mentioned health institutions. They are however granted the equivalent of funds for a ticket equivalent to India airfare. In some severe cases, upon recommendation of the treating doctor, a stretcher is also provided.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, 379 patients have benefitted assistance under the Overseas Treatment scheme.
- An amount of approximately Rs 75.2 million has been disbursed for their treatment.
- In the budget 2022/2023, the grant amount for patients requiring stretchers during overseas treatment for cases of Neurosurgery and Bone Marrow Transplant was increased by Rs 200,000.
- A framework was established with local private clinics to allow patients to undergo treatment locally under the scheme, if treatment is not available in public hospitals. The framework was operationalized in 2022.
- Financial assistance granted under Overseas Treatment Section for different types of treatment are as follows:
 1. Up to Rs 1,000,000 (inclusive of air fare for patient and one attendant) for the treatment of: Leukaemia, Cochlear Implant, Liver Transplant, Osteosarcoma and Lung transplant.
 2. Up to Rs 800,000 (inclusive of air fare for patient and one attendant) for the treatment of all other complicated cases such as Cancer, Neuro Surgery, Orthopaedic, Cardiac, Renal Transplant, etc.
 3. Up to Rs 500,000 for eyes treatment (inclusive of air fare for patient and one attendant).

Visiting Foreign Team

Foreign visiting teams in different specialities come to Mauritius to offer their services in respect of surgical interventions which cannot be carried out by local specialists. The list of some foreign visiting teams for 2022-2023 and the number of cases operated are as follows:

SN.	Visiting Doctors	Period	Purpose of visit/No of Cases Operated
1.	Professor Nicolas Leveziel , Ophthalmologist, CHU de Poitiers, Poitiers, France (Teaching Eye Surgery Foundation)	22 July to 07 August 2022	Speciality: Ophthalmology To operate on complex ophthalmological cases at New Souillac Hospital. Patients seen: 133 Patients operated: 45
2.	Prof Balaji Subramoniam Muthiah , Craniomaxillofacial Surgeon, Balaji Dental & Craniofacial Hospital, Chennai, India	11 to 17 August 2022	Speciality: Craniomaxillofacial Surgery To operate on complex maxillofacial deformity cases at SSRN Hospital. Patients operated: 11
3.	Prof Wajid Ali Khan , Prof Nadeem Qureshi , Dr Sultan Asif Kiani , Dr Shahzad Iftikhar , Ophthalmologists (Al Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, Pakistan)	29 October to 06 November 2022	Speciality/MOU: Ophthalmology/ MOU with Al Shifa Eye Clinic Pakistan To perform complex eye surgeries at Subramania Bharati Eye Hospital. Patients seen: 57 Patients operated: 16
4.	Dr Rajasekhar Perumalla , Director, HPB & Transplant Surgery & Sr Consultant HPB Surgeon, Kauvery Hospital, Chennai Dr Nischal Prasad Alladu Mr Ganesh Kumar V. S. , Nursing Officer	19 to 22 October 2022	Speciality: Transplant Surgery To perform renal transplant surgeries Patients operated: 3
5.	Dr Christopher Van Issum , Oculoplastic, Lacrimal and Orbital Consultant, Vision Rive Droite, Geneva, Switzerland (Teaching Eye Surgery Foundation)	03 to 07 October 2022	Speciality: Ophthalmology To operate on complex ophthalmological cases at New Souillac Hospital. Patients operated: 10
6.	Prof Christian Friedrich Prunte , Professor of Ophthalmology, University Eye Clinic Basel, Switzerland Mr Pierre Witz , Biomedical Engineer (Teaching Eye Surgery Foundation)	03 to 13 November 2022	Speciality: Ophthalmology To carry out complex ophthalmologic surgeries and caliber ophthalmological equipment at New Souillac Hospital.

SN.	Visiting Doctors	Period	Purpose of visit/No of Cases Operated
7.	Prof Nizam Mamode, Dr Benedict Lyle Phillips and Ioannis Loukopoulos Transplant Surgeons from Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, UK	November 2022	Speciality: Transplant Surgeons Setting up of a Renal Transplant Unit
8.	Dr Nirmal Tulwa, Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon, Mid Yorkshire Hospitals, UK	November 2022	Speciality: Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery To carry out a review of complex paediatric orthopaedic cases.
9.	Dr Poul Martin Gehrchen, Dr Henrik Jorgensen, Dr Jesper Dirks and Dr Lars Valentin Hansen (University of Copenhagen)	19 to 27 November 2022	Speciality: Spinal surgeon To perform complex spinal surgeries at Victoria Hospital. Patients seen: 70 Patients operated: 14
10.	Dr Ravi Ramalingam, ENT Surgeon and Managing Director, KKR ENT Hospital and Research Institute, Chennai, India	02 to 04 December 2022	Speciality: ENT Surgery To perform cochlear implant surgeries Patients operated: 2
11.	Prof John Anthony Tidy, Professor of Gynaecological Oncology and Director Sheffield Trophoblastic Disease Centre, Weston Park Hospital, Sheffield, UK	04 to 09 December 2022	Speciality: Gynaecological Oncology To perform an audit of our health services.
12.	Dr Sirikishan Ramkishan Shetty Dr Thomas Alan Vo Ophthalmologists from Teaching Eye Surgery Foundation	04 to 09 December 2022	Speciality/MOU: MOU with Teaching Eye Surgery To perform complex eye surgeries at New Souillac Hospital. Patients operated: 5
13.	Prof Balaji Subramoniam Muthiah, Director, Balaji Dental and Craniofacial Hospital Prof Deepak Chandrasekharan, Professor and Head, Department of Orthodontics, SRM Kattankulathur Dental College, India	23 to 29 January 2023	Speciality: Maxillofacial Surgery To conduct a Hands-on Workshop on "Cleft Orthodontics and Nasoalveolar Moulding" and operate on complex oral/maxillofacial cases at Victoria Hospital
14.	Dr Nirmal Tulwa, Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon, Mid Yorkshire Hospitals Ms Sarah Tulwa, Specialised Physiotherapist, Leeds Hospital, UK	24 February to 07 March 2023	Speciality: Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery To carry out complex paediatric orthopaedic surgeries and assist in the training of our physiotherapists who are involved in the treatment post-surgery at SSRN Hospital.

SN.	Visiting Doctors	Period	Purpose of visit/No of Cases Operated
15.	Dr Sulleman Moreea, GOSK, Consultant Gastroenterologist/Hepatologist , Bradford Teaching Hospitals, UK	10 to 25 March 2023	Speciality: Gastroenterology To review the endoscopy services in the Regional Hospitals, to oversee the National Hepatitis C Elimination Programme and the setting up of Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme.
16.	Dr Poul Martin Gehrchen, Dr Henrik Jorgensen, Dr Jesper Dirks and Dr Lars Valentin Hansen National University, Copenhagen, Denmark	25 March to 02 April 2023	Speciality: Spine Surgery To perform complex spinal surgeries at Victoria Hospital.
17.	Dr Milind Arwind Killedar, Dr Harsha Ravindra Dahake, Dr Madhuri Balaji Bhopale and Dr Priyanka Dileep Asgaonkar , Pediatric Ophthalmologists and Squint Specialists from India	10 to 14 April 2023	Speciality/MOU: Memorandum of Understanding with the Rotary Club of Bagatelle Consultation of children suffering from Squint; Performing Squint surgeries; and Training of doctors and nursing staff.
18.	Dr Stephan Marc Vanderbecken Consultant Haematologist , CHU Felix Guyon, Saint Denis, Reunion Island	16 to 19 April 2023	Speciality: Haematology To optimize the treatment of patients suffering from complex haematological disorders, including patients with Haemophilia, in Mauritius.
19.	Prof Ashley Lucien Joseph D'Cruz , Director and Sr Consultant, Paediatric Surgeon/Urologist Dr Vinay Chandrashekhar , Consultant, Paediatric Surgery, Narayana Hrudayalaya, Mazumdar Shaw Medical Center, Bangalore, India	03 to 08 May 2023	Speciality: Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery To perform complex paediatric surgeries at J. Nehru Hospital.
20.	Dr Pritham Shetty Narayen, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon , Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Hospital, Bangalore, India	03 to 06 June 2023	Speciality: Cleft Surgeries To perform consultations and cleft surgeries at Victoria Hospital.

2.1.25 PHARMACY SERVICES

The Pharmacy Department of the Ministry is supported by 31 Government Pharmacists and 206 Pharmacy Technicians posted at different points of Service throughout the Island. Pharmacists are posted at the MOHW, Central Supplies Division, Main and Specialised Hospital Pharmacies whereas the Pharmacy Technicians ensure the dispensing activities at Hospital Pharmacies, Area Health Centres, CHCS, and Mediclinics.

This Department oversees the Pharmacy Services of both the Public and the Private sector. The main duties and responsibilities are to ensure that:

- (a) the population at large have access to drugs which are of required quality, safety and efficacy.
- (b) the Practice of Pharmacy is in line with the Pharmacy Act 1983, Dangerous Drugs Act 2000 and the Pharmacy Council Act 2015.

The Medicines list of the Ministry incorporates the Essential Medicines recommended by the World Health Organization and is continuously updated by the pool of technical experts. The Pharmacovigilance Department of the Ministry is being upgraded and shall henceforth ensure that medications in use in the country are closely monitored for safety.

The Pharmacy Board is responsible for the exercise of control over the manufacture, importation, distribution and sale of medications in the country. Moreover, the Board is also responsible for the grant of licence for the operation of retail and wholesale pharmacies. Presently there are 380 Community Pharmacies operating throughout the Island and 45 Wholesale Pharmacies.

The Pharmacy Council regulates and controls the profession of Pharmacists and also promotes the advancement in the field of Pharmacy. Among others, the Pharmacy Council registers Pharmacists and Pre-registered trainees, exercise and maintain discipline in the profession of pharmacists. As at date, there are 555 Pharmacists registered with the Pharmacy Council.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- **Serially Numbered Prescription form for Schedule II and III Dangerous Drugs.**

A uniform serially numbered prescription form, in triplicates, is henceforth being used for the prescription of Schedule II and III drugs of the Dangerous Drugs Act. This measure shall help in exercising better control of Scheduled medications being prescribed in the public health institutions.

- **Real Time Monitoring of Dangerous Drugs and Precursors.**

The Pharmacy department has aligned itself as per the report of the Commission of enquiry on drugs and through the electronic platform is able to have a real time scrutiny of prescriptions and dispensing of named medications.

- **Amendments to the Dangerous Drugs Act:**

- “Medicinal Cannabis” has been added as a therapeutic item of Schedule II of the Act.

- To allow prescription of Schedule II medications for 14 days instead of 10 in view to reduce the number of visits to the hospital for patients on palliative care requiring these medications.
- To allow prescriptions of Methadone to be printed and hand signed instead of being handwritten. This measure will alleviate the burden on prescribers to handwrite more than 5,000 prescriptions every 14 days.
- To align with the provisions to have an electronic register to record all transactions relating to the controlled drugs listed under the Dangerous Drugs Act"

- **Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Pooled Procurement Initiative.**

The SIDS have now been able to initiate the first procurement exercise for pharmaceuticals and shall shortly proceed for the evaluation of bids received. This initiative is being supported by the Pharmacy Services of the MOHW and will definitely improve the availability of rare medications /items difficult to source.

- **Review of Conditions of Tender - Pharmaceuticals - Procurement Unit - MOHW.**

The tender conditions for Pharmaceuticals have been revisited and needful have been made to provide more clarity to bidders, ensure more transparency, and improve bidders' participation.

- **Review of Acceptable shelf life for drugs purchased by the Ministry.**

The Acceptable shelf life is now 75% to 80% of the maximum shelf life for Pharmaceuticals. This shall impact positively in prompt availability of medications.

- **Extension of the Electronic Informatics Management System (EIMS) facilities to AHCs and CHCs.**

The Ministry is presently extending the provision of the EIMS to AHCs and CHCs. This shall allow a real stock monitoring of medications held by the Ministry.

- **Other Initiatives**

(i) Re-introduction of Committee of needs prior to finalization of procurement quantities for Pharmaceuticals in the Public Sector.

(ii) The Committee of needs for Pharmaceuticals have been introduced successfully and will benefit the Ministry to minimize stock outs as well as wastage due to expiry.

(iii) A better monitoring mechanism has been put in place at the Central Supplies Division and communication has been positively improved among the stakeholders.

(iv) The Contract Management department for Pharmaceuticals has been reinforced.

2.1.26 CENTRAL HEALTH LABORATORY



The Central Health Laboratory (CHL) which is the apex body of public laboratory network in the Republic of Mauritius functions as both clinical and public health laboratory. Health Laboratory Service covers nine departments comprising of Bacteriology, Biochemistry, Blood Transfusion Services, Cytology, Haematology, Histopathology, Parasitology, Virology and Molecular Biology.

CHL is the reference laboratory for many diseases of public health of importance. Besides the routine diagnostic services, CHL also supports many national programmes like NCD, Cervical Cancer Screening, HIV/Syphilis/Hepatitis B and C Screening aiming towards dual elimination (HIV/Syphilis) of Mother to Child Transmission (eMTCT) as well as Hepatitis C Elimination amongst others. More importantly, CHL has been highly effective and proactive in responding to the pandemic by providing timely diagnosis, patient monitoring as well as epidemiologic surveillance.

CHL also operates a network of regional and peripheral laboratories. The services provided by regional laboratories include Routine Biochemistry, Blood Bank/Cross Matching, Haematology, Parasitology and Bacteriology (at Dr. AGJH Laboratory only) while peripheral laboratories provide basic Biochemistry, Haematology and Parasitology services.

The National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) is responsible for recruitment of voluntary blood donors through education, information and motivation, collection of blood at fixed and mobile sites, processing of blood into components, testing and supply of blood and blood products to all public and private health institutions in the country. NBTS is fully computerized as from 2007 and is also ISO 9001-205 certified.

Achievements of Laboratory Services and NBTS for FY 2022-2023:

➤ Number of laboratory tests performed

A total of 16 million tests have been performed from July 2022 to June 2023 at CHL. Moreover, 4,838 Immunohistochemistry (IHC) markers have been done on 916 cases for cancer diagnosis over the same period. Seven new IHC markers were introduced to help in better diagnosis of cancer patients, thus bringing the total number of markers available to 57. Earlier most cases requiring IHC were being sent abroad with higher costs and longer turnaround times to obtain results.

Currently, the CHL has a test menu of more than 350 tests and this is expected to go up as health services are expanding for example with the New Cancer Hospital and upcoming Transplantation Programme.

➤ **Number of pints of blood collected**

A total of 50,798 pints of blood have been collected during FY 2022-2023 as compared to 45,890 pints in the preceding FY. A total of 883 mobile sessions were organized. In addition, a Mega Blood Donation is held every year in the month of December to avoid shortage of blood products during festive period. In 2022, this event was held over 4 days from 19-22 December and 1,835 units of blood were collected.

➤ **Genomic Sequencing**

Sequencing for COVID-19 for surveillance of variants is fully done locally and so far, a total of 9,981 samples have been successfully sequenced locally.

➤ **Introduction of New Tests/Services**

The following tests have been introduced:

- (i) HPV testing for cervical cancer screening,
- (ii) Molecular tests for colon and lung cancer and Chronic Myeloid leukemias, and
- (iii) Flow Cross match for HLA compatibility in renal transplants.

➤ **Equipment**

The following major equipment have been received through procurement at the level of Ministry:

- (i) Two Chemistry auto-analyser and two immunoassay analysers for Blood bank and Biochemistry,
- (ii) Three Glycohaemoglobin analysers,
- (iii) One serum protein electrophoresis analyser, and
- (iv) Equipment for Automated antifungal susceptibility.

➤ **Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)**

After successful implementation of COVID-19 LIMS at CHL, it was decided to extend the LIMS to other departments of CHL. In this process, implementation has been completed in Virology and Molecular biology department. Currently LIMS implementation of Biochemistry and Haematology is underway with interfacing of various analysers. The LIMS is also being rolled out to AHCs.

➤ **Training of staff**

- (i) Two technologists were trained for six months in cervical cytology screening at TATA Memorial Hospital Institute, India.
- (ii) Two technologists were trained for a duration of 3 months at Manipal University, India in Clinical Embryology to work at Fertility Clinics.
- (iii) Two technologists have received training in “Bioinformatics and Reporting” and one technologist has received training in “Establishing capacity for Pathogen Genomics” from CDC Africa.

2.1.27 RADIOLOGY SERVICES



Radiology refers to diagnostic imaging that involves various tests to visualize and project different parts of the human body. These tests include ultrasound, MRI, CT scans, echography, mammography and X-rays which are vital for medical diagnosis and management of various diseases.

Radiology services are offered in both Regional Hospitals and Mediclinics, with 24/7 emergency care available for various departments, including surgical, medical, neurosurgical, orthopedics and pediatrics. Radiologists, on a roster basis, provide urgent X-rays/scans to all other departments.

Moreover, C arm facilities are available in operation theatres and Cardiac unit on a 24-hour basis.

Under this unit, the primary objectives are to (i) minimize patient waiting lists and implement extra sessions for specific test when necessary, (ii) focus on radiation monitoring through the As Low As Reasonably Achievable (ALARA) principle, and (iii) follow rigorously safety guidelines and sanitary protocols, compliant with international standards, amongst others.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- A total of 767,692 examinations were performed by the X-Ray Department including MRI and CT-Scan in 2022.
- CT, MRI, Ultrasound and X-ray are done based on a routine list and emergency basis. Over and above the routine, Radiology Department also caters for a few sub specialties including (i) Interventional radiology services; (ii) Urgent SAMU requests; (iii) Pediatric radiology; (iv) Fertility diagnosis; (v) Renal transplant; (vi) Oncology Services; and (vii) Spine unit.
- Digitalised system for X-ray services was launched in November 2022 as part of the E-Health project. This system will enable the online transfer of soft version of X-rays through a local area network.

2.1.28 NATIONAL AIDS SECRETARIAT

The National AIDS Secretariat (NAS) operates under the aegis of the MOHW and is responsible to lead and coordinate the National AIDS response with the buy-in and support of all relevant stakeholders including line Ministries, Development Partners, NGOs and Civil Society Organisation amongst others.

NAS synchronises and integrates all the activities of different actors in the national response and keeps track of all resources for the purpose of funding the national response in particular resources from international NGOs or agencies.

The NAS ensures development and adherence to international recommendations and national guidelines for effective implementation of the response. Furthermore, the Secretariat also identifies gaps in the resources and develops strategies to fill them.

It also ensures harmonization of all plans in the country is aligned to that of the National HIV Action Plan and that there is a robust Monitoring and Evaluation System under one National AIDS Coordinating body. Its operations are guided by the United Nations 'Three Ones' key principles:

- One agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that forms the basis for coordinating the work of all partners
- One National AIDS Coordinating Authority with a broad-based multi sectoral mandate
- One agreed country level Monitoring and Evaluation System

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Development and implementation of the Operational Plan for the Year 2023. The Implementation Plan for Year 2023 disseminated to relevant stakeholders.
- The HIV and AIDS Act 2006 has been amended to introduce Directly Assisted HIV Self-Test and HIV Self-Test and to cater for inclusion of paraphernalia kit to be distributed under the Needle Exchange Programme.
- The National Protocol for the Management of People Living with HIV and AIDS has been updated as per guidelines of the WHO.
- Approval from the WHO for Technical Assistance to review the HIV Prevention Programme.
- Improved accessibility and strengthen prevention through the procurement and installation of 25 Condom Vending Machines around the island.
- The Secretariat embarked on the development of (i) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (ii) HIV Response Transition Plan and (iii) Funding Request with the Technical Assistance from Expertise France.
- Global Fund approval of the Funding Request submitted in May 2023 for the allocation of USD 2,368,481 for period January 2024 to December 2026 with the MOHW as Principal Recipient.

- Subsequently, Mauritius has been allocated USD 2,368,481 for period 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2026.
- Collaboration with Ministry of Education and Ministry of Gender Equality through their involvement in the SADC HIV Fund Round 3 project for development of IEC materials.
- Working in close collaboration with NGO – Collectif Arc-En-Ciel for HIV and Syphilis testing among the LGBTQIA+ group.
- Technical Working Groups with NGOs established for Monitoring and Evaluation, Treatment, Care and Support and Behavioural Change Communication.
- Weekly case-study sessions with doctors of the AIDS Unit for management of people Living with HIV.
- Ongoing Awareness sessions in vocational institutions, workplace and line Ministries.
- Sensitization campaign on HIV and AIDS and HIV preventive measures through the media.
- Production of leaflet on Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for distribution in the community and Mass media campaign on PrEP through Facebook.
- Seventeen (17) workshops with regards to the national HIV programs targeting different audiences have been organised by NAS including staff of NGOs.

2.1.29 AIDS UNIT

The AIDS Unit provides prevention activities and clinical services to People living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) in the country including prison settings and Rodrigues Island. The unit also provides Testing and Counselling for HIV, STIs and viral hepatitis in the community at large, health institutions and workplace.

Caravan Testing services are provided around the island. HIV testing services, through Rapid Tests, are provided in the Accident and Emergency department of all hospitals by the staff of the AIDS Unit. The MOHW in collaboration with the civil society has launched a “Centre de Santé Sexuelle Communautaire” in view of effectively increasing access and uptake of several services, including counselling, screening, prevention (PrEP), and follow up of HIV, Hepatitis C and Sexually Transmitted Infections. Furthermore, the AIDS Unit conducts HIV testing among the hard-to-reach populations in collaboration with different NGOs.

Moreover, young adolescents are being sensitized early in schools and out of school youth are also being reached. Pregnant PLHIV are also closely followed from Ante-natal care clinic until delivery. There is ongoing promotion of male and female condoms as primary and secondary prevention.

The Hotline for the AIDS Unit is **8000500**.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- **HIV Testing and Treatment - Antiretroviral Treatment (ART)**

Around 134,291 tests have been conducted (96,396 ELISA and 37,895 RDTs) from July 2022-June 2023. For the reporting period same period, around 360 new HIV cases have been detected (210 males, 148 females). Out of the total tests carried out, 6,933 HIV tests have been conducted through the mobile caravan around the island, including the community, beach testing, commercial sites and deprived areas. Out of these tests, 34 positive cases have been detected. Moreover, 8,205 Rapid Diagnostic tests have been conducted at Casualty level in all Regional Hospitals, among which 16 were found positive.

During the FY 2022-2023, there were 4,352 PLHIV on Antiretroviral drugs. The adherence rate was approximately 71%.

- **HIV Prevention Programmes for the Key Populations**

From July 2022 to June 2023, prevention programmes were conducted among the Key Populations. 4,590 Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), 5,242 Females Sex Workers (FSW) and 1,965 Transgenders (TG) have been reached respectively. Among those reached, 1,425 MSM, 1,740 FSW and 672 TG were tested for HIV. In prisons, around 8,275 HIV tests have been conducted over the same period.

- **Prevention through Distribution of Condoms**

During the period under review, 603,795 male and 24,352 female condoms were distributed and 131,843 Lubricant gels have also been supplied.

- **Community awareness on HIV and AIDS**

A total of 16,785 adolescents have been reached through 478 school intervention sessions. 1,015 out-of-school/vulnerable youths in deprived areas have been reached through awareness programmes. Awareness and testing sessions have been carried out among 1000 students in tertiary institutions. 150 young Adolescent and Young adults have been sensitized regarding HIV/AIDS in Rehabilitation Youth Centres (RYC) and Correctional Youth Centres (CYC). 5 Workshops and training sessions for health care professionals have been carried out on Treatment Care and Support, Stigma and Discrimination, PMTCT and Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

- **Co-infected HIV/Hepatitis C**

As at June 2023, 442 PLHIV co-infected with Hepatitis C have already been treated while 400 were on treatment.

2.1.30 HARM REDUCTION UNIT (HRU)

The Harm Reduction Unit of the MOHW started to implement harm reduction measures in Mauritius since 2006. The Unit's vision is mainly to curb HIV epidemics among people who use drugs and break the cycle of drugs by aligning efforts along with all stakeholders concerned toward sustainable drug policies focusing on health, human rights, peace and security. The HRU also carries out Drug Use Prevention Activities in-line with the National Drug Control Master Plan 2019 – 2023. The Hotline of the HRU is **8001022**.

The main functions and services of the HRU are as follows:

- Needle Exchange Programme
- Methadone Substitution Therapy
- Drug Prevention Programme/
- Mass Media Campaign
- Rehabilitation and Detoxification Programme
- Psycho-social support and counselling

As at date around 8,000 beneficiaries are on the methadone programme and accessing their daily doses at 48 dispensing points throughout the country including 4 sites within the prisons. In order to offer a comprehensive package of services to methadone beneficiaries, the MOHW operates 5 Day Care Centres namely at the following places:

Name of Centre	Contact Number
Sainte Croix Methadone Day Care Centre	242 0192
Dr. Bouloux Cassis Methadone Day Care Centre	211 2442
Mahebourg Methadone Day Care Centre	631 3075
Centre Frangipane - Beau Bassin, and	455 3187
Centre Orchidée for Women - Beau Bassin	455 9066

The services offered are methadone induction, methadone dispensing, medical follow up clinics, hepatitis C treatment, psycho-social support, counselling, distribution of condoms and educational materials. Treatment for detoxification with suboxone/naltrexone is also offered.

Moreover, there are treatment and rehabilitation services on a residential basis mainly for minors and young people under the age of 23 years at the **Nenuphar Centre situated at Long Mountain (Contact Number: 209 2030)**. The service is offered in full confidentiality to all People Who Use Drugs and tailor made with respect to the type of drug of concern. Patients who are admitted at the Nénuphar Centre are mainly those who have consumed synthetic drugs, cannabis and heroin as major drugs of concern. Counselling activities and psychosocial support are carried out by a multi-disciplinary team consisting of psychiatrists, psychologists, doctors and nursing officers. In addition, there is Medically Assisted Therapy (MAT) for patients.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- A new revised methadone substitution protocol referred as “Protocoles de Prise en Charge de l'Usage de Drogues a Maurice” has been developed by all stakeholders including HealthCare Professionals, members of the civil society and NGOs. This new protocol is being implemented since March 2023.
- Methadone Substitution Therapy (MST) - Currently there are around 7,500 beneficiaries on MST accessing their daily doses at the dispensing points/centres throughout the country.
- Decentralisation of methadone dispensing in Primary Healthcare Institutions is on-going and the following new methadone dispensing sites were opened: Goodlands Mediclinic; Triolet Mediclinic; Belvedere Mediclinic; Riviere du Rempart AHC; Bel Air AHC and Montagne Blanche AHC.
- Needle Exchange Programme (NEP): 50 sites are operational throughout the island in areas where there is concentration of Injecting Drug Users. 42 sites are run by the MOHW through mobile caravans and 8 sites are run by NGOs. There are around 2,000 beneficiaries under the NEP. Apart from the clean injecting needles and syringes, alcohol swabs and condoms are provided to NGO Collectif Urgence Toxida under the NEP. In 2022, the total number of distributions were as follows:

(i) Syringes	: 826,132
(ii) Needles	: 863,621
- Drug Use Prevention programme: For awareness and educational sessions in schools, the HRU reached 316 classes with 7,191 students as at 30 June 2023; Sensitization programmes in the Community – 10 sessions with 292 participants; Workplace reached 692 participants; Youth Empowerment Programme Against Drugs (YEPAD) – 26 regions reaching 672 participants (cumulative since 2021).
- Moreover, a series of workshop targeting key stakeholders was organised by the HRU over six full days at Flic-en-Flac reaching 168 participants.
- A yearly national Mass Media/ Social media campaign is carried out targeting adolescent and young adults.
- In year 2022, the five regional Addiction Treatment Units reported an attendance of 5,693 patients. The major drug of concern was reported to be New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) known as synthetic drugs.
- As at end of 2022, the number of admissions recorded are as follows:

(i)	163 admissions in Mahebourg Detox Centre
(ii)	85 admissions in Nénuphar Centre
- The Dangerous Drugs Act (DDA) has been amended in 2022, specially, concerning section 34. A person in possession of illicit substance according to the DDA for personal use was liable for prosecution. Following amendment of the DDA and the establishment of a Drug Users Administrative Panel (DUAP) substance abusers intercepted by police in

possession of drugs for personal use will be diverted from the criminal justice system and directed toward treatment and rehabilitation. This will give them the opportunity to obtain a clean certificate of character.

- Mauritius will be among the first countries in Africa to be implementing paraphernalia (sterile cooker, cotton filter, dry post injection swab, alcohol swab) distribution to People Who Injects Drugs (PWIDs). In order to protect the PWIDs from arbitrary arrests and detention, the HIV AIDS Act 2006 makes provision for beneficiaries of NEP not to be arbitrarily arrested and detained if they are intercepted by police and are in possession of dry injecting materials. This law has been amended to include paraphernalia kit. A number of workshops have been conducted with officers from Police department in order to share facts in the HIV Act and also Dangerous Drugs Act in context of DUAP.

2.1.31 GERIATRIC HEALTHCARE UNIT

The MOHW, in collaboration with the WHO and a range of other stakeholders, elaborated the **National Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) Strategic and Action Plan 2022-2026**, comprising 7 Strategic Objectives and 55 activities to be implemented in order to improve the spectrum and quality of geriatric care in all its aspects. This Strategic Plan was launched by the Prime Minister, Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, on 23rd March 2023.

A specialist in Geriatrics under the Ministry was appointed duties and responsibilities of National Focal Point for Implementation of ICOPE as from October 2022, and to further help implementation, a Geriatric Healthcare Unit was setup on 20th June 2023 under the oversight of the National Focal Point for Implementation of ICOPE. The unit comprises 2 specialists in Geriatrics and 3 Medical and Health Officers.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The **Early Dementia Diagnosis Clinic (EDDC)**, which provides multi-disciplinary management of Dementia, and was previously setup at Victoria Hospital in 2018, has been extended to all 5 Regional Hospitals.
- 150 staff have been trained across Mauritius through **Training of Trainers** workshops in multi-disciplinary management of Dementia, and ICOPE implementation.
- The **Carnet de Santé**, a 50-page booklet of A5 size providing healthcare advice for the elderly in user-friendly language and graphics, and acting as an “aide-mémoire” and care-coordination tool, has been designed, and will be provided free of charge to 260,000 Mauritians aged 60 years and above.
- Health awareness tools, for example in the form of animated clips on topics such as (i) Dementia and (ii) Preventing Falls in the Elderly, have been designed, and health awareness campaigns have been accordingly implemented, e.g., on television, radio and social media.

2.1.32 ORTHOPAEDIC APPLIANCES WORKSHOP (OAW)

The Orthopaedic Appliances Workshop of the MOHW is divided into five sections namely Prosthesis, Orthosis, Leather, Metal and Seamstress. The main objective of the Orthopaedic Workshop is to assist disabled patients overcome their disabilities by fitting them with appropriate orthopaedic appliances. Patients are referred for orthopaedic appliances to the Orthopaedic Appliances Workshop by medical practitioners from all Regional Hospitals, AHCs and Rodrigues.

The Orthopaedic appliances include provision of corrective braces, spinal braces for fracture of spine, night splints for corrective upper and lower limbs, adapted chairs for cerebral palsy, Minerva jacket for fracture of cervical and lower limb prosthesis for amputees.

All these orthopaedic appliances are manufactured with specific materials, orthotics and prosthetics components mostly procured from abroad.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 11,622 patients have attended the Orthopaedic Appliances Workshop to receive orthopaedic appliances.
- 12,072 patients were also attended to by staff of the Orthopaedic Workshop in Regional Hospitals once a month for the period 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.
- 18,414 Orthopaedic Appliances were delivered to patients.

2.1.33 DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES

The Department of Operation Support Services of the MOHW is responsible for the management of all health transport activities including ambulatory service and the provision of adequate logistics accordingly. It also undertakes repairs and maintenance works pertaining to vehicles in its fleet. The department also attends to repairs, maintenance, refurbishment, extension and renovation works required at public health institutions.



Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The Unit adopted cost cutting strategies and shifted from Coromandel rented warehouse to Government owned building making a saving Rs 550,000 monthly.
- Setting up of child friendly amenities at dental clinic of Rose-Belle has been completed.
- The setting up Autism Centre at Bois-Cheri is in progress.
- Provision of all necessary transport services has been made to meet the different needs of the Ministry.

PART II - SECTION B

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE SERVICES



2.2 PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES

According to the WHO, Primary Health Care (PHC) is the foundation for Universal Health Coverage. In Mauritius, PHC services are provided through a network of 19 AHCs, 113 CHCs, 7 Mediclinics, 2 Community Hospitals and other satellite PHC institutions. The network of PHC facilities is such as to enhance accessibility to primary care within a radius of 3 km.

In 2022, a total of around 4.7 million attendances were recorded at the 141 primary health care institutions for the treatment of common diseases and minor injuries. **TABLE II** gives an indication of the total number of attendances recorded in all the PHC institutions at the level of the five Health Regions.

Table II: Attendances at PHC Institutions 2022

REGIONS	ATTENDANCES
Health Region 1 PHCS (under Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital)	1,053,309
Health Region 2 PHCS (under SSRN Hospital)	1,247,009
Health Region 3 PHCS (under Dr. Bruno Cheong Hospital)	843,535
Health Region 4 PHCS (under J. Nehru Hospital)	592,051
Health Region 5 PHCS (under Victoria Hospital)	965,007
TOTAL	4,700,911

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022

In 2022, a total of 385 pre-primary schools were visited and 10,348 children were screened for common illness and dental carries. 3,573 children were referred to PHC institutions for vaccination. **TABLE III** highlights on the activities undertaken at the level of primary schools in 2022.

Table III: Summary on Primary School Health Activity 2022

ACTIVITY AND RESULT	ISLAND OF MAURITIUS
SCREENING BY NURSING STAFF	
No. of schools visited	293
No. of children screened	11,746
<i>Nits and lice</i>	308
<i>Dental problems</i>	850
No. of children referred to dentist	552
VISION SURVEY (Std III, V & VI)	
No. of children screened	8,977
No. with defective vision	671
No. referred to specialists	549
IMMUNIZATIONS PERFORMED	
TDaP/IPV (New entrants)	7,777
TDaP (School leavers)	4,492

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022

On top of hospitals, primary health care centres have also contributed for 1,908,298 consultations by doctors. 1,389,220 cases attended for general consultation during normal working hours and another 372,930 cases attended after normal working hours sessions, on Sundays and public holidays. Specialist clinics catered for 57,001 cases while other services such as Family Planning, Cash Gift, Screening programmes, Nutrition and Foot Care clinics have attended to 88,147 cases. Primary health care centres have thus catered for some 5,228 cases on average daily.

At PHC level, the nursing staff takes on a range of responsibilities, including the inspection of medical instruments and equipment, preparing patients for clinic visits and consultations through the monitoring of their vital parameters, collecting blood samples, tracking investigation results, providing health education and counselling to patients visiting AHCs/CHCs, administering prescribed patient dressings and maintaining records of medications and drugs.

The achievements for the FY 2022-2023 of the different units falling under the Primary Healthcare Services have been elaborated in this part of the Report.

2.2.1 NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE (NCD) CLINICS

NCD clinics are operational in all the Mediclinic, Area and Community health centres of the 5 health regions. The consultations in NCD Clinics are carried out by a multi-disciplinary team including Community Physicians, Diabetic Specialized Nurses and Nutritionists, amongst others. They provide personalized care to all patients. The Diabetic Nurses, besides counselling patients on their medications, including insulin injections, also motivate them to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Restructuring of Diabetes Care in the Primary Health Care Services.
- Improving quality of care by providing Diabetes Specialist Clinics in all Health Regions by setting-up additional clinics in the Primary Health Care under the Endocrinology Unit.
- Provision of glucometers and strips to all women with Gestational Diabetes free of charge.
- Introduction of New Diabetes Mellitus (DM) Drugs for patients with uncontrolled DM.
- Primary education on the risk factors of NCD is increasing as the NCD Coordinators deliver talks in the Social Welfare Centres to outreach more people on Healthy Lifestyle Hygiene.
- A register of new NCD cases is available in all Primary Health Care institutions to ensure a better surveillance and follow up of these cases.
- The New protocol introduced by the Ministry pertaining to proper referral of patients has been a good guide to the Community Physicians and General doctors conducting the NCD Clinics.

Ancillary Services for NCD Clinics

(i) Diabetic Foot Care Services

The NCD clinics include the foot care clinic run by specialized diabetic foot care nurses. The purpose of this service is to screen all diabetic foot complications and also perform specialized dressing for diabetic foot ulcer so as to prevent amputation.

- 42, 828 patients have received Foot Screening in 2022.
- Training in basic podiatry management imparted to all the Specialised Nurses (Diabetic Foot Care) by foreign team with the support of WHO. Simple cases are being seen by the Specialised Nurses.
- Podiatry sets were procured in 2022 to serve all the Diabetic Foot Care Clinics.
- 13 Nurses are following the National Diploma courses in Diabetes Foot Care Nursing (2022 – 2025) at the MIH.

(ii) Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Services

All diabetic patients are referred for screening of the eyes for early detection of diabetic eye complication and appropriate referral to eye specialist for early treatment is made in order to prevent blindness. Diabetic Retinal Screening services are carried out by trained diabetic retinal screeners.

- 22, 872 patients have received Retinal Screening in 2022.

(iii) Tobacco Cessation Services

The Tobacco Cessation Services (TCS) is an essential component of the WHO's MPOWER initiative, dedicated to assist patients in quitting smoking without incurring any costs. The TCS were launched in 2011 as a pilot project in Odette Leal CHC. Presently, there are nine Tobacco Cessation Centers (TCCs) in Mauritius. These TCCs are manned by Community Physicians specifically trained in delivering effective TCS.

1. Approximately 2,034 patients have been successfully registered in the tobacco cessation clinics. According to the WHO's criteria, 3 out of every 5 patients who strictly adhere to the treatment have been classified as successful cases.
2. 2 TCCs were inaugurated, one in Montagne Longue Community Hospital on April 2023 and one clinic at Mont-Lubin, Rodrigues on 31 May 2023.
3. A 3-day training course has been delivered to 70 medical and paramedical staff of Rodrigues in April 2023 to empower them with basic TCC skills.
4. An additional pamphlet was launched during the FY on World No Tobacco Day to raise awareness on the harmful effects of smoking. Additionally, seven Health Information, Education and Communication (HIEC) officers have received training in the sensitization of population on ill-effects of tobacco.

5. 150 staff have been trained in TCC practices this year through half-day sessions with participants from the whole island.
6. 3 TV programs and 2 radio programs have been broadcasted about the ill-effects of tobacco.

(iv) Dietician Services

The patients seen at NCD Clinics are also referred to dietician working under the Nutrition Unit of the MOHW. This Unit is involved in the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of healthy eating habits. **(More details at section 2.2.5 of the Report)**

2.2.2 COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION UNIT

The Community Based Rehabilitation Unit was introduced as part of Primary Health Care with an aim to make outreach rehabilitation services accessible to every person with mental and physical disabilities so that they have equal opportunity in the community. Rehabilitation services include the following:

1. Therapies – Physio, Occupational and speech.
2. Referrals – Treatment, Benefits, Appliances, Schooling, Job Placement, Social Integration and Recreation.
3. Facilitation – Evaluation, Liaison, Provision and Accessibility.
4. Counselling and Monitoring – Health Education, Treatment, Progress and Follow-up.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- Total number of disabled persons attended: 9,547.
- 15 officers were recruited in May 2023.
- Several sessions with primary school students, teachers and parents helped to identify reading disabilities and provide remedial measures for certain cases to improve performance at school.
- The Unit accompanied paraplegic patients and acted as facilitators for them in terms of access to financial grants provided by Government, referrals for home nursing, medical certificate for normal and electric wheelchairs.
- Weekly sessions with bedridden patients and their relatives who also act as trainers. Some of the patients had the chance to recover and re-integrate their work.

2.2.3 MATERNAL, NEONATAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) care is the health service provided to mothers (women in their child bearing age) and children. The targets for MCH are all women in their reproductive age groups, i.e., 15 - 49 years of age, children, school age population and adolescents.

These services also address the health of mother prior to pregnancy, during pregnancy, during delivery and after delivery and care of newborn and child. Main concepts are as follows:

1. Preconception Care
2. Antenatal care
3. Obstetric care
4. Postnatal care
5. Breastfeeding
6. Care of newborn and children (Vaccination, Well Baby Clinics and cash gift)

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The activities carried out in 2022 by the Maternal and Child Health Services are given below:

Table IV: Maternal and Child Health Activities in Public Sector – 2022

ACTIVITY	NUMBER
DOMICILIARY VISITS BY MIDWIFE/NURSE	
Antenatal	1,167
Postnatal	1,769
CASES REFERRED TO HEALTH CENTRES & HOSPITALS	
By doctor for specialised treatment	7,326
EXAMINATIONS CARRIED OUT AT CLINIC	
ANTENATAL EXAMINATIONS BY MIDWIFE/NURSE	
First attendances	7,728
Subsequent attendances	28,756
ANTENATAL EXAMINATIONS BY DOCTOR*	
First attendances	7,929
Subsequent attendances	26,826
POSTNATAL EXAMINATIONS BY DOCTOR	
First attendances	3,022
Subsequent attendances	924
CHILDREN SEEN FOR GROWTH MONITORING	
Number of attendances	111,269
EXAM. OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS BY DOCTOR	
First attendances	4,955
Subsequent attendances	11,897
TOTAL ATTENDANCES AT CLINIC	203,306
*Include cases examined by specialists at first and subsequent attendances.	

Source: Health Statistics Report 2022

- The Ministry is working on the implementation of the recommendations of Committee on Maternal deaths. In this context, the Minister/SCE also chairs monthly meetings where Consultants in Charge in all specialities including Gynaecology and Obstetrics are required to make presentations on the implementation thereof in their respective units.
- The Ministry has also implemented 24/7 specialised care in hospitals and as from 01 August 2022, one Paediatrician, one Gynaecologist and one Anaesthetist are physically present in each Regional Hospital to ensure that they can attend to any high-risk cases of delivery. This 24/7 coverage has helped to reduce the maternal mortality and therefore ensure a better delivery of maternal health services.
- Advancements have been made in the field of neonatology; all Regional Hospitals have Level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Units as per the American Academy of Pediatrics with advanced equipment such as the Nitric Oxide Therapy system which can provide lifesaving treatment to babies with a life-threatening medical condition known as Persistent Pulmonary Hypertension. It is worth noting that the number of maternal deaths in Mauritius has decreased from 8 in 2000 to 7 in 2021 and 4 in 2022.
- Preconception Care is the optimizing the health of a woman and a couple prior to conception with the goal of improving maternal health and pregnancy outcomes in terms of a healthy baby. Preconception care clinics have been implemented at PHC (Mediclinics and AHCs). Several activities have been conducted including training of health professionals, HIEC materials (videos, pamphlets and booklets), guidelines for health staff, sensitisation sessions for NGOs, awareness sessions with public officers and tertiary level students. For FY 2022-2023, there were 10 sessions with some 30 participants on this area.
- The National Breastfeeding Action Plan 2022 – 2027 has been devised with the overarching goal to meet the WHO and Global Nutrition targets by gradually increasing exclusive breastfeeding from 20% to 50% by 2027 for the first six months of life of babies. The Plan is based on six major strategic areas:
 - Consolidation of existing policies to enhance breastfeeding environments
 - Review of relevant legislation
 - New policies to regulate the marketing of breast milk substitutes
 - Enhancing community action and participation in breastfeeding initiatives
 - Capacity building of health professionals involved in breastfeeding
 - Monitoring and evaluation of policies and actions
- The Maternal and Child Health Handbook has been reviewed to include a growth monitoring chart, for ages 0-19 years has been included in the MCH Handbook. This Handbook is a good source of information and knowledge on MCH and will guide healthcare professionals in dispensing the appropriate care to mothers and babies. 12,000 copies have been produced in collaboration with WHO and distributed to mothers attending antenatal clinics.



- **Other activities**

- Training on monitoring in labour ward for health personnel- 2 sessions with 50 participants each
- Three Awareness days on Sexual and Reproductive Health, including maternal and child health
- Community talks on breastfeeding – 12 sessions with 30 participants each
- Workshop on breastfeeding, antenatal and postnatal care - 2 sessions with 50 participants each
- One Workshop on stakeholders mapping on SRH with 30 participants
- Two days National Conference on Breastfeeding with 30 participants
- Radio/ TV programs on Maternal and Child Health
- Community awareness on Maternal and Child Health – 10 sessions with 30 participants each
- Celebration of International Day of Midwife 2023

2.2.4 SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES

The Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) Unit of the MOHW is committed to promoting sexual and reproductive health and to advance reproductive health and rights in the country, especially for women and young people. Over the years, Sexual and Reproductive health services as well as its indicators have improved tremendously and Mauritius has already achieved some of the health-related SDG targets set for 2030.

The different programmes that make up the SRH Unit are as follows: Family Planning; Safe Motherhood; Infant and Child Health; Breastfeeding; Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health; Cancers of the Reproductive Tract among Females; Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health; Male Sexual Dysfunctions and Geriatrics-related SRH.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

1. National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy 2022 and National Sexual and Reproductive Health Implementation Plan 2022 – 2027

The National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy 2022 was launched in October 2022 with the goal to promote quality and safe sexual and reproductive health among women, men and youth through informed choices and anchored on a rights-based approach. It endorses guiding principles such as human rights, stakeholders' involvement, accountability and transparency.

The policy focuses largely on promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as enhancing health services for victims of Gender Based Violence, including sexual violence. To guide the implementation of the policy, a National Steering Committee has been set up along with 5 different subcommittees.

2. Other achievements

- In service training on modern methods of contraception and preconception care – 3 sessions with 50 participants each
- Collaboration with Action Familiale – empowerment of single and teenage mothers for the project “Konn to valer” with 100 participants
- One Workshop on Sexually Transmitted Infections with 50 participants
- Three Awareness days on Sexual and Reproductive Health
- One Workshop on Adolescent Health with 50 participants
- One Workshop on stakeholders mapping on SRH with 30 participants
- Radio/ TV programs on Sexual and Reproductive Health
- One Sensitization session on Adolescent Health Services
- Celebration of World Sexual Health Day 4th September 2022

2.2.5 NUTRITION UNIT

The Nutrition Unit of the MOHW is involved in the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of healthy eating habits. The unit is composed of a Chief Nutritionist, 2 Principal Nutritionists and 13 Nutritionists/Senior Nutritionists and it advises on all matters relating to nutrition and on the formulation of health nutrition policies, amongst others. The nutrition services offered by the Nutrition Unit, therefore, are both preventive and curative.

Diet counselling is provided by the Nutritionists to both outpatients and inpatients on therapeutic diets at hospital level. This service is also extended to the Community through the AHCs and CHCs. The Nutritionists are also called upon to advise on the nutritional standard of the hospital's general food services and ensuring that the prescribed diets are prepared and supplied to patients. Health Promotion activities including talks on nutrition and healthy eating habits are targeted to all age groups.



Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- **Conduct of the Mauritius National Nutrition Survey 2022**

The National Nutrition Survey was conducted in August 2022. The overall objective was to study food consumption patterns and assess the nutritional status of the population with a view to address diet and nutrition related health problems, and non-communicable diseases in the country. The target population comprised individuals aged between 5 to 74 years and categorised into four age groups.

The nutrition survey 2022 has provided a clearer understanding of the typical dietary practices, food choices and eating habits of the Mauritian population and their impacts on the nutritional and health status of the average child, adolescent and adult aged 5-74 years. The majority of the populations are consuming sufficient food. However, certain trends have been observed regarding underweight, overweight, obesity, and micronutrient deficiencies that are present in sub-groups of the survey population. This is called “hidden hunger” which needs to be addressed by further improving the quality of diet being consumed by the population.

- **Mandatory Wheat Flour Fortification with iron, folic acid, Vitamin B₁₂ and Zinc**

In April 2023, the Mauritian Standards for Wheat Flour Fortification was gazetted. The State Trading Corporation (STC) will henceforth refer to the Mauritian Standards for the procurement of wheat flour. Les Moulins de la Concorde (LMLC) will in turn produce fortified wheat flour as per the Mauritian Standards. The Mauritian Standards for the Wheat Flour Fortification has been inserted in the draft Food Regulations 2023 making the fortification of wheat flour mandatory in Mauritius. It is expected that the first batch of fortified flour will be on the local market by early October 2023.

- **Establishment of the Mauritius Food Standards Authority (MFSA)**

MFSA Act was passed in the National Assembly on 27 October 2022 and was assented by the President of the Republic on 31 October 2022. A board has been set up for the administration of the Agency. The mission of the Mauritius Food Standards Agency is to guarantee consumers a high degree of food safety and nutritional quality of food that is produced, packaged and imported, before being sold on the local market. Consequently, this will promote transparency regarding the functioning of the country's food industry.

- **Review and Strengthen the National Nutritional Surveillance System (NNSS) for children from zero to less than five years in the Republic of Mauritius**

- (i) Growth charts for children 0-5 years have been updated with the technical assistance of WHO.

All anthropometric equipment (baby weighing scale, Length boards and Mother-child tarring scale) as per WHO standards are being procured for all Health institutions involved in data collection for infants and children.

- **The permissible level of Trans Fatty Acid in fats and oils and the level of salt in bread has been included in the Draft Food Regulation 2023**

The Draft Food Regulations 2023 includes:

- (i) Level of salt in bread: The level of salt in the commonly consumed bread has been regulated through the draft Food Regulations 2023 to less than 1 gram of salt per 100 grams of baked bread.
- (ii) Sale of foods in school canteens” (pre-primary, primary, pre-vocational and secondary schools): The list of healthy foods allowed for sale in school canteens being enforced as from 2010, has been revised and updated and included in the draft Food Regulations 2023.
- (iii) Trans Fatty Acids: The permitted level of industrially produced Trans Fatty Acids in fats and oils has been amended. The amended regulation will limit industrially produced TFA to a maximum of 2% of total fat in all fats, oils and foods.

2.2.6 AYURVEDIC MEDICINE

Under the 'Ayurveda and other Traditional Medicine Act-1989', the practice of Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Chinese system of Medicine are recognized and regulated in Mauritius. At present, six Ayurvedic Clinics are providing the following Ayurvedic services to the population:

- Free Consultation and Diagnosis
- Ayurvedic Panchkarma Therapy on prescription
- Advising therapeutic yoga in all required and appropriate cases
- Special session of NCD with Ayurvedic management
- Advising and counselling of patient as per Ayurvedic principles
- Free distribution of Ayurvedic Medicine
- Regular follow-up of all cases depending on its acute or chronic condition
- Awareness programmes

Ayurvedic health services are provided at the outpatient level which is open 6/7 days. Mauritians attend these Ayurvedic clinics for various ailments ranging from hairfall, chronic joint disorders, skin problems like psoriasis, digestive problems, obesity, NCDS and even with complications like cardiovascular diseases, renal diseases, cancer etc.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Attendances/Cases

- Following the COVID-19 pandemic aftermath the routine Ayurvedic service has come to its normal functioning. Patients attending the clinics are reverting back for their regular follow up.
- Brief Statistic report for all 6 Ayurvedic clinics for the year 2022:

Attendances/Cases	
Total number of attendances	40,162
Total number of diseases treated	73,539
Total number of new case (M)	3,521
Total number of new case (F)	4,961
Total number of follow up (M)	11,126
Total number of follow up (F)	20,550

- Statistics for NCDs cases:

Year	Total no. of High BP cases	Total no. of Diabetes cases
2017	2604	5778
2018	3965	7829
2019	4514	10064
2020	4358	9181
2021	4599	9929
2022	5345	10760

2.2.7 TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL CONTROL UNITS

Tobacco Control Unit

The Tobacco Control Unit is mainly involved in drafting policies with respect to the public health implications and the subsequent impact of tobacco consumption on the population. Mauritius has ratified the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control since 2004 and this unit of the MOHW operates to implement the guidelines of the Convention. The TCU also ensures proper implementation of the recommendations of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade of Tobacco Products which the country acceded in 2018, provides technical support for the enforcement of the Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) Regulations 2022 and liaising with importers of tobacco products for issuance of clearances among others.



Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The Unit has been involved in the preparation of the Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) Regulations 2022 which was promulgated in 2022 and came into force on 31 May 2023. These regulations brought about bans on imports of tobacco products such as electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, roll-your-own tobacco products, heated tobacco products and accessories to be used with these tobacco products. Together with the bans, these regulations brought about plain packaging of cigarettes for the local market.
- Capacity building workshops have been carried out both in Mauritius and Rodrigues.
- Four workshops were organized in collaboration with ViSA (NGO) to train officers of the Mauritius Police Force to better implement the Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) Regulations 2022 and its subsequent amendments.
- Mauritius has hosted, in collaboration with the WHO Country Office and WHO AFRO, a workshop for legal and judicial experts of the Afro region in tobacco control measures from 01 to 03 March 2023.
- In May 2023, in line with the World No Tobacco Day 2023, the Ministry organized a National Fresque Murale Competition with students of Grade 8 to 10 in over 30 colleges to sensitise youngsters over the ill effects of tobacco and over the need to choose a healthier lifestyle. The theme of the competition was – “We need food, not tobacco”. The prize giving ceremony was held on 31 May 2023 to celebrate the World No Tobacco Day.
- Two pamphlets have been launched namely, “L'alimentation et le tabac” and “Le guide du sevrage tabagique”.
- All activities carried out are in line with the National Action Plan for Tobacco Control 2022-2026.

Alcohol Control Unit

The alcohol unit focuses on strategies and establishment of frameworks targeted towards alcohol consumption control as a modifiable risk factor of NCDs. The services offered by alcohol unit are directed towards offering specialized care in psychiatric units of Regional Hospitals to cater for both in-patients and out-patients.

The unit is implementing the National Action Plan to reduce harmful use of Alcohol 2020-2024 which aims to achieve a 10% relative reduction in the harmful use of alcohol, as appropriate, within the national context by 2025, as per cited in Global NCD Target: Reducing Harmful Use of Alcohol (2016) article by the WHO. Midterm review for the National Action Plan to reduce harmful use of alcohol is presently under desk review at WHO (local office) for consultants to evaluate effectiveness of strategies listed to curb the consumption of alcohol nationally.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

1. The alcohol statistics depict a **decrease** in regular alcohol consumption from 66.2% in males and 41% in 2015 to an overall consumption of 60.8% as per NCD Survey 2021.
2. The abusive consumption of alcohol has **decreased** from 19.1% in 2015 to 15.4% in 2021 – **a relative reduction of approx. 4%.**
3. Sensitisation sessions through “Life Enhancement Education Program” were conducted with 13 NGOs and the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity.
4. Approximately 60 000 persons have been sensitized in the general public on harmful effect of alcohol consumption through health activities and screening sessions conducted by the Health Promotion Unit.
5. Additional support received from WHO for (i) social media cards for sensitisation on alcohol, and (ii) the organization of additional activities such as “Dry Day” and raising awareness on fetal alcohol syndrome.
6. Assistance provided to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare with respect to the Gender Based Violence Mobile App, LESPWAR and the hotline 139 to support victims of gender-based violence including alcohol as a causal factor.
7. Training sessions delivered to officers of HIEC Unit to disseminate information in the community.
8. Approval from Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology to conduct educational sessions on alcohol use by HIEC in tertiary institutions.

PART II - SECTION C

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

2.3 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES



According to the WHO, “public health refers to all organized measures (whether public or private) to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life among the population as a whole”. The Public Health Unit of the Ministry drives policies with regard to public health and deals with emerging and re-emerging communicable diseases, environment health, food safety and licensing of private health institutions. In the wake of the COVID-19, the need for well-prepared public health services to address these challenges in real time, has been strongly felt.

In this line, the disease surveillance at the points of entry is being reinforced. The Ministry partnered with the WHO to commit to the multisectoral engagement using the One Health approach to strengthen public health emergencies detection, early preparedness, and swift response through a multi-year action plan known as the Mauritius National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) to be implemented over 2 years.

As a signatory of the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005), the Republic of Mauritius had conducted voluntary and external assessments such as the State Party Annual reporting (SPAR) and the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) in 2018. The results of these evaluations, coupled with lessons learned from the national response to the COVID-19 have enabled the identification of all necessary actions to improve national capacities and define the NAPHS.

With the support of WHO, the MOHW is working on the finalisation of the NAPHS which reflects stronger political commitment and multi-sectoral engagement to advance a comprehensive preparedness and response plan to strengthen the health security. It is a milestone that sets the country to invest smartly to further protect its population and to minimize effects of outbreaks and pandemics.

The Ministry is also envisaging to set up a Public Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) with the technical assistance of the World Health Organization for addressing emerging and re-emerging diseases. The PHEOC will serve as a coordinating platform for the preparation, readiness, response, and recovery from public health emergencies among relevant stakeholders. A functional PHEOC will be the backbone of a strong disease surveillance system and will provide real-time response to any public health emergency, early disease detection and response for timely decision making and efficient management of resources and communication.

It is expected to have fewer human casualties and consequently lesser socioeconomic repercussions with preparedness for the early detection of public health emergencies and timely interventions. The international platforms have shown that preparedness to public health emergencies were better in terms of cost effectiveness as compared to unplanned and unprepared responses.

The achievements for the FY 2022-2023 of the different units falling under the Public Health Services have been elaborated in this part of the Report.

2.3.1 PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY INSPECTORATE

The Public Health and Food Safety (PHFS) Inspectorate Unit is responsible for the protection of public health in order to promote a healthy living environment. It enforces, *inter-alia*, the Public Health Act 1925, the Food Act 2022, the Quarantine Act 2020 and its Regulations, the Dangerous Chemicals Control Act as subsequently amended and other related Regulations including the International Health Regulations. Its objective is to sustain measures for the prevention and control of communicable diseases, environmental sanitation, and food safety.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

A. PUBLIC HEALTH

Environmental Sanitation

Statistics as regards Environmental Sanitation is given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of premises inspected	61,357
No. of Sanitary notices served	2,583
No. of Notices served (water nuisances)	3,133
No. of Statement of Nuisances issued	916
No. of complaints attended	3,294
No. of contraventions established for environmental sanitation	27
No. of cases sentenced in District Courts	27
Revenue from Fines paid in District Courts	(as fine) Rs 53,200 + (as costs) Rs 2,200

Prevention and control of epidemic-prone communicable diseases (Vector-borne diseases)

Statistics as regards to communicable diseases and larviciding are given in the following table:

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
Communicable Diseases	
No. of cases of Dengue reported	Imported - 18, Local - 57
No. of cases of Chikungunya reported	0
No. of passengers visited for Dengue and Chikungunya surveillance	324,427
No. of cases of Filariasis detected amongst Expatriate Workers	Imported - 330, Local - 0
No. of Imported cases of Malaria notified	Imported - 41, Introduced - 0 Local - 0
No. of Incoming passengers visited for Malaria surveillance	357,008
No. of blood smears sent to laboratory to test for Malaria parasite	115,771
No. of cases of Zika reported	0
No. of passengers visited for Zika surveillance	72,361
Larviciding	
No. of premises covered during larviciding	393,464
Amount of chemical larvicide used (Temephos – common name Abate)	206 Kg

B. FOOD SAFETY CONTROL

Food Hygiene

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of Food premises inspected	21,618
No. of Food squads carried out	418
No. of school canteens visited	1,153
No. of Improvement Notices served	3,243
No. of Prohibition Orders issued	61
No. of Notice prior to Emergency Closing Order issued	12
No. of food complaints attended	437
No. of Contraventions established	549
No. of cases sentenced in District Courts	461
Revenue from Fines paid in District Courts	(as fine) Rs 1,054,700 + as costs Rs 140,600

Food Seizures

Statistics in respect of food seizures are given in the table hereunder.

Food seized	July 2022 – June 2023
Meat & meat products	7.8 Kg
Fish & fish products	149 Kg
Milk & milk products	33.9 Kg
Vegetables & Fruits	117.9 Kg
Canned foods, bottles & others (eggs)	36.3 Tons
Food seized destroyed under the supervision of Officers of the Public Health and Food Safety Inspectorate	28.05 Tons

Food Sampling

Statistics in respect of food sampling are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of food samples taken for chemical analysis	331
No. of food samples taken for microbiological examination	1,263
No. of samples taken for Toxicological, forensic examinations, etc.	1,485
Total No. of samples taken for analysis	3,079

Food Handlers Training

Statistics in respect of food handlers training are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of food handler's training sessions delivered	697
No. of food handlers examined	68,035
Food Handler's Training upon request from private food establishments against payment	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of food handler's training sessions delivered upon request from private food establishments against payment	625
Revenue collected for delivering Food Handler's Training upon private food establishments	Rs 2,645,000

Food Poisoning

The number of food poisoning cases whereby Inquiries carried out by PHFS was 101 in FY 2022-2023.

Pre-Market Approval Permit (PMAP) and Food Import Unit

One (1) Pre-Market Approval Permit has been issued during the FY 2022-2023. Statistics regarding the activities of the Food Import Unit is given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
Containers of foodstuffs examined/released	
No. of containers of foodstuffs examined/released by FIU at the Port	118,384
Food Sampling by FIU * (already included in table above)	
No. of food samples taken for chemical analysis	124
No. of food samples taken for microbiological examination	126
TOTAL no. of food samples	250
Foodstuffs not granted release	
Foodstuffs not granted release at Port & bonded warehouses	40.2 Kg
Revenue collected for fumigation of containers	
Revenue collected in respect of fumigation of food containers	Rs 2,326,000

Squad Operations

Squad operations are done to target activities which are normally unreachable or not in operation during normal working hours. Such activities include cooking and selling of food by roadside, 'grillade', and also food establishments like restaurants, bakeries etc.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of Squad operations carried out	418
No. of food inspections carried out	3,810
No. of Contraventions established	72

C. TOBACCO CONTROL

Statistics in respect of tobacco control are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of Visits effected	14,182
No. of Contraventions established	40
No. of cases sentenced in District Courts	21
Revenue from Fines paid in District Courts	Rs 38,000

D. PORT HEALTH ACTIVITIES

General Port Health activities

Statistics as regards general Port Health activities are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 - June 2023
General	
No. of ships given pratique	2,919
No. of Sick Persons from Incoming Ships Referred To RPHS	24
Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate	
No. of ships visited for issue of Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate	514
De-ratting of ships	
No. of deratting of ships performed	16
Fumigation of ships	
No. of ships fumigated	17
No. of holds of ships fumigated	42
TOTAL no. of containers of food fumigated	2,732
Revenue Collected for de-ratting and fumigation services	
Revenue collected in respect of services offered at the Port (viz. fumigation of food containers, deratting of vessels and Ship Sanitation Certificates)	Rs 2,622,000

Rodent Control

Statistics pertaining to rodent control are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of complaints attended	50
No. of visits carried out	7,805
No. of rats caught/ killed	3,912
No. of specimens forwarded to laboratory for detection of plague disease (N.B. All were negative for plague)	62
No. of Sensitization programs effected	3,716

E. ACTIVITIES AT AIRPORT HEALTH OFFICE

Statistics as regards General Port Health activities are given in the following table.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
Screening of passengers	
No. of planes landed	10,079
No. of passengers screened	1,565,067
No. of planes disinfected on arrival	25
No. of planes disinfected on departure	0
Amount aerosol insecticide used	2.5 Kg
No. of Passenger under surveillance of other diseases (SARS, Avian Flu, Mers Cov, Corona Virus etc...)	93,080

No. of Passengers screened for Ebola	245,817
No. of Passengers screened for Flu	9,648
No. of Passengers screened for Plague	134,248
No. of Passengers screened for Dengue	105,245
No. of Passengers screened for Chikungunya	62,292
No. of Passengers screened for Cholera	70,083
No. of Passengers screened for Malaria	45,606
No. of Passengers screened for Zika	323,677

F. LODGING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EXPATRIATE WORKERS (Dormitories)

Statistics in respect of dormitories are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of dormitories inspected	1,877
No. of dormitories in good sanitary condition during 1st visit	877
No. of dormitories issued with list of requirements for compliance	533
No. of Health Clearances issued	703

G. CREMATION / EXHUMATION

Statistics concerning cremation and exhumation are given in the table hereunder.

Item	July 2022 – June 2023
No. of cremation permits issued by Health Offices	5,716
No. of private cremation sites visited	27
No. of exhumations attended	8
No. of Unclaimed dead bodies for which needful done for interment by Health Offices after completion of formalities by Police	14

H. REVIEW OF LEGISLATIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Involvement of PHFS Inspectorate in the review of Food Act and its Regulations. The Food Act 2022 was enacted in July 2022 and a new Food Regulations is being finalised.
- Involvement for the Mauritius Food Standards Agency (MFSA) Act 2022 which has been enacted in October 2022. The Composition of the Board was approved by Government on 30 January 2023. The Agency was set up in April 2023 and the Board of the MFSA has already had three meetings since now and the operationalisation of the Agency is being worked out.
- Involvement in the review of Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) Regulations.

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENGINEERING UNIT (EHEU)

In Mauritius, the management of public health risks such as unsafe drinking water, inadequate sanitation, noise, and odor pollution falls under the purview of the Ministry of Health and Wellness. The EHEU of the Ministry is the Unit responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of Drinking Water Quality Control, Noise and Odor under the Environment Protection Act 2002 (as amended).

Amongst others, the EHEU has to:

- Monitor Drinking-Water Quality to ensure that drinking-water being distributed to the public is safe for drinking and consumption purposes in line with Drinking-Water Standards of the Environment Protection Act 2002 (as amended) and WHO Guidelines;
- Monitor Environmental Noise to ensure that environmental noise emanation is within the permissible limits as prescribed under the Environment Protection Act;
- Carry out investigation and monitoring in relation to environmental problems in relation to odor and wastewater.

Moreover, the Professional Cadre also assists the Project Implementation Unit of the Ministry as regards to conceptions and implementation of civil (construction) related projects of the Ministry. In this respect, the Unit also participates in evaluation, preparation of Terms of Reference for major projects and attending site visits/meetings with consultants and contractors.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Drinking-Water Quality Monitoring: In order to ensure that the drinking water being supplied conforms to the established norms, the Ministry of Health and Wellness conducts independent tests on daily drinking-water samples collected along the water distribution lines. A total of 4,490 drinking water samples were taken and analysed for bacteriological and physico-chemical analyses during the period under review.

Noise Monitoring: The Ministry has nine (9) sound level meters to measure the noise intensity levels in decibels [dB (A)Leq]. The Ministry has also set up a squad for noise monitoring after office hours and same is in operation since the beginning of July 2009. From July 2022 to end June 2023 the said squad has carried out a total **193 noise assessments** after office hours in addition to attending to **464 noise complaints** received at the EHEU for the same period.

Other activities for monitoring of Environmental Hazards: To safeguard environmental health and ensure that proper environmental sanitation is maintained, odour complaints are attended to, and visits are carried out at wastewater and water treatment plants. Site visits are also undertaken for the processing of Environment Impact Assessments (EIAs), Preliminary Environment Reports (PERs) and morcellement applications. From July 2022 to end June 2023:

- 262 odour complaints have been received and attended to;
- 221 visits have been carried out to wastewater treatment plants;
- 236 visits have been carried out to water treatment plants;

- 42 EIA applications have been received and processed;
- 10 PER applications have been received and processed;
- 225 visits have been undertaken for Ex-Post monitoring of EIAs/PERs;
- 24 Building Plans applications for Government Projects have been received and processed;
- 802 site visits have been carried for processing of morcellement applications.

2.3.3 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES CONTROL UNIT (CDCU)

The Communicable Disease Control Unit (CDCU) at national level is under the supervision of the Regional Public Health Superintendent of CDCU and Director Health Services (Preventive). It serves as the primary agency for the control and prevention of communicable diseases. CDCU manages and coordinates the work at the regional level, is responsible for the analysis and interpretation of data, submission of reports, which are essential for the planning, implementation and evaluation of appropriate public health measures.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023:

Table V: Vector-Borne and Other Diseases

Vector-borne diseases - July 2022 to June 2023	
Number of passengers placed under malaria surveillance	299,998
Number of blood smears (slides) taken	69,460
Number of cases of malaria detected (All imported)	38
Number of passengers placed under Dengue/Chikungunya surveillance	261,005
Number of cases of Dengue detected (All Imported)	13
Number of cases of Chikungunya detected	-
Number of passengers placed under surveillance for Zika Virus	59,958
Number of cases of Zika detected	-
Number of Filariasis cases detected (all imported)	297
Other diseases on surveillance at points of entry (Port and airport)	
Number of passengers placed under surveillance for Avian Flu/ MERS-CoV	67,417
Number of passengers placed under surveillance for Corona Virus	26652
Number of passengers placed under surveillance for cholera	56,639
Amount of larvicide (Temephos) used (Litres)	144
Amount of fogging solution used (Litres)	78.6
Amount of indoor residual spraying solution used (Litres)	107.3

Expanded Programme of Immunization

Under the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI), the following activities have been carried out during the period 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023:

Babies, infants, toddlers and children have been vaccinated against 13 antigens: for girls 13 antigens and boys 12 antigens.

- a) 9,351 doses of BCG were administered to babies against Tuberculosis infection;
- b) 16,731 doses of Rotavirus were administered to babies against diarrhoea (Rotavirus infection);
- c) 29,048 doses of Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine were administered to babies against Pneumococcal infection;
- d) 37,749 doses of Hexavalent vaccines were administered to babies against the six killing diseases. (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus Toxoid, Haemophilus Influenzae type b, Hepatitis B and Inactivated Polio Virus) in a single injection which has been introduced in January 2018;
- e) 7,173 booster doses of Diphtheria, Tetanus, acellular Pertussis and Inactivated Polio Vaccine (DTaP-IPV) were administered to school children;
- f) 18,835 doses of MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) were administered to babies;
- g) 3,622 doses of Human Papillo virus vaccine were administered to Primary school girls of Grade V and Grade VI to protect against Cervical cancer; and
- h) 7,501 doses of Diphtheria, Tetanus, acellular Pertussis (Tdap) were administered to Grade V and VI school children.

2.3.4 GOVERNMENT ANALYST DIVISION (GAD)

The Government Analyst Division (GAD) is the Chemistry Laboratory of the MOHW and falls under the directorate of Public Health. of the Ministry. The GAD caters for both public and private entities. Private firms and individuals are charged fees for services from GAD.

The activities at the Division include:

- **Regulatory Activities:** Food analysis as per Food Act 2022, Alcohol analysis as per Excise Act, Drinking water analysis as per Environmental Protection Act 2002.
- **Clinical Analysis:** Toxicological screening for body fluids from patients in poisoning cases, Heavy metals in Biomedical samples.
- **Support to different MOHW units:** Determination of blood cholinesterase level for sprayer men, Heavy metals in Body fluids for industrial workers, Dialysis water quality from Haemodialysis Unit, Methadone quality for Harm Reduction Unit, Hypochlorite content in disinfection products, Determination of Sugar content in foods, Analysis of samples submitted by the Dangerous Chemical Control Board, Quality Control of Pharmaceuticals and Analysis of food samples served during official banquets.

- **Support for National Surveys:** Lagoonal monitoring - Heavy metals levels in fish and Nutrition survey- Micro-nutrients in blood.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023:

- From July 2022 to June 2023, GAD has analysed 3,080 samples which correspond to about 30,000 test parameters. Analysis for private customers has generated Rs1,342,650.
- The GAD has obtained accreditation to the ISO 17025:2017 Quality Management system standard as certified by the MAURITAS in 2022. The division is accredited to the following Testing fields: Food and Chemical Testing. The Division is working towards extending the number of parameters under scope to cover heavy metals testing in drinking water and biomedical samples.
- In collaboration with the Environment Health Engineering Unit, GAD has analysed drinking water from boreholes and reservoir around the Mare Chicose region following the fire at landfill site. The water was free from any contamination. The monitoring is ongoing with periodic sampling by the EHEU.
- GAD has analysed 54 samples of medicines including Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicine, Beta-adrenoceptor blocking agent, Tricyclic Antidepressant among others, for the MOHW. The tests were carried out to detect sub-standard or falsified medicines. Types of medicines analysed were tablets, coated/prolonged release tablets, syrups, ophthalmic solutions, infusions and injectables.
- The Division has extended its testing capabilities by introducing
 1. Serum lithium level for psychiatric patients
 2. Serum Paracetamol levels for overdosed patients
- The use of a newly commissioned Gas Chromatography Triple Quadrupole Mass Spectrometer has enabled GAD to screen for a larger number of pesticides in food and drinking water. The GAD can now screen for 406 pesticides and degradation products with improved detection limits.
- Statistics of activities at GAD in terms of number of samples analysed are as tabulated:

	Private Customers	Governmental Organisation
Analytical Toxicology (in poisoned patients)	99	1597
Trace metals in body fluids	135	49
Cholinesterase	276	128
Food Testing	153	340
Drinking water (EHEU)	-	115
Dialysis water	-	72
Bottled water	1	25
Medicines	-	54
Non-Food (including disinfection products)	3	33
Total	667	2413

2.3.5 VECTOR BIOLOGY CONTROL DIVISION (VBCD)

The responsibilities of vector studies, surveillance and strategical control are vested to the Vector Biology and Control Division (VBCD) of the MOHW. The overarching objective of the Division is to gear Mauritius to be free from resurging/newly emerging vector-borne diseases and to prone efficient control of existing vectors of such diseases in the country. Its main activities include the following:

- (1) Conducting daily surveys: i) to evaluate the incidence and behaviour of mosquitoes and other arthropods of diseases, ii) upon notification of vector borne disease and to provide guidelines for vector control interventions.
- (2) Evaluating fogging, spraying, larviciding operations, as well as the efficacy of insecticide products and vector control operations.
- (3) Surveying other disease vectors such as the fresh-water snail *Bulinus cernicus* and biting midges belonging to the *Culicoides* genus.
- (4) Screening for resistance to commonly-used insecticides in the island's mosquito populations and other arthropods (fleas, bedbugs, mites, ticks, etc.)
- (5) Participating in public awareness campaigns on vector-borne diseases, vectors and their control.
- (6) Conducting research on novel environment-friendly methods or strategies to decrease mosquito incidence in Mauritius.
- (7) Identifying insects of (i) forensic importance which are retrieved from human corpses and (ii) entomological importance from food specimens submitted by the sanitary department.
- (8) Conducting surveys and recommending control measures in case of infestation of hospitals, other private/public institutions or houses by arthropods such as bed bugs, fleas, ticks, amongst others.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Routine activities	
Number of mosquito surveys carried out	413
Number of sites inspected for mosquito larvae	39,314
Number of sites with larvae that were overturned or treated with insecticide	395
Number of bed bug surveys carried out upon request	114
Number of other pest-related surveys (ticks, fleas, mites, cockroaches, ants, millipedes, etc.) carried out upon request	26
Number of mosquito night-catch surveys carried out to assess mosquito biting incidence and behaviour	7
Number of entomological exhibits from suspected criminal cases examined (Forensic entomology)	12
Number of times VBCD officers deposed in a court of law	11

Number of food specimens examined for insect infestation	8
Number of insecticide products tested for their efficacy	10
Number of insecticide resistance tests carried out	35
Additional/ research-related activities	
Zoonoses: Number of mosquito and <i>Culicoides</i> (biting midges) surveys conducted around animal points in collaboration with the Livestock and Veterinary Division under One Health	28
Surveys related to An. stephensi : Number of special surveys conducted at points of entry	60
Sterile Insect Technique: Number of sterile male mosquitoes produced and released in Champs de Mars area	1.56 million

PART II - SECTION D

HEALTH EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND NCD SCREENING SERVICES



2.4 HEALTH EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND NCD SCREENING SERVICES

The Ministry is also committed towards the development and implementation of appropriate health policy to address the rising global burden of NCDs. According to the WHO, majority of NCDs emanate from four specific behaviours; harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, physical inactivity, and unhealthy diet that are leading to four key metabolic/physiological changes such as raised cholesterol, raised blood pressure, overweight/obesity and raised blood glucose.

In order to address the growing challenges of NCDs while also contributing to communicable disease control efforts, distinguished units have been set up.

The achievements for the FY 2022-2023 of the different units falling under the Health Education, Promotion and NCD Screening Services have been elaborated in this part of the Report.

2.4.1 NCDS, HEALTH PROMOTION AND RESEARCH UNIT (NHPRU)



The NCDS, Health Promotion and Research Unit is responsible to organise, coordinate and execute health intervention programmes pertaining to prevention of NCDs and health promotion activities as well as to improve quality of life and well-being of the population through promotion of healthy lifestyles. The Unit undertakes activities related to communicable diseases with a view to further strengthen the ongoing surveillance programme for the control of communicable diseases.

The objectives of the Unit are to screen and provide health education to as many people as possible at worksites, secondary schools and outreach regions and for the community at large, promote the health status by means of nutritional intervention and increased physical activity, organize sensitization campaigns, talks and counselling sessions to prevent the development of NCDs; offer opportunities for lifestyle management; provide necessary infrastructure to enhance physical activity; and mobilize the community and enlist their participation.

Additionally, the Unit also conducts Research/Studies/Trials in all matters related to NCDs that include Life styles diseases such as Obesity, Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiovascular problems, Drug, Alcohol, Smoking and Substance abuse among others. Other NCDs like cancer and chronic respiratory diseases are also included in our research trials. Some examples of Research studies undertaken by the Unit are as follows:

- Rodrigues NCD Survey 2022
- Mauritius Nutrition Survey 2022
- The Prediction of Long COVID Metabolic Profiling in the Mauritius Population Survey 2022- 2023
- Global Blood Pressure Survey - May Measurement Month 2023
- Chromium Lactate Supplementation in people with impaired glucose intolerance (IGT) in Mauritius study 2023
- Rodrigues Nutrition Survey 2023

The Unit also assists in the preparation and implementation of National Action Plans namely:

- National Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol (2020-2024)
- National Action Plan for Tobacco Control (2021-2025)
- National Cancer Control Programme (2022-2025)
- National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN)
- National Sport and Physical Activity Policy (2018 – 2028)

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

A. NCD Screening Programme



NCD Screening Programme is being carried out for early detection, prevention and treatment of the diseases, thereby laying much emphasis on their risk factors and complications. It is conducted on a regular basis for people aged 18 and onward at work sites and community areas throughout the island. The activities carried out are: registration, height and weight measurement, blood pressure measurement, and blood test for glucose level measurement, vision tests, electrocardiography (ECG) consultation, counselling / health education, referral and follow up of positive cases and issue of Health Cards. The NCD Screening Programme also consists of an intensive health promotion campaign for the general public.

Total number of persons screened and counselled for NCDs during the period of **01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023: 45,098**. This Screening Programme was also done in collaboration with:

- (i) National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) for Social Registry of Mauritius (SRM) beneficiaries in order to outreach the service to the most vulnerable and needy people in the society - Number of participants screened: 2,077
- (ii) Citizen Support Unit (CSU) - Number of participants screened: 1,179

B. Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Programme



Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Programme has been re-engineered and the age for screening has been increased to 25 - 65 years instead of 30 - 60 years. The programme is for married or sexually active women. Guidelines laid by experts are followed for the early detection and treatment by using Liquid based cytology instead of conventional cytology (microslide-smear). For the period of **01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023**, the number of women who were screened for breast and cervical cancer are as follows:

- Breast Cancer Screening: **12,246**
- Cervical Cancer Screening: **8,395**

C. School Health Programme for Secondary Schools

Screening programme for students of secondary schools of Grade 7, Grade 9 and Grade 12 (aged between 13 – 17 years) is being carried out for the early detection of NCDs. The programme also comprises health promotion activities. For the period of 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023: 32, 562 students of Grade 7, Grade 9 and Grade 12 were screened.

D. Physical Activity Programme



A National Action Plan on Physical Activity has been implemented to create awareness in the population at national level regarding the need and importance of undertaking physical activity in Mauritius. Consequently, aggressive campaign for the practice of physical activity is continuously being emphasized for a more physically active and healthy nation.

Along with the activities of the 22 Health Clubs, the physical activity programme will continuously offer Yoga, Tai Chi, Aerobics, Bollywood Aerobics, Zumba, Physical Exercise, and Karate sessions in the **77 additional centres** throughout the island. Physical Instructors have been employed on contract basis to support the physical activity sessions which will be carried out throughout the island.

E. Health Promotion Campaigns

Health Promotion campaigns are being organized in the compound of commercial centers/ shopping malls/ district councils/ municipal councils across the island given that one of the recommendations of the Mauritius NCD Survey 2021 Report is to expand and strengthen the NCD and Health Promotion activities in the community.

The objectives of the Health Promotion Campaigns are to:

- Increase awareness on health-related issues such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, food safety, nutrition, family planning and many others,
- Increase awareness on health services available to the public, and
- Detect early through screening non-communicable diseases (DM, cancer, obesity, cardiac disease) and HIV for an early treatment.

The MOHW in collaboration with National Insurance Company Ltd (NIC) and the NGOs, namely, Diabetes Foundation Mauritius and Heart Foundation (Mauritius) have launched a series of 12 Health Promotion Campaigns throughout the island. These campaigns have already started as from 1st October 2022 across the island and will be conducted in 12 shopping outlets/malls and municipalities.

Out of the twelve, eight Health Promotion campaigns have already been organized.

Activities carried out during Health Promotion Campaigns are as follows:

- Counselling / Health Education - sensitization campaign through talks on: physical activity, healthy eating / Salt Intake, tobacco cessation, alcohol and substance abuse, mental health awareness and distribution of pamphlets on health issues
- NCD Screening by NHPRU
- Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening by NHPRU
- Blood Donation
- Counselling on adoption of safe behaviours, pre and post-test counselling by the AIDS and Harm Reduction Unit.
- Counselling on Nutrition
- Dental Services
- Cardiac Centre Services
- Interventions by Public Health and Food Safety Unit
- Interventions on Family Planning, Maternal Child Health, Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Interventions by Mauritius Sports Council / Active Mauritius
- Ayurvedic Services
- Interventions by NGOs (eg Link to Life, Mauritius Family Planning and Welfare Association, Heart Foundation (Mauritius) and Diabetes Foundation Mauritius)
- Exhibition by National Insurance Company Ltd (NIC)
- Live Animation, Public Entertainment and Quiz Competition

F. Sensitization/Health Education Campaigns

In all the screening sessions, whether in schools, communities and workplace, health education/talks are delivered on the following topics: healthy lifestyles, benefits of physical activity, risks factors associated with smoking, alcohol consumption and drug abuse.

Over **100,000** persons are sensitized through the NCD screening in worksite and community, School Health Programme even through CSU and NEF programmes. For the period of **year 2022-2023** some **113,275 talks** has been delivered on Tobacco, alcohol, cancer and other topics in the community, worksite and secondary schools.

In addition,

- Weekly TV and Radio Programme, Talks on NCDs and risk factors are carried out
- A TV programme named “**Priorité Santé**” is being broadcasted every week for 26 minutes with the aim to educate and sensitise on the various health topics.
- A special TV programme known as “**Tou Korek**” is mounted in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) with the aim to sensitize the population on NCDs and to decrease the number of people suffering from NCDs.
- Another TV programme named “**Minute Santé**” based on Nutrition and healthy lifestyle has been introduced.
- A new radio programme named “**Mauricien kone ou la santé**” will be aired in creole and Bhojpuri Language

G. Health Promotion Clubs



Health Promotion Clubs have been set up by the MOHW in collaboration with the PMO, Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms, Public Officers' Welfare Council and Mauritius Sports Council.

The objective of the Health Promotion Clubs is to encourage public officers to practice regular physical activity and to adopt healthy eating habits. There are also frequent talks on health issues including mental health, stress management, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, alcohol and substance abuse to raise awareness and prompt public officers to be more health conscious. Additionally, medical check-up for early detection of diabetes, hypertension, Breast and Cervical Cancer are also carried out. **70 Health Promotion clubs** have already been set up and others are in the pipeline. **Around 80,000** officers benefit from these clubs.

H. Development of a National Strategy for Adolescent Health (2023 - 2028)

According to the recommendations based on the findings of the Global School-Based Health Survey Mauritius 2017, it has been decided to establish a new programme known as the Adolescent Health Programme under the aegis of NHPRU. The proposed activities concerning adolescents are:

- Prevention of the risk factors for NCDs
- HIV and Drug Use prevention including Gender Base Violence and related issues
- Sexual health education and sexually transmitted infections prevention
- Diet and physical activity
- Sensitization against tobacco, alcohol and psychoactive substance
- Violence and injury prevention
- Prevention of mental health problems and promotion of mental health
- Nutrition – Balance diet
- Helping children and adolescents manage chronic conditions

This new programme has been further developed with a detailed action plan and is named as National Strategy for Adolescent Health (2023 - 2028) in collaboration with other Units within the Ministry, Ministry of Education, Tertiary education, Science & Technology, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare and Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation

During the FY 2022-2023, the NHPRU has been working on the development of the National Strategy for Adolescent Health (2023 - 2028).

I. Development of a National Service Framework for NCDs and a National Integrated NCD Action Plan

The NHPRU has been working on a **National Service Framework (NSF) for Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) (2023-2028)** which represents a key policy and implementation tool for delivering a real change in the way health and social care bodies and their local partners will work with people with long-term conditions to plan and deliver the services which they need to make their lives better. Its main objective is to support people with prevention and management of NCDs, maintaining independence and achieving the best possible quality of life through an integrated process of education, information sharing, assessment, care planning and service delivery.

The Unit has also been working on the **National Integrated NCD Action Plan (NINAP) for NCDs** will provide a vision for identifying barriers and opportunities for NCDs and scaling up proven interventions through an implementation roadmap for the delivery of NCD-GAP by implementing the WHO General Programme of Work (GPW 13) and aligning it with 'Mauritius Vision 2030' and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The objectives of the NINAP (2023-2028) aim to achieve the prevention, control and management of NCDs by providing vision, strategic leadership and engaging in partnerships, shaping the research agenda, setting norms and standards, promoting and monitoring their implementation, articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options, strengthening technical support, catalysing innovation and change, building sustainable institutional capacity, and monitoring health situation and assessing health trends.

J. Implementation of Strategic Goal on Community Empowerment under Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) 2020 -2024

The purpose of the Local Health Committee (LHC) is to act as a link between the community and the local health service to:

- Ensure health services meet the health needs of the community
- Promote health services and health initiatives
- Enhance the health of their community

In line with the HSSP, **143** Local Health Committees has been set up at the PHC level throughout the Island.

K. Introduction of Cardisio Artificial Intelligence ECG (AI ECG)

The Cardisio Artificial Intelligence ECG (AI ECG), is being introduced in the NCD screening programme as from this year.

AI ECG records the electrical activity of the heart in three dimensions, that is; (X, Y, Z) and analyses parameters in an algorithm based in Frankfurt, Germany. All the information is sent to Germany via the internet instantly and results are obtained within 4 to 5 minutes. Traditional ECG provides only 40% results whereas the AI ECG has a sensitivity and sensibility around 98%.

Training was undertaken over two days in January 2023 for different medical and para-medical cadres. Eligibility Criteria for the selection of participant are as follows: Aged 45 years and above; High risk; Cardiovascular Risk Score should be 12 points and above.

L. Surveys / Research

(i) May Measurement Month

May Measurement Month is a global awareness campaign carried out by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, with the collaboration of the International Society of Hypertension (ISH) on a yearly basis. The aim of the May Measurement Month is to increase access to blood pressure screening as potentially the most effective way to reduce hypertension's adverse toll on health.

(ii) Mauritius NCD Survey 2021

The Mauritius NCD Survey 2020/2021 is the 7th NCD Survey. This NCD survey provides the current prevalence of NCDs and appropriate intervention strategies that will help reduce disease and risk factor prevalence and improve disease control. The main objective of the survey is to determine the prevalence and study the trends in the prevalence of Type 2 diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiovascular diseases and their associated risk factors in the Mauritian population.

A one-day workshop was organized in April 2023 to disseminate the findings to other stakeholders.

(iii) Rodrigues NCD Survey 2022

The Rodrigues NCD Survey had started in 2022. The enumeration exercise and the field survey were carried out with some 2000 participants. The Rodrigues NCD Survey report 2022 is under preparation.

(iv) Mauritius and Rodrigues Nutrition Surveys

The Preliminary Mauritius Nutrition Survey 2022 report was launched and disseminated in May 2023. The main objective of the Survey is to study food consumption patterns and assess the nutritional status of the population with a view to address the problem of non-communicable diseases in the country.

This Survey will serve to update national data on the population's BMI and waist circumference, selected blood biochemistry/parameters not included in national NCD surveys, food consumption patterns and trends in dietary intake and physical activity levels. Baseline data will be available regarding nutritional status and dietary habits of the under-five group in this country as well on breastfeeding practices and prevalence. This survey will also help to evaluate the on-going Nutrition programmes.

In May 2023, the Mauritius Nutrition Survey 2022 report was disseminated while field activities of Rodrigues Nutrition Survey 2023 are planned to be conducted in the next FY.

(v) Chromium lactate supplementation in people with impaired glucose intolerance (IGT) in Mauritius

The MOHW, in collaboration with University of Helsinki, Finland and World Community for Prevention of Diabetes has conducted the Chromium Lactate Supplementation throughout the island of Mauritius in June 2023 with a total of 212 participants.

The aim of the study is to compare the possible beneficial changes in glucose parameters after 2-months of diet supplementation with of Chromium-lactate (BioChrome) with no-supplementation of chromium-lactate (usual care) in adult individuals with impaired glucose tolerance (pre-diabetes) in Mauritius. The study will enable to find out dietary factors for the prevention of diabetes in persons at high risk of developing diabetes over 2-month period of time.

M. Vaccination Campaign against COVID-19



Till date Mauritius has received 3,503,710 doses of different COVID-19 vaccines. The NHPRU has been assigned the task of Vaccine deployment and cold chain monitoring from the General Warehouse to Regional Pharmacies and finally to the vaccination centres. The vaccine storage modalities and a calendar for its administration are handled by the Unit.

An inventory of available vaccine is monitored by the NHPRU along with the Pharmacist in charge at the General Warehouse and Regional Pharmacies. Random spot checks are carried out by NHPRU staff to cross-check the vaccine inventory in the Regional Pharmacies.

During the FY 2022-2023, the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been sustained for the administration of 1st, 2nd, booster and second booster dose vaccine for adults and administration of vaccine to adolescents aged 12 to 17 years.

N. HPV Vaccination Campaign

In 2016, a National HPV Vaccination Programme was introduced, focusing on administering the Cervarix vaccine to 9 years old girls in schools. However, the National Cancer Control Program 2022-2025, aims to expand the HPV program to include young boys. In this context, the MOHW, in partnership with the WHO and the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science, and Technology, has launched a national HPV vaccination programme. This program now targets a total of 108,000 students, both boys and girls aged 9 to 15, within schools, through the utilisation of Gardasil-9 vaccine.

In addition, as part of the communication strategies for the sensitization of the public about the importance of HPV vaccination, a series of 4 videos have been launched describing;

1. The Human Papillomavirus,
2. The HPV vaccine,
3. Why parents should vaccinate their children and
4. Why boys also should get vaccinated.

O. Celebration of International Health Events

The NHPRU also organises International Health Days to commemorate the call for attention of the population on public health issues and sensitisation. The common health days celebrated are:

(i) World Cancer Day; (ii) World Health Day; (iii) World No Tobacco Day; (iv) International Day of Yoga; (v) World Heart Day; (vi) Ayurveda Day World Diabetes Day

P. Official Functions

Various governmental functions are also organised by the NHPRU and these include:

- Launching Ceremony of National Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidelines
- Inauguration of the Fertility Clinic
- Inauguration of the Oxygen Generation Plant
- Inauguration of Autism Day Care Centre
- Launching of Health Week
- 12-Hour National Relay Walk, Jog and Run for Health
- Launching of Workshop on National Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination Campaign
- Laying foundation for new projects

2.4.2 HEALTH INFORMATION EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION UNIT

The HIEC Unit is a Supporting Unit which provides its services in the field of Health Promotion and Health Education to all Units/Departments of the MOHW and to non-health and medical sectors viz Ministry of Education, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Environment, Airports of Mauritius, NGOs, Civil Society, amongst others, and to the community in general. The HIEC Unit is mainly involved in mass media and community-based interventions, developing communication strategies to promote positive behaviour to encourage the Mauritian population to adopt healthy behaviours. I.E.C. materials like posters, stickers, pamphlets, leaflets, banners etc. are produced and distributed to health centres in all districts and also to the community.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

1. Mass media campaign on all health-related issues

- Co-ordinate MBC TV and Radio programmes
- Co-ordinate health programmes for private radios
- Facebook page on COVID-19

2. Production of Health promotion materials

- Posters, Pamphlets, Flyers, Newspaper inserts
- Media/ TV Spot/ Radio Spots
- TV Scroll- Billboard, Press communiqué

3. Community-based interventions (total of 800):

- Official requests for talks from Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research & Technology in ZEP schools for parents
- Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and MITD Centres
- Official requests for talks from Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development & Family Welfare
- Work places
- Social Welfare Centres, Community Centres and Youth Centres

4. Contract award to supplier for Media/Social Media campaign on Drug Prevention

5. Sensitisation on Dengue at MBC:

- Production and broadcast of 2 new spots on Dengue for MBC/ Facebook
- Design of a new Artwork to replace existing pamphlet on Dengue for Rodrigues and Mauritius
- Production of 50,000 new pamphlets
- Visit to Rodrigues Island with a view to assist in the fight against Dengue
- Talks on Dengue at community level

6. Distribution of pen drives to all public health institutions containing extracts of Priorite Sante TV programs on NCDs.

7. Activities undertaken in relation to decentralisation of specialist services in Health Regions 2, 4 and 5:

- Production of audio and video
- Mass media Campaign at MBC
- Update of pen drives in Hospitals, Mediclinics, AHCs, and CHCs
- Upload of same video on Facebook
- Production of 7 booklets

8. Fresque Murale Intercollege Painting Competition – World No Tobacco Day 2023: Award Ceremony, Production of 14 videos, Production of 2 pamphlets: 1. Sevrage tabagique and 2. Le tabac et l'alimentation

9. Yearly Returns for HIEC Activities for 2022:

Television: (a) Total No. of TV programs: 92 and (b) Broadcast of scrolls- ongoing: 200

Radio: Total No. of Radio Programs: 60

PART II - SECTION E

TRAINING, INFRASTRUCTURE,

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPORT

SERVICES



2.5 TRAINING, INFRASTRUCTURE, PROCUREMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES

On a yearly basis, the public health sector is expected to take strategic directions that will naturally be requiring additional financial resources, more adapted infrastructure and proficient workforce to meet the rising needs of the population and a dynamic sector. During FY 2022-2023, Government has been making major strides in investing in the required infrastructure and equipment to better respond to the needs of the population.

Under this section, the focus is laid on the training, research, and capacity building, operating within the MOHW which serves as a cornerstone for healthcare advancement. It embodies the commitment to holistic healthcare improvement through education, research, and workforce development.

It also describes the project implementation unit, the MOHW's procurement function, supply management of medical products, and information providers within MOHW, amongst others.

2.5.1 TRAINING, RESEARCH AND CAPACITY BUILDING UNIT (TRCBU)

The Training, Research and Capacity Building Unit (TRCBU) is responsible for local training as well as overseas training. The Unit is also responsible for offering elective (medical) placement, clinical (nursing) placement and placement in other health related department under the Health Professionals Training Framework.

The TRCBU receives projects/surveys for granting of ethical clearance. Issue of No Objection Certificates (NOC) And Statement of Need (SON) and Clinical Trials involving human subjects also fall under the purview of the TRCBU.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

1. Local Training

Institutions*	Completed Programmes	Ongoing Programmes	Forthcoming Programmes
Mauritius Institute of Health (MIH)	12 training programmes 837 Officers were trained	8 ongoing programmes, aiming to train around 100 Officers 2 research programmes	7 forthcoming programmes

Central School of Nursing (CSN)	• 5 training programmes • 350 Officers were trained	• 482 Officers are being trained in Diploma in Nursing, Basic Midwifery and Health Care Assisting	• 4 forthcoming programmes • 212 Officers are expected to receive training
Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd	• 80 Midwives were trained	• 33 Nursing Officers are being trained in Diploma in Mental Health Nursing.	• Diploma in Oncology Nursing

* Collaboration with the University of Mauritius (UoM) is in the pipeline for 5 programmes

2. Overseas Training

This Ministry is often called upon to nominate officers to attend training abroad. The requests emanate from different Training Institutions/ Organisations like the ITEC, IAEA, WHO, SADC, Africa CDC, among others. Some 211 officers from the MOHW have received training offered by the different Training Institutions/ Organisations abroad.

3. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

As per the MoU signed between the Ministry and the Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd (PML), the latter is currently conducting training in Diploma in Midwifery and Obstetrical Nursing for **80** Midwives and Diploma in Mental Health Nursing for **33** Nursing Officers. The Ministry is in process to sign an 'Accord Cadre de Coopération' in collaboration with the University of Mauritius (UoM), the University of Bordeaux, CHU Bordeaux and the French Embassy in order to provide postgraduate courses to our doctors.

4. Clinical Placement

The Health Professionals Training Framework between the MOHW and the UoM offers professional placement to undergraduate students in health-related programmes. The MoU between the MOHW, UoM and University of Geneva provides clinical facilities within public hospitals and specialised hospitals, for the clinical training of the undergraduate medical students of the programme.

Besides, the MOHW have Clinical Training Framework (CTF) Agreements and Supplemental Agreements signed with SSR Medical College, Anna Medical College, PML and Curtin Mauritius to cater for clinical training of undergraduate medical and nursing students at our public hospitals, specialised Hospital and Primary Health Care Centres.

During the FY 2022-2023, the Ministry has offered elective placement to **90** undergraduate medical students and **3** undergraduate nursing students in our Public Hospitals. In regard to undergraduate non-medical placement, same has been offered to **10** Mauritian students studying locally and **5** Mauritian students studying abroad.

The Ministry has also issued **7** No Objection Certificates to doctors who are pursuing postgraduate studies in South Africa during the FY.

5. National Ethics Committee

The main purpose of the National Ethics Committee (NEC) is to give ethical clearance before conducting any research involving human subjects. The main function of the NEC, amongst others, is to receive and review proposals for human research projects to determine whether they meet all relevant ethical standards and subsequently, approval is granted.

From 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, the National Ethics Committee granted clearance to **36** project proposals.

6. Clinical Research Regulatory Council (CRRC)

MAJOR CRRC ACTIVITIES		
1	Total number of Research Protocols received	25
	Initial Research protocol reviewed	8
	- Initial Research protocol not approved (1)	
	- Issue of Trial Licence to initial research studies (7)	
	Amended Research protocol reviewed	12
2	Total number of Clinical Trial Licences renewed	5
3	Total funds collected (Rs)	1,220, 000
4	Other activities: Organization of one consultative workshop: 31.01.23 Participation in stakeholder's meetings: MoHW, EDB, CIDP	

2.5.2 CENTRAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

The School of Nursing operates under the aegis of the MOHW and is mandated to deliver nursing and midwifery courses for the Ministry with a view to provide qualified nursing personnel for the public and to some extent private sector (clinics) as well.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

A	Successfully completed courses	Duration	Target groups	No. of participants
1.	First Aid Course	30 hrs	Ambulance Care Attendants	19 completed successfully
2.	National Diploma in Nursing Cohort Jan 2017 & Sept/Dec 2018		Trainee Nurses	5 passed Final Exam
3.	Certificate in Post Basic Community Health Nursing Cohort May 2022	40 weeks	Nursing Officers	28
4.	Certificate in Clinical Nursing Management & Ward Administration - Batch 1	6 weeks	Ward Managers	40

5.	Certificate in Clinical Nursing Management & Ward Administration - Batch 2	6 weeks	Ward Managers	41
B	Running Courses	Duration	Target groups	No. of participants
1.	Top Up Diploma in Nursing Batch 8	6 Months	Nursing Officers	217 (Awaiting results)
2.	National Diploma in Nursing (Cohort June 2020)	3 years	Trainee Nurses	16
3.	Basic Midwifery Course (Cohort July/Sept 2021)	2 years	Trainee Midwives	15
	Basic Midwifery Cohort August 2022	2 years	Trainee Midwives	25
4.	Health Care Assisting Course (Cohort May 2022) Group 1	1 year	Trainee HCA	72
	Health Care Assisting Sept 2022 Group 2	1 year	Trainee HCA	44
5.	National Diploma in Nursing (New Entrants) (Cohort 2023)	3 years	Trainee Nurses	128
6.	Top Up Diploma (Batch 9)	6 Months	Nursing Officers	140
7.	First Aid Course	30 hrs	Ambulance Drivers	10

2.5.3 THE MAURITIUS INSTITUTE OF HEALTH (MIH)

The Mauritius Institute of Health (MIH) as the Training and Research arm of the Ministry of Health and Wellness since 1989, promotes medical and health professional development and capacity building through the conduct of training programmes to upgrade, enhance and develop the skills of personnel. The MIH also caters for health systems research and acts as a focal point and resource centre for the production, exchange and promotion of health learning and health information material.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Training Programmes and Courses

(i) Completed

- Field Epidemiology Training Programme (FETP) Frontline One Health: 2nd cohort. 25 participants successfully completed the 13-week Certificate Course in March 2023 (20 from MOHW and 5 from Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security).
- National Certificate Level 5 in Physiotherapy Assisting – 5 candidates successfully completed this one-year certificate course in November 2022.
- 26 Nursing Officers posted to the Dialysis Units have completed the six-month Certificate Course in Nephrology and received their certificate in July 2022. A 2nd Cohort of 24 Nursing Officers successfully completed the programme in March 2023.

- 13 trainees have successfully completed the Certificate in Cooking in October 2022.
- 11 in-service Blood Bank Assistants/Senior Blood Bank Assistants successfully completed a six-month certificate course in Phlebotomy in March 2023.
- Top-Up Programme Leading to the National Pharmacy Technician Diploma (4th batch) - 16 trainees successfully completed the one-year training programme in May 2023.
- 23 SAMU Ambulance Drivers successfully completed a short training course in March 2023.

(ii) Ongoing

- Diplôme Universitaire (D.U.) de Soins en Médecine d'Urgence - 30 Nursing Officers
- National Pharmacy Technician Diploma Course (2nd batch) - 20 trainees
- National Certificate Level 5 in Physiotherapy Assisting - 1 candidate
- National Diploma in Diabetes Foot Care Nursing (2nd cohort) -13 Nursing Officers
- 1-year Certificate in Chronic Haematological Disorders - 11 Nursing Officers
- Short training in Mental Health for Health Care Assistants - 159 participants divided in 6 batches
- Certificate in Cooking - 26 trainees, divided in two batches

Training Related Activities

- The MIH acted as Awarding Body for both the School of Nursing of the MOHW and the Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd (PML).
- 293 Doctors attended 19 Continuing Professional Development sessions during period July 2022 to June 2023.
- 168 Dentists attended 10 Dental CPD Sessions.
- Online CPD –19 participants completed 38 online CPD courses during the period under review.

Virtual Health Library Mauritius (VHLM) and Health Institution Repository System (HIRS)

The Virtual Health Library Mauritius (VHLM) of the MIH provides health professionals with access to no less than 200,000 academic and professional peer-reviewed contents from international databases covering a wide range of scientific, technical and medical specialities.

User education and demonstration activities are conducted at the MIH to maximize usage. To date, 4,044 staff from medical, nursing and paramedical categories of the MOHW have been registered on the portal. A total of 180 Clinical Guidelines covering about 33 different pathologies as well as a set of 20 Standard Operating Procedures on National Infection Prevention Control are hosted on the VHLM.

Moreover, the Health Institution Repository System (HIRS) of the MIH consists of a digital collection comprising both scanned and born digital documents. As at date, the Repository consists of a collection of 450 documents.

2.5.4 MEDICAL PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY

The Procurement and Supply Unit of the MOHW is in charge for the planning, management, acquisition, maintenance, storage, stock control and distribution of hi-tech medical equipment, other medical equipment, surgical items, pharmaceutical products as well as other goods, works and services required. The Unit is broadly subdivided into the Pharmaceutical and Non-Pharmaceutical Sections. There is a Clearing and Forwarding Unit for customs clearances at the Airport and Seaport, a Stock Control Unit and a Procurement Unit at each Regional Hospitals.

As per the recent budget, Government has approved the construction of a modern warehouse of International Standard for essential medicines and medical consumables at Cote-D'or. Moreover, during FY 2022-2023, substantial work has been undertaken for the preparation of relevant legislations for the setting up of the Central Medical Procurement Office under the aegis of the MOHW for the procurement of medical supplies, including drugs, vaccines, equipment, consumables and medical disposables for public health institutions in Mauritius.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

The MOHW undertook procurement of Pharmaceutical and Non-Pharmaceutical items amounting to some Rs 3.7 billion for the Financial Year 2022-2023. These procurement exercises are not only highly complex but also very specialised and have to be executed in a planned and timely manner to ensure uninterrupted supply of these items as most of them are lifesaving.

➤ Procurement of Pharmaceutical Items

The Procurement of Pharmaceutical Items Section deals mainly with the purchase of drugs, vaccines and active pharmaceutical ingredients.

Procurement of Pharmaceutical Products

Financial Year	Amount Spent (Rs)
2019-2020	1,288,291,496
2020-2021	1,010,186,687
2021-2022	1,210,284,540
2022-2023	1,726,087,562

➤ Procurement of Non-Pharmaceutical Items

The Procurement of Non-Pharmaceutical Items Section deals with all procurements other than drugs and vaccines such as medical equipment, consumables, reagents, among others.

Procurement of Non-Pharmaceutical Products

Financial Year	Amount Spent (Rs)
2019-2020	1,472,923,164
2020-2021	1,290,321,832
2021-2022	1,219,218,398
2022-2023	2,011,732,942

The Procurement Section is also responsible to ensure proper storage and distribution of all items procured to relevant health institutions. The Central Supplies Division is responsible for stocking and monitoring the overall stock of pharmaceutical products and other consumables, such as gloves, masks and suture materials, amongst others.

In order to avoid cases of shortage, the Stock Control Unit monitors and appraises management of the requirements for replenishment of the stock of relevant items.

2.5.5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT



Government is leaving no stone unturned to improve universal access to quality healthcare services and significant investments have been made to upgrade existing infrastructures and to build new and modern hospitals and primary health care institutions.

In this line, the Ministry has embarked on the implementation of numerous health infrastructural projects whereby new, state-of-the-art and upgraded health infrastructure are being provided for the improvement of health services in Mauritius.

At the MOHW, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is responsible for the proper implementation of minor infrastructural works and capital projects. Consultancy Services for the implementation of major public health infrastructural projects have been entrusted to Hospital Services Consultancy Corporation (India) Ltd., a Government of India enterprise under a G-2-G Agreement with the Government of India. The Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community

Development (MNICD) also provides technical expertise for the implementation infrastructural projects.

For FY 2022-2023 some Rs 2.2 billion were budgeted for health infrastructural works for a total Project Value of around Rs 19.2 billion.

Table VI: Status of Implementation of Major Infrastructural Projects

S/n	Project		Status as at 30 June 2023
1	New Flacq Teaching Hospital (Phase 1)		Progress of works at 73%.
2	New Cancer Centre		Infrastructural Works Completed. Acquisition of Furniture and Equipment in progress.
3	New Eye Hospital		Progress of works at 22%.
4	Extension and Renovation of the Pharmacy at J. Nehru Hospital		Tender Stage.
5	New Renal Transplant Unit at J. Nehru Hospital		Progress of works at 3%.
6	7 New Mediclinics	a) Stanley	Progress of works at 72%.
		b) Coromandel	Completed. Operational since February 2023.
		c) Bel Air	Progress of works at 88%.
		d) Quartier Militaire	Progress of works at 82%.
		e) Chemin Grenier	At tender preparation stage.
		f) Grand Bois	Progress of works at 32%.
		g) Rivière du Rempart	At design stage.
7	6 New Area Health Centres	a) Henrietta	At tender preparation stage.
		b) Cap Malheureux	Letter of Award issued in May 2023.
		c) New Grove	Letter of Award issued in May 2023.
		d) Plaine Magnien	At design stage.
		e) Curepipe	At tender preparation stage.
		f) Bambous	At tender stage.
8	11 New Community Health Centres	a) St François Xavier	Progress of works at 76%.
		b) Roche Bois	Tender documents under preparation to complete outstanding works.
		c) Grand Bay	Completed. Operational since April 2023.
		d) Pointe aux Sables	Completed. Operational since February 2023.
		e) Trou d'Eau Douce	Completed. Awaiting inauguration.
		f) Camp de Masque	Progress of works at 40%.
		g) Baie du Cap	At design stage.
		h) Case Noyale	
		i) Piton	
		j) Ecroignard	
		k) Camp Thorel	
		l) Tamarin	

Source: Project Implementation Unit at MOHW

Health Hub - The Ministry embarked on three (3) projects under the Build Operate Transfer (BOT) scheme through a Public Private Partnership mechanism in the Healthcare and Pharmaceutical sector at the Côte d'Or Integrated Smart City by Landscape (Mauritius) Ltd. The status of these three projects are as follows:

s/n	Project Description
1	Design, Finance, Build and Maintain a building for the National Health Laboratory Service Centre (NHLS)
	The NHLS shall be the principal public health laboratory of the Republic of Mauritius and will provide quality laboratory investigations and technical coordination of the entire network of health-related laboratories. It will be designed according to International infrastructural and ISO standards which will include BSL-3 level Laboratory and will aim to become a Supra-National Reference Laboratory in the region.
2	Design, Finance, Build, Operate and Maintain a building for a Modern Warehouse of International Standard for Storage of Medicines, Medical Consumables, Medical and Non-Medical Products/ Equipment
	A modern Warehouse constructed and operated in line with best storage practices and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the World Health Organization and comprising: ○ Proper Racking systems and Material Handling Equipment to ensure appropriate racking and material handling equipment that would facilitate First Expiry First Out (FEFO) inventory management systems. ○ A modern Warehouse Management System with appropriate software, bar coding equipment, and radio frequency communications to provide computerised process management and inventory control.
3	Design, Finance, Build and Maintain a building for a State-of-the-Art Cardiac Hospital
	A 225 bedded state-of-the-art Cardiac Hospital having new specialties such as paediatric and congenital cardiac surgeries, interventional paediatric and congenital cardiology, interventional and open vascular surgery, thoracic surgery, hybrid cardiac surgery, electrophysiology, round the clock Primary Coronary Intervention (PCI), PCI, Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) facilities and Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI).
	Status as at 30 June 2023 for the above 3 projects: Transaction Advisor appointed and completed the following assignment: • Project Inception • Draft Project Structuring Report completed

Source: Project Implementation Unit at MOHW

Extension and upgrading of Health Institutions



Furthermore, the Ministry has also embarked on more than 200 projects of upgrading of the existing health infrastructures which include upgrading works, leakages, extension of existing services, paintings, and renovations.

2.5.6 PLANNING, FINANCE AND DIGITAL HEALTH UNIT (PFDHU)

The PFDHU is responsible for the sound monitoring of measures as announced in the Government Programme 2020-2024 and budget measures falling under the purview of MOHW.

The Unit oversees the implementation of the following: Government programme 2020-2024, Health Sector Strategic Plan 2020-2024, Preparation and monitoring of budget, Digital Health and computerisation, Internal Control, Audit and Public Accounts Committee, Health Financing and Cost Centres, Bilateral-Regional-Multilateral cooperation and human rights, Health records and Medical and statistical data.

Projects are being implemented by different departments under the purview of the PFDH namely the Digital Health Office, the Internal Control Unit, the Health Records Department, Health Statistics Unit, the Health Economics Unit and the Finance Section.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

During the FY 2022-2023, the Planning and Finance Unit has been involved in the following:

Preparation, Submission and Monitoring of MOHW Budget

- Monitoring of Budget implementation for Financial Year 2022-2023
- Preparation and submission of Budget Proposals for FY 2023-2024
- Monthly updating of the ePMIS 5.0 platform with regard to the implementation of 30 capital projects and 13 non-infrastructural measures

Response to National Audit Office

Responding to the Management Letters and Reference Sheets issued by the National Audit Office on the following areas:

- i. Emergency Procurement of COVID-19 Related Drugs;
- ii. Provision of Security and Cleaning Services to Hospitals and Health Institutions;
- iii. Ophthalmology Services – Long Waiting Lists for Eye Surgeries;
- iv. Laser Photocoagulator Machines not Optimally used;
- v. Electronic Inventory Management System at the Ministry – Stock Management Issues;
- vi. Land Infrastructure Assets – Land Ownership and Usage Shortcomings;
- vii. Construction of Community Health Centres – Implementation Issues;
- viii. Governance Issues – Non-compliance with Legislation; and
- ix. Follow Up of Matters Raised in Previous Audit Reports.

Digitalization of Public Health Sector

- Implementation of the co-financing agreement with the UNDP to the tune of USD 5,750,999 for the implementation of the Digital Health Transformation Portfolio which comprise the implementation of an eHealth solution, the legal drafting of a Digital Health Law, the formulation of a long-term digital health strategic framework, institutional assessment for the setting up of a Digital Health Office and a site readiness assessment for eHealth implementation.
- Sustained scaling up of the COVID-19 LIMS to a National LIMS to include the other tests in the main units at the Central Health Laboratory and in all Regional Hospitals.

Upscaling Bilateral-Regional-Multilateral Corporation

Donor Agency	Details on Assistance	Value of Donation
Department of Health South Africa and Gift of the Givers Foundation	Donation of more than 400 Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machines for use in Mauritius in view of the COVID-19 situation	Received in kind
European Union Delegation in Mauritius	Implementation of visibility envelope under the project "Reinforcing the Health Sector in Mauritius" – REHSIMUS	EUR 75,000
Government of Japan	Implementation of the 1 st Grant under the Economic and Social Development Programme for the procurement of medical equipment for the Ministry and the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care comprising five (5) thermography machines, two (2) negative pressure booths, one (1) angiography system and one (1) X-Ray system	JPY 300 million
	Implementation of the 2 nd Grant under the Economic and Social Development	JPY 550 million

	Programme for the procurement of medical equipment for the Ministry and for the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care	
United Nations Development Programme	Signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change for the implementation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project “Indian Ocean Regional Project – Mauritius – Implementation Sustainable Low and non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS)” Project supported by the GEF through the UNDP to: ○ Improve the Mauritius Network Services system of the Dangerous Chemicals Control Board; and ○ Implementing a Centralised Treatment Facility for Healthcare Wastes	USD 1,394,450 from GEF-7 USD 925,000 from MOHW (co-financing)
	Acquisition of one autoclave at Victoria Hospital	USD 70,000 from UNDP USD 260,000 from MOHW (co-financing)

Source: PFDHU at MOHW

Support on Human Rights Matters

- Compilation of inputs from concerned sections of MOHW for submission to the Human Rights Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade on the health aspect of Human Rights.
- The inputs relate to international commitments undertaken by the country with respect to the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Committee on the Right of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Right of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and for the formulation of the National Human Rights Action Plan 2023-2030.

2.5.7 HEALTH RECORDS DEPARTMENT

The Health Records Department comprising an establishment of some 365 officers is headed by the Chief Health Records Officer and supported by Principal Health Records Officers, Senior Health Records Officers, Health Records Officers, Senior Health Records Clerks, Higher Health Records Clerks and Health Records Clerks. It forms part of the emergency services of a hospital which operates on a 24-hour basis and is usually the first point of contact of the patient with the health facilities.

It primarily provides clerical support to medical professionals through the registration of patients. It is also the custodian of medical data ensuring compliance to data protection and information governance. The second core activity is Health Information Management, starting with collection of data up to transforming them into sound information.

The Health Records Department is providing extensive user requirements for the first phase of e-health. It is the first department with the responsibility to implement the Patient Administration System and eventually to manage the National Health Information System.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- During the FY 2022-2023, the department has been working on the publication of the forty-eight volume of the Government Health Services Statistics Report 2022 with regard to activities of the major health service departments of public health institutions. The health service delivery and medical data contained in the report represent a useful tool for decision-making and policy formulation to administration and also support research projects.
- Furthermore, between October – December 2022, 49 officers have been trained in clinical coding of diseases and other health interventions using ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases, Eleventh Version) and ICHI (International Classification of Health Interventions) as recommended by WHO in replacement of the outgoing ICD-10.

2.5.8 HEALTH STATISTICS UNIT

The Health Statistics Unit, headed by the Chief Health Statistician, provides evidence-based information on the health care delivery systems of the public and private sectors in Mauritius as well as Rodrigues. Health Statistics, which include data on population and vital events, mortality, morbidity, health services and health systems, are also used for the purpose of reporting to various local, regional and international agencies. These data are also used to formulate policies, design strategies and evaluate health performances.

Health indicators compiled are useful for monitoring progress towards the national health targets, including those formulated in the HSSP 2020-2024 as well as international health goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the annual Health Statistics Reports are sole scientific documents which can be used to study the evolution of the health status of the population since independence.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- The Health Statistics Reports of 2020 and 2021 showed the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare in Mauritius. The 2022 Report provides evidence for a gradual return to normal. For example, the number of out-patients seen by doctor in public health institutions, which had gone down from 5.5 million in 2019 to 4.5 million in 2020 and to 4.3 million in 2021, went up to 5 million in 2022.

- Data compiled by the Health Statistics Unit during the FY 2022-2023 are available on the website of the Statistics Mauritius (SM) and published in the annual reports of SM, namely, in that of Environment Statistics, Gender Statistics and Demography Statistics. The Health Statistics Unit has also contributed in the compilation of health-related Sustainable Development Goals indicators included in the complete SDG dataset maintain by SM. Furthermore, the Unit has closely collaborated with the Health Economics Unit in various enterprises such as the formulation of the SDG 3 Action Plan.
- Data collected by the Health Statistics Unit have been submitted as inputs for the drafting of responses of several Parliamentary Questions. Quarterly data have been used to report on the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) documented in the Budget 2022-2023. In addition, health statistics published in the annual reports have been extensively used for the situational analysis required for the formulation of various Action Plans under MOHW.
- Furthermore, staff of the Health Statistics Unit were responsible for the data management and analysis of various research projects such the Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance (IBBS) Surveys which have been carried out among high-risk groups.

2.5.9 DIGITAL HEALTH OFFICE

The Digital Health Office (DHO) is a very important unit that was set up in 2022 under the PFDHU. This office supports the MOHW with respect to the Digitalisation Projects in the public health sector including the e-Health Portfolio implementation with the technical and financial collaboration of the UNDP.

The DHO functions in close collaboration with the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, with the Central Informatics Bureau providing the Policy and Programme Management Support and the Central Information Systems Division, providing operational support to digitalisation and computerisation initiatives at the MOHW. Staff with ICT background from the MOHW also support the DHO in its functioning. In addition, a Project Officer from the UNDP coordinates the activities under the e-Health Portfolio collaboration with the UNDP.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Progress achieved under eHealth Portfolio with the UNDP:

- Phase 1 of the e-health project will be over 18 months with the implementation of a Patient Administration System, a new National Blood Transfusion System, a Patient Portal and Reporting. The procurement process for implementing eHealth in all Public Hospital has been initiated.
- A Site Readiness Assessment in all public health facilities for eHealth implementation has been undertaken.
- The Request for Proposal documents for the drafting of a Digital Health Law and a Digital Health Strategic Framework has been finalized.

Collaboration with the World Health Organization:

- Development of the “Mo Bienet” “SMART Health App” for Infection Prevention and Control and public awareness of health events.
- Expanding the use of DHIS-2 for the HIV and AIDS programme, the Expanded Programme against Immunisation and the electronic Diseases Surveillance and Response.
- Training of user departments and officers from the DHO on the use of DHIS-2.

Other Initiatives

- Implementation of a Digital Radiology System at Dr. A.G. Jeetoo Hospital and a National Digital Renal Registry;
- Implementation of Local Area Network in all public health facilities across the five Health Regions for the implementation of eHealth; and
- Renewing the outlook of the website of the MOHW.

2.5.10 HEALTH ECONOMICS UNIT

The main function of the Health Economics Unit (HEU) is to develop and deliver health economic analysis for the formulation of health development projects. During the FY 2022-2023, the Unit was manned by a Lead Health Analyst, two Senior Health Analysts and two Support Officers.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

Completion and Validation of National Health Accounts (NHA) 2020: The HEU finalised the NHA 2020 study during the FY 2022-2023. The NHA Committee validated the NHA 2020 Report and Cabinet was apprised of the NHA 2020 Findings on 09 December 2023. A policy brief on the trends in health financing was likewise presented to Cabinet.

NHA provide a systematic description of the financial flows related to the consumption of healthcare goods and services in a country for a given period of time. Information was collected from both the public and private health stakeholders through questionnaires. The assistance of WHO Consultants were sought for the extrapolation of survey data and the development of NHA Matrices. NHA reports are publicly available on the Ministry’s website.

Estimated Costing of different Action Plans: A number of Action Plans and Policies have been developed by MOHW including the National STI Action Plan 2023-2027, National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) and the NCD-related Action Plan.

Based on the requirements of the user departments, the estimated indicative costing exercises were undertaken for the activities identified under these action plans.

Implementation of Hospital Services Costing Project: The HEU has been liaising with the consultants from African Development Bank (AfDB) under the technical assistance for the

Hospital Services Costing Project. Subsequently, a field mission was undertaken by one AfDB consultant in October 2022 to review data systems. In this context, during the FY 2022-2023, the HEU had recurrent working sessions with relevant personnel at Hospital level for data collection with respect to a sample of hospital services.

In addition, the HEU has also provided an estimate costing on hospital transport services for dialysis patients at Victoria Hospital and the costing of a cataract surgery at the Moka eye hospital. These estimated costings provide a basis for decision-making by Management.

Monitoring of Progress on the Implementation of the Health Sector Strategic Plan 2020-2024: The HSSP 2020-2024 makes provision for the submission of reports at regular intervals on the status of progress made on the implementation of Strategic Actions. In this respect, 21 Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) have been set up at the level of the Ministry. These groups are required to act as coordination mechanisms and develop Operational Plans for the 26 Strategic Goals of the HSSP 2020-2024. 26 Operational Plans have thus been elaborated with over 600 activities identified by the different TWGs. These Operational Plans chart out the roadmap for health sector development and outline activities that will address health challenges.

The HEU has the overall responsibility to liaise with these TWGs, obtain the status of implementation of the operational plans and the preparation of the progress report to be presented to Cabinet. The second progress report was presented to Cabinet in September 2022. The HEU has also initiated the collection of information with respect to the third progress report.

A dissemination workshop on HSSP Implementation Progress in Mauritius was organized in collaboration with the European Union Commission (EU) on 30th November 2022 mainly with TWGs members.

During May 2023, a workshop was organized in collaboration with EU to support the Commission for Health and others for the development of Operational Plans with respect to the implementation of activities under the 12 HSSP Strategic Goals for Rodrigues.

Formulation of the Annual Report on Performance for the Ministry: The HEU had the responsibility to liaise with all the different units of the MOHW and to take stock of the achievements, challenges, trends and way forward for the Ministry. Based on the information received from the different units, the Annual Performance Reports for the FY 2021-2022, was formulated and submitted to the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development during the period under review.

Support for development of funding requests made to Global Fund and Pandemic Fund: The HEU has been involved with the NAS and WHO for the determination of the financial assistance to be requested under Global Fund and Pandemic Fund, respectively.

Collaboration with SADC and Global Fund for the National Health Financing Dialogue (NHFD): The Ministry is collaborating with the SADC Secretariat and the Global Fund for the National Health Financing Dialogue. A preliminary visit was undertaken by the SADC/ Global Fund Consultants in February-March 2022 to initiate discussions with the officials of the Ministry and other stakeholders regarding possible support to improve health financing and domestic resource mobilization. In this context, a concept note was prepared. The HEU is supporting the SADC/GF to undertake a Pre-Dialogue and a National Dialogue Workshop in early July and mid-September 2023, respectively.

Participation in the World Health Assembly 2023 side-event: The HEU was designated to showcase the health financing strategies of the Republic of Mauritius and to act as panellist at World Health Assembly 2023 side-event entitled “Advancing Health Financing Reforms Through Inclusive Dialogue” held in May 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Other Activities

- Sustainable Development Goal 3 Monitoring of Indicators jointly with the Health Statistics Unit.
- Support to PFDHU for Budget Preparation including formulation of Strategic Overview.
- Preparations of inputs for different Ministries, International Bodies and Attending webinars (e.g., WHO, AU Agenda 2063, WTO, SADC, WB, Trade-in -Services).
- Preparation of inputs on Human Rights.
- Filling of survey questionnaires from different institutions.
- Preparation of inputs and participation in WHO Regional Committee for Africa in August 2022.
- As regards to health care financing, with the support of the WHO, the Health Financing Progress Matrix was being finalized.
- Preparations of inputs for internal stakeholders on areas such as mental health, Universal Health Coverage, procurement and WHO Biennium.

2.5.11 DEMOGRAPHIC/EVALUATION UNIT

The Demographic/Evaluation Unit is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the national family planning programme in Mauritius. The unit collects family planning statistics from all government health service points and two non-governmental organizations, namely Action Familiale and Mauritius Family Planning and Welfare Association. The demographic/evaluation unit has been instrumental in helping the Government in establishing targets for its population policy. The unit also coordinates with all government departments and organizations involved in population-related issues.

Achievements for FY 2022-2023

- 1. Monthly bulletin on reproductive health service statistics:** A monthly bulletin on reproductive health service statistics is issued that gives information about the number of clients at Government clinics and NGOs. This publication is important for the monitoring of the family planning programme.
- 2. Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook:** The monthly bulletins are compiled into a Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook giving family planning data for Government clinics and NGOs as well as data on population, vital statistics, and the health service points.

3. **Updating the catchment area and the population size for the health service points of the Republic of Mauritius:** The catchment area and population size for all health points for the Republic of Mauritius have been updated to include figures for 2022.
4. **Celebration of World Population Day 2022:** The World Population Day is an annual event celebrated worldwide on 11 July. The theme for the event in 2022 was "A World Of 8 billion: Towards A Resilient Future For All - Harnessing Opportunities And Ensuring Rights And Choices For All ". The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has chosen this theme for World Population Day since the world's population was projected to reach 8 billion on 15 November 2022. In this context a one-day training workshop was organized on monitoring in labour for MHOs and Midwives.
5. **Population Policy:** The population of Mauritius is ageing due to sustained low fertility level and increasing life expectancy, which in turn is resulting to lower proportion of children and higher proportion of elders in the population. In this context, a population policy was formulated in 2019, focusing on the present socio-demographic patterns in Mauritius, and proposes Government actions to enhance the positive impact of such trends on development, and correspondingly, reduce social and economic risks. This policy is being continuously monitored annually by an Inter-Ministerial Committee.
6. **Activities carried out under United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in FY 2022/2023:**
 - Capacity building of health professionals to address fertility issues in view of the implementation of the fertility clinic was conducted.
 - Training of Medical and paramedical staff on i) Degenerative Disorders and sexual Dysfunction, ii) modern methods of contraception and iii) monitoring of labour and dementia.
 - One-day training on breastfeeding for health personnel.
 - Training of support carers to counsel pregnant women on SRH.
 - 9 sensitization campaigns (one per district) on cancer for community members.
 - A Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) assessment was undertaken to respond to the SRH needs of affected populations at the onset of a humanitarian crisis, such as torrential rains and cyclones.
 - Support in SRH for unmarried mothers "konn to valer".
 - A one-day SRH Campaign was carried out to sensitise the community on SRH services provided by the MOHW.
 - Capacity building of medical and paramedical staff on maternal health, breastfeeding, infant, child health and infertility and STIs.
 - Training workshops for healthcare providers (MHOs, Community Physicians, Midwives) on adolescent SRH and sensitization workshops for adolescents on availability of SRH appropriate for them.

PART III

RISK MANAGEMENT, **IMPLEMENTATION AND** **MONITORING OF KEY ACTIONS** **AND BUDGET MEASURES ON** **HEALTH SECTOR**

3.1 RISK MANAGEMENT, CITIZEN ORIENTED INITIATIVES AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Risk Management



Risk management is the identification, evaluation, and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability or impact of the risks or to maximize the realization of opportunities.

In this respect, the Ministry has set up various committees to identify risk areas and weaknesses. A prioritization process has been established so that the issues with the highest probability of risks/impacts are addressed promptly. Risk Management is carried out through the Internal Control Unit, the Audit Committee and the Anti-Corruption Committee.

The achievement of risk Management objectives, such as: compliance with laws, regulations, and acceptable ethical behaviour; internal control; information and technology security; sustainability; and quality assurance is crucial for the Ministry.

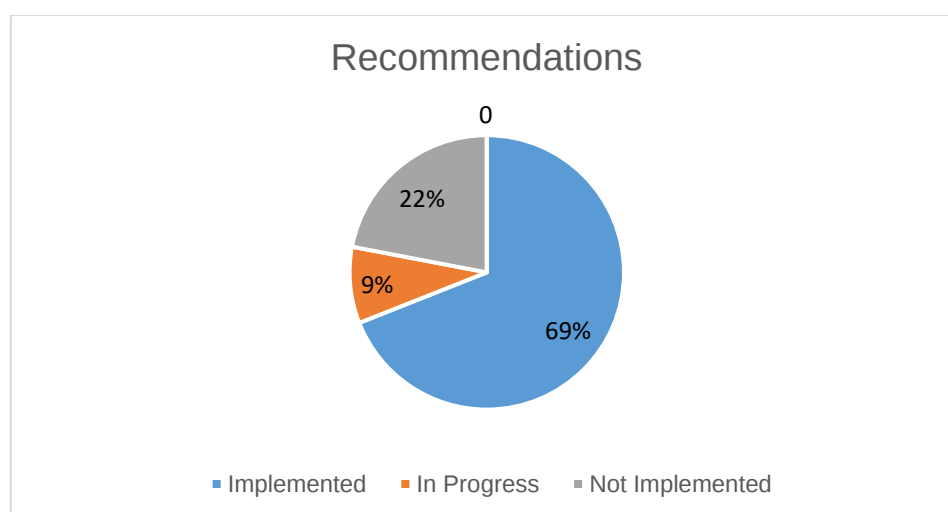
Internal Control Unit

The Internal Audit provides independent and objective assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk Management and control processes in order to enhance and protect the organizational value. It thus helps the MOHW in accomplishing its objectives by bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of these vital processes.

After consultation with the Accounting Officer, Audit Committee and other stakeholders, a risk-based internal audit plan was prepared in line with the Ministry's strategies, objectives and associated risks for the FY 2022/23.

During the FY 2022/23, 14 audit assignments were planned. Twelve audit assignments which represented around 86% of the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 were completed. The Accounting Officer and the Audit Committee are informed of the performance achievement relative to the plan on a quarterly basis.

Follow up audit was carried out on 378 recommendations issued for the FYs 2021-22 and 2022-23 to determine the status of recommendations implemented. At least 69% of the recommendations have been implemented with 9%, still in progress. Results of the follow up audit are illustrated in the PIE Chart.



Significant time was also spent on special assignments received from the MOHW (12 Special Requests), which held priority over other audit exercises. Out of the 12 Special Requests, 11 Assignments, representing 92% were completed during the FY 2022-2023 and one was rollover to FY 2023-24.

Anti-Corruption Committee

The Anti-Corruption Framework Committee of the MOHW has been reconstituted in July 2020 and has come up with a new Anti-Corruption Policy. The main objective of this anti-corruption policy is to strengthen and sustain an integrity culture within the Ministry. This is achieved through:

- a) The setting up of effective processes characterized by broad participation and transparency,
- b) Regular evaluation of corruption risks, systems and procedures,
- c) Ensuring that projects have clearly formulated goals, expected results as well as monitoring and follow-ups, and
- d) Learning from experiences and continually improving organizational performance and the corporate image.

In the same vein, Anti-Corruption Sub-Committees have been set up at the level of Regional Hospitals, the MIH and the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care-Cardiac Centre (TFSMC).

Moreover, the Ministry has worked in close collaboration with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) for the conduct of Corruption Risk Assessments (CRAs) and Corruption Prevention Reviews.

For FY 2022-2023, the Ministry has obtained the assistance and support of ICAC for the conduct of CRAs. In this context, CRAs have been carried out in 5 Regional Hospitals, the Mauritius Institute of Health and the TFSMC. The areas under assessment for the CRAs were Procurement and Supply Section, Pharmacy Section, Operation Theatre and Human Resource Section.

Parliamentary Questions and Private Notice Questions

During the FY 2022-2023, the Hon Minister of Health and Wellness has responded to some 175 Parliamentary Questions requiring oral answers and 1 Private Notice Questions, especially on the Ministry's policies and actions related to the COVID-19.

These questions and answers represent important means used by members of Parliament to ensure the Government is accountable to the Parliament for its policies and actions and, through the Parliament, to the nation.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is an integral element of public accountability and governance. It plays a key role in ensuring compliance by Ministries/Departments with their legal and fiduciary responsibilities, especially with respect to the integrity of a Ministry/Department financial information and the adequacy as well as effectiveness of internal control system. The Committee supervises the entire audit, reporting processes and ensures that weaknesses in the system raised by both the Internal Control Unit and the National Audit Office are looked into and that their recommendations are complied with.

The Audit Committee has had 11 meetings during FY 2022-2023. Specific meetings were held with management and departments falling under MOHW, to discuss amongst others, issues reported by the Director of Audit (DOA), review of queries raised, follow up on the DOA's recommendations and identify remedial actions to be taken. The Implementation Plan to address shortcomings identified in audit reports and status of remedial actions have been provided in the following table.

3.1.1 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TO ADDRESS SHORTCOMINGS IDENTIFIED IN AUDIT REPORTS AND STATUS OF REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Issues	DOA Comments	Status of Actions taken
Quarantine Facilities – Inadequate Monitoring and Control	• Lack of Internal Checks on Payments • Delay in Signature of Contracts between MOHW Quarantine Facilities/Treatment Centres • Non-compliance with Public Procurement Act	• Action initiated by the Finance Section to recoup the overpayment made, if any. • The Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority has liaised with the respective hotels to have the contracts signed. • The Ministry of Tourism selected service providers according to the Public Procurement Act and its Directives.
Waiting List for Angiography Examinations- Delay in obtaining Appointment due to Long Waiting Lists	• The limited number of angiography machines in public hospitals led to a long waiting list for an angiography examination/angioplasty	• All waiting lists are being more closely monitored on a weekly basis.
Laser Photocoagulator Machines not optimally used	• Number of Patients undergoing Retinal Screening significantly below that recommended in Guideline	90% • Reminder call by Retinal Screening Staff prior to appointment is being carried out. Additionally, follow up calls for missed appointments will be introduced.

Issues	DOA Comments	Status of Actions taken
	Service Delivery hampered by frequent breakdown of Photocoagulator Machines	Preventive maintenance on the two units of laser photocoagulator is being carried out quarterly to minimize likelihood of breakdowns.
	Laser Machines not optimally used while another one overused	Re-distribution of patients in the event of breakdown in a particular region is being considered to balance and optimize equipment usage across the country.
Provision of Security and Cleaning Services to Hospitals and Health Institutions – Value for Money not obtained	Contracts renewed on a Monthly Basis Despite Poor Performance of Service Provider	90% Procurement exercise has been initiated and launched at the level of the Central Procurement Board (CPB) through Open National Bidding (ONB).
	Penalty Clauses not applied for Non-Compliance with the Scope of Service	Penalty clauses are being applied by all hospitals for non-compliance to the scope of service and performance specifications as laid down in Bidding Documents.
	Lack of Proper Monitoring Measures leading to Poor Level of Security and Cleaning Services	Ongoing Existing monitoring measures, more frequent roll calls and surprise checks have been reinforced to ensure better quality of service from contractors.

Issues	DOA Comments	Status of Actions taken
Ophthalmology Services – Long Waiting Lists for Eye Surgeries	Patients waited for more than five years to get an appointment for eye surgery	The exercise to call back by phone these few patients is ongoing.
Electronic Inventory Management System (EIMS) at the Ministry – Stock Management Issues	- Discrepancy between Stock Value as per EIMS and Returns submitted to Treasury - Decisions were made based on inaccurate Stock Balances	- A Steering Committee meets on regular basis and looks into the implementation of EIMS. - Instructions were issued to ensure stock figures on EIMS to be reconciled and all users to make entries on EIMS on real time and live on the implementation of EIMS. - Instructions have been issued to all departments to submit their returns to this Ministry for consolidated purposes.

Source: MOHW Audit Committee

3.2 STATUS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACTIONS 2022-2023

Table VII: Status on the Implementation of Key Actions 2022-2023

Vote 18-1 Ministry of Health and Wellness					
Outcome		Outcome Indicator	Target 2022/2023	Achievements as at 30 June 2023	Remarks
An efficient and effective healthcare delivery system		Mortality rate due to NCDs per 100,000 population	<600	620	A 12.5% decrease has been noted in the number of deaths in the period January to August 2023 as compared to the same period in 2022. Mortality rate due to NCDs is projected to be around 575 per 100,000 population in 2023
		Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	12.5	15.0	Infant Mortality Rate in the period January to August 2023 is 12.7 per 1,000 live births, indicating a significant decrease from 14.7 in 2022. Following the increase in the number of infant deaths in the period July 2022 to June 2023, neonatal deaths in hospitals are being investigated and recommendations are shared with all relevant doctors.
Delivery Unit	Main Service	Key Performance Indicator	Target 2022/2023	Achievements as at 30 June 2023	Remarks
Hospital and Specialised Services	Reduce prevalence of NCDs	Implementation of National NCD Action Plan 2022-2027	45%	50%	“The National Service Framework for Non-Communicable Diseases (2023-2028) and the National Integrated Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Action Plan (2023-2028) have already been prepared and launched in September 2023” “Implementation of National NCD Action Plan 2022 - 2027” has been replaced by National Service Framework for Non-Communicable Diseases (2023-2028) and the National

					Integrated Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Action Plan (2023-2028)
		Mauritius Food Standards Agency operational	Dec-22	Mar-23	The agency has been set up. Mauritius Food Standards Agency Act 2022 enacted in October 2022
	Improve neonatal services	Number of neonatal ICU ventilators (Cumulative)	55	45	The figure includes 1 for Rodrigues Procurement exercise for 6 additional Neonatal ICU Ventilators has been launched for New Flacq Hospital
Primary Health Care	Provide quality primary healthcare services	Number of new Mediclinics / AHCs / CHCs constructed	9	4	1 Mediclinic constructed at Coromandel and 3 CHCs constructed at Grand Bay, Pointe aux Sables and Trou d'Eau Douce respectively. Work is in progress at 4 Mediclinics (Stanley, Bel Air, Quartier Militaire & Grand Bois) and 2 Community Health Centres (St Francois Xavier & Camp de Masque) Additional Details at Table VI
	Strengthen laboratory services	Percentage of common laboratory results available within 24 hours	90%	85%	The indicator refers to availability of results at laboratory within 24 hours of receipt of specimens.
Management and Administration	Digitalise health services through an effective e-Health system	e-Health Patient Administration System developed	May-23	Jun-24	Evaluation completed and bid evaluation report planned has been submitted to UNDP Advisory Committee on Procurement in July 2023. Currently Ministry is awaiting recommendation for award from UNDP Advisory Committee on procurement.

Source for Actual 2022/2023: Information compiled by Planning and Finance Unit at MOHW and Budget 2023/2024

3.3 STATUS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BUDGET MEASURES 2022-2023

Table VIII: Status on the Implementation of Budget Measures 2022-2023

Ministry of Health and Wellness			
S/N	Budget Para	Budget Measure	Status Update/ Remarks as at 30 June 2023
NON-INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS			
1	259	To strengthen the capacity of the public health sector to deliver high quality services, recruitment of 1,354 staff in 2022.	162 staffs have been recruited Scheme of Service under preparations for many posts and recruitment exercise ongoing for the remaining posts.
2	260	To ensure 24/7 specialised services: - (a) Specialists in the fields of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Anaesthesia will be physically present in hospitals at all times; and (b) Primary PCI Angiography services will be offered at the Victoria Hospital and the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care for Cardiac Centre.	Completed (a)Effective as from 1st August 2022 in the field of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Anaesthesia. (b)Effective as from 2012 at VH. Effective as from Aug 2022 at TRSMCC.
3	261	The grant amount for patients requiring stretchers during overseas treatment for cases of Neurosurgery and Bone Marrow Transplant is being increased by Rs 200,000.	Completed Effective as from 1st July 2022 Eligible patients requiring stretchers during overseas treatment for cases of Neurosurgery and Bone Marrow Transplant are granted an additional amount of Rs 200,000 up to the ceiling of RS 1M. This condition does not apply for paediatrics as per new Budgetary Measures 2023.
4	B 7 (i)	Introduction of the Medical and Healthcare Products Bill.	The Draft Medical and Healthcare Products Bill is at legal vetting stage.

5	B7 (ii) (a)	Review the existing framework for licensing of laboratories and will issue guidelines for setting up of specialty test laboratories involved in stem cells, genetic, specialized molecular test, amongst others, to further the research and development agenda in the life-sciences and biotechnology field.	A Standing Committee under the Chair of the Director General Health Services has been set up to work out on the guidelines for such purposes.
6	B 7 (ii) (b)	Proclaim relevant sections of the Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) Act to provide the legal framework for organ donation in Mauritius.	Draft Regulations were worked out and sent anew for legal vetting.
7	B 7 (ii) (c)	Implementation of the E-Health project.	The Project is being implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Evaluation completed in June 2023. Award planned for October 2023 and implementation of Phase 1 in November 2023.
8	B 7 (ii) (d)	Extension of the Laboratory Information Management System to regional hospitals.	Version 2.6 has been implemented at the Central Health Laboratory. The system would be extended to Version 3.0 (final upgrade). The complete roll-out of V 3.0 at the Central Health Laboratory is planned by December 2023. Subsequently, the final upgrade of the system would be rolled-out in all health regions.
9	B 7 (ii) (e)	Development of a Surveillance Outbreak Response Management and Analysis System for laboratory data management, contact tracing, and disease detection.	The implementation of a Surveillance Outbreak Response Management and Analysis System would be taken up under the e-Integrated Diseases Surveillance and Response system through the DHIS-2. The World Health Organization (WHO) has been approached for the provision of a consultant for capacity building and upscaling of the DHIS-2.
10	B 7 (ii) (f)	Come up with a comprehensive Digital Health Law and Strategy to provide legislative framework for e-Health and telemedicine.	Ongoing Exercise is at evaluation stage.

11	B 7 (iii) (a)	Develop a legal framework for clinical trials for medical devices	The Clinical Trials (Medical Devices Trials) Regulations 2021 was made by the Minister under section 35 of the Clinical Trials Act and Gazetted in May 2021. The Third Schedule of the Regulation provides for definitions of Invasive and active devices, implementing rules and classification rules comprising non-invasive, invasive, inactive, active devices including active therapeutic devices. The implementation of the provisions is underway.
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS			
1	254	Upgrading works at Souillac Hospital.	All clearances for external painting and miscellaneous works to be carried out by MNICD, has been obtained.
2	254(a)	Completion of the New Cancer Centre by December 2022.	Construction completed on 31 January 2023. Procurement of medical equipment and furniture in progress.
3	254(b)	Completion of the New Flacq Hospital by June 2023.	Project 73% completed. Construction works expected to be completed by 31 December 2023.
4	254(c)	Upgrading of the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit at the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital;	At design stage
		Construct the Renal Transplant Centre at the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital.	Contract awarded in February 2023. Project 5% completed.
5	254(d)	Construction of the New Eye Hospital at Moka.	Contract awarded in May 2022. Project 22% completed.
6	254(f)	Construction of a New Haemodialysis Unit at the SSRN Hospital.	At design stage
		Acquisition of lithotripsy machines in regional hospitals.	At tender stage Tender for the Acquisition of Lithotripsy Machine will be launched by October 2023.
7	254(g)	Setting up of 4 fertility clinics at 4 regional hospitals.	The setting up of the fertility clinic is already in place at the SSRN Hospital. This service would roll out to other regional hospitals.
8	254(h)	Construction of a New Orthopaedic Appliance Workshop at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre.	At design stage

9	255	Acquisition of high-tech medical equipment including digital X-ray machines for the Souillac Hospital and a CT Scan equipment for the Flacq Hospital.	80 Haemodialysis machines have already been acquired and are currently being used in the 5 regional hospitals.
10	256	The second phase of the New Flacq Teaching Hospital project will be implemented under the public-private partnership framework.	Project registered with BOT Projects Unit in September 2022. At requirement gathering stage and drafting of Terms of Reference to procure the services of a Transaction Advisory firm.
11	257	New AYUSH Hospital will be constructed at Côte d'Or.	The concept design has been prepared and approved. The detailed project requirement is planned for October 2023.
12	258(a)	Construction of an Accident and Emergency Department at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital.	At design stage
13	258(b)	Setting up of a New Autistic Day Care Wards in hospitals starting with Souillac Hospital.	Ongoing • Region 1 - Brown Sequard Hospital – 90% Completed • Region 2 – Ex. Triolet AHC – completed and operational • Region 3 - in progress • Region 4 - ex. Cooperative Centre Bois Cherie – 50% completed • Region 5 – in progress
14	258(c)	Construction of a Mediclinic at Rivière du Rempart;	At design stage
15	258(d)	Construction of a New Area Health Centre (AHC) at Bambous	At construction stage
		Construction of a New Area Health Centre (AHC) at Curepipe	At tender stage
16	258 (e)	New Community Health Centre (CHC) at Camp Thorel	At design stage (land identification)
17		New Community Health Centre (CHC) at Ecoignard	At design stage
18		New Community Health Centre (CHC) at The Vale	At design stage (land identification)
20		New Community Health Centre (CHC) at Case Noyale	At design stage (land identification)
21		New Community Health Centre (CHC) at Piton	At design stage
22		New Community Health Centre (CHC) at Tamarin	At design stage (land identification)
23		Construction of New Block at Mahebourg Hospital	At design stage

Source: Project Implementation Unit at MOHW

* The table is inclusive of the measures from the Budget Annex FY 22-23

PART IV



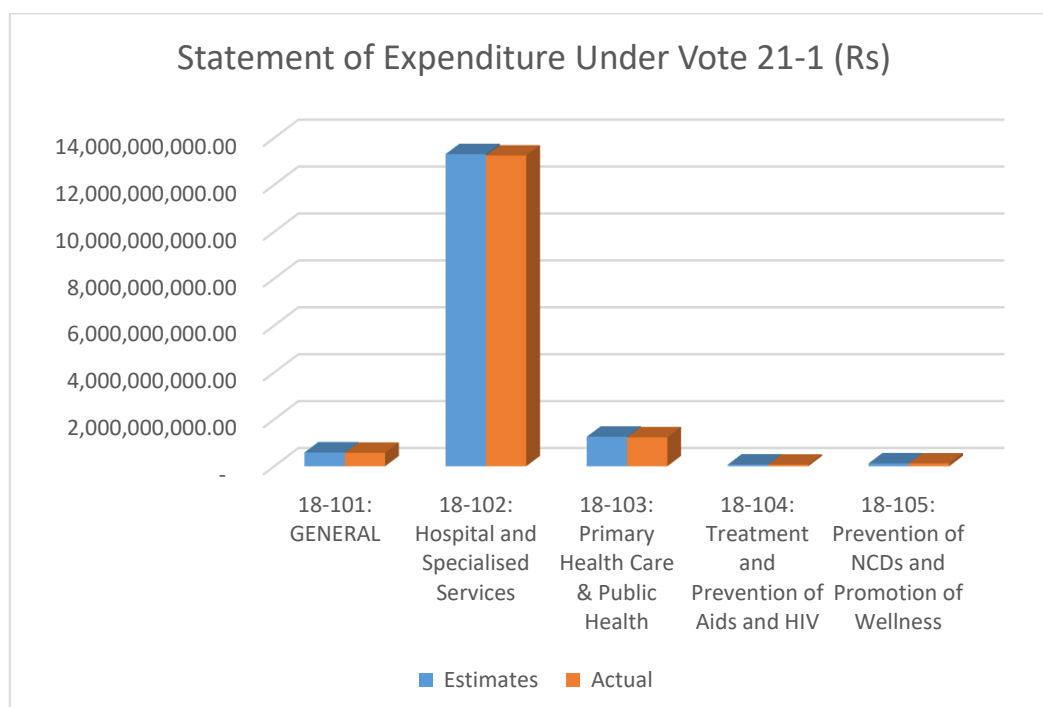
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of rising healthcare costs, Government through the Budget for FY 2022-2023 and the two preceding ones, has been sustaining its investments to shore up public health systems so that it can continue to provide high quality healthcare to Mauritians. A financial envelope of Rs 14.7 billion was allocated to the MOHW to provide free universal access to quality health care services to the population and thus to leave no one behind.

Government spending on health increased by nearly 60% over the past eight years, from Rs 9.2 billion in 2014 to Rs 14.76 billion for FY 2022-2023. Government Expenditure on Health as a percentage of GDP has improved from 2.4 % in 2014 to 3.2 % in FY 2022-2023. Per capita Government expenditure on health which was Rs 7,292 in 2014 has increased to Rs 11,611 in FY 2022-2023, representing an increase of nearly 60%.

The actual and estimated amount of expenditure for the FY 2022/2023 is as follows:



4.1.1 STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE UNDER VOTE 18-1

Table IX: Statement of Expenditure Under Vote 18-1

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE UNDER VOTE 18-1				
		2021-2022	2022-2023	2022-2023
		Actual (Rs)	Estimates (Rs)	Actual (Rs)
18-1 HEALTH AND WELLNESS		14,760,192,876	15,180,000,000	15,180,054,792
	18-101: GENERAL	1,135,631,020	621,900,000	574,084,499
20	Allowance to Minister	2,400,000	2,400,000	2,400,000
21	Comp of Employees	253,665,760	310,000,000	315,979,822
22	Goods & services	643,203,463	82,400,000	84,408,326
25	Subsidies		1,000,000	748
26	Grants	28,002,002	35,100,000	33,065,471
27	Social Benefits	89,477,000	105,000,000	76,945,621
28	Other Expenses	2,779,200	4,000,000	2,932,800
31	Acquisition of Non- Financial Assets	116,103,595	82,000,000	58,351,711
	18-102: Hospital and Specialised Services	12,449,236,834	13,113,800,000	13,183,145,580
21	Comp of Employees	6,524,606,555	7,812,100,000	7,830,347,950
22	Goods & services	4,289,594,410	3,356,200,000	3,600,101,468
26	Grants	339,000,000	392,000,000	400,700,000
31	Acquisition of Non- Financial Assets	1,296,035,869	1,553,500,000	1,351,996,162
	18-103: Primary Health Care & Public Health	1,008,736,710	1,254,300,000	1,233,577,801
21	Comp of Employees	672,547,427	836,300,000	811,141,221
22	Goods & services	182,279,644	189,000,000	181,798,737
31	Acquisition of Non- Financial Assets	153,909,639	229,000,000	240,637,843
	18-104: Treatment and Prevention of Aids and HIV	62,927,770	72,700,000	67,564,922
21	Comp of Employees	25,585,707	29,200,000	26,543,920
22	Goods & services	37,342,063	43,500,000	41,021,002

	18-105: Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases and Promotion of Wellness	103,660,542	117,300,000	121,681,990
21	Comp of Employees	71,019,612	77,700,000	76,127,931
22	Goods & services	32,640,930	39,100,000	45,554,059
31	Acquisition of Non- Financial Assets		500,000	
		14,760,192,876	15,180,000,000	15,180,054,792

Analysis of Changes

Healthcare costs in Mauritius will continue to rise as the country is highly dependent on the importation of goods, such as pharmaceutical products, vaccinations, medical consumables and equipment.

Unexpected rise in the number of visits in hospitals (around 8.8 million) has led to an increase in the consumption of medicines, drugs, medical disposables and laboratory supplies. Coupled with the depreciation of the Mauritian Rupee against US Dollar, the high rate of inflation in Mauritius and the Russia-Ukraine war have led to significant increase in prices.

A supplementary appropriation to the tune of 871 million was also made for the Ministry for the FY 2022-2023 to cater for expenses namely payments of allowances overtime, electricity charges, medicines, drugs, medical disposables related to dengue fever, claims in respect of various equipment, supplies and reagents that were acquired for laboratory services.

4.1.2 STATEMENT OF REVENUE

Table X: Statement of Revenue

SN	Description	Actual 2022/2023 (Rs)
1	Pharmacy Licences	1,526,450
2	Central Health Laboratory Fees	9,456,140
3	HIV & Filarisis	1,030,245
4	Deratting Fees	2,085,000
5	Vaccination Fees	14,983,550
6	Fumigation and Disinfection Fee	2,082,900
7	Sale of Drugs, Serum and Sundry	757,899
8	Health - Miscellaneous Sales of Goods and Services	58,989,524
9	Licence to run Private Hospitals	2,093,000

10	Entertainment Fees	44,500
11	Government Analysis Division	1,319,900
12	Forfeiture of performance Bond	10,903,186
13	Dangerous Chemical Licence	2,279,000
14	Refund of Bond	2,204,756
	TOTAL	109,756,049

PART V



5.1 CHALLENGES, PRIORITIES AND THE WAY FORWARD

The MOHW holds the prime responsibility to provide quality and patient-centric health services to the population and is called upon to manage one among the largest fractions (around 8%) of the National Budget. In this line, the Ministry has to ensure that the provision of medical services, other key functions, such as sustaining the right health infrastructure and the procurement of drugs and medical equipment, are carried in the most efficient manner to ensure that the enhancement of health sector development is at par with the Government's ambition of a modern Republic.

Altogether, the public health sector requires constant development to meet rising expectations. The MOHW is called upon to sustain progress made in the public health sector, address the challenges and thrive for a better and more resilient future for the sector. Thus, the Ministry has to keep pace with new health technologies, implement the strategic directions and actions as approved by Government and also continue investing in the health workforce and health infrastructure.

Areas of priorities, *inter-alia*, include the following:

Enhancing the Management and Prevention of NCDs: Over the years, Government has sustained the investments on management of NCDs and according to the Mauritius NCD Survey 2021, improvements have been observed in the status of NCDs and their risk factors as compared to the situation in 2015. Nevertheless, NCDs remain a major public health problem in Mauritius and require constant attention. In fact, the prevalence of NCDs and the chronic conditions associated with these diseases and disability will scale up with the ageing population.

In the long run, addressing the risk factors of NCDs and increasing investment on prevention of NCDs may lead to a reduction in the expenses involved in treating NCDs and the associated chronic conditions. Thus, strategies to reduce preventable and premature morbidity, mortality and disability due to NCDs will have to increase. Implementation of the National Integrated NCD Action Plan (NINAP) (2023–2028), strengthening the ongoing NCDs surveillance system, expansion of the screening services for early detection of NCDs, including mental health and cancer, implementation of the Tobacco Control Action Plan 2022-2026 and the National Cancer Control Programme 2022-2025 represent key priorities.

Moreover, a Food Standards Agency is being operationalized and it is envisaged to introduce and implement new Food Regulations, specifically for salt, trans-fats and nutrient profile labelling in collaboration with stakeholders. Recent budget measures on Management of NCDs will also have to be implemented including increased screening for cancer risks assessments and early detection, equipping the New Cancer Centre with high-tech equipment, provision of continuous glucose monitor for some 1000 Type-1 diabetes patients and an insulin pump for some 450 high risk diabetic patients and scaling up the Artificial Intelligence-enhanced Electrocardiography test in public hospitals.

Moreover, children in the Republic of Mauritius diagnosed with cancer will henceforth benefit from financial assistance for the full costs of cancer care and treatment in foreign hospitals or local private hospitals with the best expertise.

Upscaling Hospital and Specialized Services: The MOHW envisages to extend existing services as well as introduce new ones with respect to different pathologies. There is a need to extend Neuro Surgery, Cardiac Surgery, Fertility Clinics, Paediatric services, Gastroenterology and upscale the use of advanced technologies such as Linear Accelerators, CT-Scan, MRI and non-invasive medical techniques in the Regional Hospitals as well as Specialized Hospitals wherever these services/technologies are lacking.

The Ministry recognises the urgency of addressing the rising incidence of breast cancer and envisages establishment of a dedicated Breast Unit at SSRN Hospital. In order to ensure the delivery of high-quality specialized services, the unit will have to be equipped with a high-definition ultrasound scanner, core biopsy equipment and additional digital mammography machines.

Additionally, with the constant increase in the number of ischemic heart disease as well as with the ageing population, the number of patients being presented for cardiac surgeries is expected to increase. Thus, in the advent of new technologies to tackle cardiac cases, introduction of innovative procedures and investment in Cardiac Assistance Devices need to be considered.

Moreover, the Radiology department has forthcoming projects such as acquiring a fluoroscopy machine for specialized exams and hysterosalpingography for the fertility clinic. There is also a focus on improving services for thalassemia patients through the incorporation of Ferritin Estimation with R2 Relaxation Rate Imaging (FEERI) scan in MRI.

There is also the need to set up facilities in all health regions to integrate patients with autistic spectrum disorder. The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Victoria Hospital is in the process of being further upgraded to a Level 4 NICU where premature babies lower than 26 weeks gestation would be provided with respiratory support and treated with high level care. Refraction Clinics which were being carried solely at SBEH till recently, are now being offered at SSRN Hospital and will shortly start at Souillac Hospital.

The New Cancer Centre will provide a range of services and facilities, including availability of 200 beds and provision of two Linear Accelerators with multi-leaf collimators and a Cyber-knife. The centre will also offer Nuclear Medicine facilities, PET-CT scans, other therapeutic options and a complete spectrum of radiological modalities to patients. Molecular studies and special investigations will also be available in the laboratory services. Beyond treatment, the centre will provide educational and complementary services, including clinical trials, genetic testing cancer screening programs among others.

The Ministry has recourse to the treatment of patients abroad or in private sector for cases which cannot be treated in the public health system. In order to reduce such spending, it is also envisaged to further train our doctors and/or employ super-specialists to deliver these services, for example at the New Cancer Hospital, the New Renal Transplant Centre, the New Eye Hospital, and the New Cardiac Centre. Furthermore, to keep pace with international standards and practice, Mauritius will also have to embark on the application of Artificial Intelligence and use of Telemedicine and Robotics thus requiring significant investments in the near future.

Strengthening Primary Health Care Services: Provision has been made in the Strategic Plans for the setting up of Family Doctor Service Scheme (FDS) to be able to re-engineer the Primary Health Care (PHC) and to respond to today's rising expectations of patients for improved quality of care and service. As such, the FDS will offer patient centred healthcare, enhance preventive care, act as a gatekeeper mechanism for accessing tertiary services at Regional Hospital Level

and address the needs of our ageing population. A wider range of services will be made available to support our people through their life course for the welfare and the healthcare of their families.

In the long run, investment in FDS and preventive care are expected to bring down spending on curative services. According to the WHO Global Monitoring Report, the Universal Health Coverage Index for Mauritius was 66 in 2021 and introduction of FDS in Mauritius is expected to raise this index to a higher and more favourable level due to improved access to services.

The Ministry also plans to extend the Decentralised Programme of Medical Specialities to diverse Health Regions with the oversight to ensure equitable access, quality care, and consistency in healthcare services across the country.

Moreover, at PHC level, the Tobacco Cessation Centres (TCCs) envisions a comprehensive approach to tackle modifiable risk factors associated with soft addictions, including alcohol and nicotine which entails establishment of a dedicated unit to address these issues effectively. Additionally, the unit aims to upscale the WHO-ASSIST program with two more centres within each health region and position TCCs as integral components of addictology clinics and addictology centres.

Reinforcing Public Health Services and prevention of Communicable Diseases: The world remains at risk of other infectious diseases, vector borne diseases, zoonotic diseases and pandemics. Climate change and the closeness of people to animals due to deforestation around the world places us at risks of similar threats such as COVID-19 and Monkey pox.

Mauritius being a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) is prone to external shocks and needs to ensure resilience when faced with these threats. Government is collaborating with the WHO and the Green Climate Fund to work on the structure of a dedicated unit to look into health issues associated with climate change.

The MOHW is actively engaged in developing an Integrated Diseases Surveillance and Response (IDSR) framework, a project initiated in collaboration with the WHO. The Ministry is also envisaging to finalise and implement the National Action Plan on Health Security which will address the necessary thematic areas under Public Health.

In addition, the Ministry is planning to set up a Public Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) in collaboration with the WHO for addressing emerging and re-emerging diseases. The PHEOC will serve as a coordinating platform for the preparation, readiness, response, and recovery from public health emergencies among relevant stakeholders. A functional PHEOC will be the backbone of a strong disease surveillance system and will provide real-time response to any public health emergency, early disease detection and response for timely decision making and efficient management of resources and communication.

The international platforms have shown that preparedness to public health emergencies were better in terms of cost effectiveness as compared to unplanned and unprepared responses.

The Ministry has to also sustain its investments in terms of recruitment of personnel, training, rapid response, PCR testing, rapid testing, laboratory equipment and reagents, Personnel Protective Equipment, vaccination and quarantining to better prepare the country to face any future epidemiological situation. The disease surveillance at the points of entry has to be

reinforced. The public health offices are also not conducive for today's need and expectations and new infrastructure for public health offices are required.

Better implementation of Health infrastructural Projects in the public sector: The Ministry is envisaging to set up a dedicated unit for the better administration, monitoring and implementation of the Capital Budget in relation to Health Infrastructural Projects and for the timely maintenance and construction of health infrastructure.

During the FY 2023-2024, the construction of the new Victoria Hospital and the development of the health hub at Cote D'Or with the construction of a National Health Laboratory Services Centre, a new Cardiac Centre, a new Modern Warehouse for medicines and establishing an AYUSH Centre of Excellence will be pursued under a Public-Private-Partnership venture.

Moreover, Primary healthcare would be reinforced with the construction of additional Mediclinics, Area Health Centres, Community Health Centres (CHCs) and Public Health Offices and existing infrastructures would be renovated and upgraded. It is planned to operationalise five additional Mediclinics and five additional CHCs in the coming year.

The National Cancer Centre and the Flacq Teaching Hospital would be operationalised and the construction of the New Eye Hospital and the Renal Transplant Unit at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital would also be pursued.

Promoting efficiency through digitally enabled health care delivery: The MOHW has already embarked on the Phase 1 of the digitalisation of the public health sector through the implementation of Digital Health Solutions with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This strategy is expected to strengthen the underpinnings for decision-making and assist the sector to further achieve efficiency gains.

The Patient Administration System under e-health will bring the "one patient one record" concept which is expected to reduce wastage and duplication of work. Additionally, the "SMART Health Mobile App - Mo Bienet", and establishment of real-time monitoring for healthcare expenditures and public health facility operations via e-Health are planned to roll-out during Phase 2. It is also planned to enhance the use of the District Health Information System (DHIS-2) for vaccination programmes, diseases surveillance, HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment, and prevention of NCDs. Furthermore, digital x-ray will be extended to all Regional Hospitals

Altogether, the Digital Health Office at the Ministry would be reinforced for the effective implementation of Digital Health initiatives. Nevertheless, the concept of "one patient and one record" will only translate into reality if there is parallel investment in IT infrastructures, networking equipment, hardware and software, IT cloud storage, high data security, IT literate health workforce and real time back-office IT support amongst others.

Strengthening legislative/institutional frameworks and Multisectoral Collaborations to underpin developments in the health sector: Provisions under the Central Medical Procurement Authority Act 2023 will be implemented as from the next FY. It provides for the setting up of a Central Medical Procurement Authority which will, inter alia, be responsible to manage the overall procurement, warehousing, supply and distribution of medical supplies, ensuring that the stock level of medical supplies is maintained and are available at all times in all public health institutions in Mauritius. Moreover, the following amendments will be undertaken as proposed in Budget FY 2023-2024:

- (i) The Ayurvedic and Other Traditional Medicines Act will be amended to cater for specialists in traditional medicines.
- (ii) The Medical Council Act will be amended to empower the Medical Council to establish Clinical Guidelines intended to optimizing patient-care; and provide for the terms of office of the Disciplinary Tribunal.
- (iii) The Pharmacy Act will be amended to cater for and facilitate the development of the local pharmaceutical manufacturing sector in Mauritius.
- (iv) The Human Tissue Act will be amended to enable in-vitro fertilisation and all applications under the Clinical Research Regulatory Council (CRRRC) will be processed within a maximum period of 15 days.

For more development in the sector, it is envisaged to scale up further collaborations with Development Partners, NGOs and also strengthen the Public Private Partnerships for increasing health financing.

Improving quality of health services and Human Resources for Health (HRH): To sustain the provision of quality and accessible patient-centred public health services, the following are also envisaged: (i) a mandatory feedback mechanism will be introduced in hospitals on care being delivered to in-patients (ii) Partnership with the National Health Service of the United Kingdom, under a Government-to-Government initiative, to carry out a quality assurance and audit of clinical and overall healthcare services in hospitals and (iii) implementation of recommendations provided by oversight bodies (National Audit Office, Internal Control etc).

Additional staffing and further capacity building of medical and non-medical staff will certainly be needed. As far HRH is concerned, the Managers Human Resources would need to provide monthly updates on the status of vacancies and ensure close follow-up so that all funded vacancies are filled in a timely manner. The MOHW is upgrading the services, implementing new services, specialities and super specialities. Thus, there is a need to ensure that more officers are continuously trained and equipped to provide these health services. There is also the need to re-engineer the human resources for Public Health separately so as to cater for any future pandemic like COVID-19.

Ensuring Sustainability of the HIV Response: This represents an upcoming challenge as the country is in a transition period with regard to the Global Fund Grant which will phase out by the year 2027. Eventually, new sources of financing will have to be determined to take full ownership of the HIV programme. The MOHW has ensured that Government steadily increases its funding of HIV programming, both nominally and as a percentage of total spending. A transition committee has been set up and there is strong civil society engagement with respect to HIV programming. Furthermore, negotiations are in process with the National Social Inclusion Foundation to scale up fund provided to NGOs which represent around 8% contribution to the HIV expenditures.

5.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In order to build on the health gains achieved and further improve healthcare services, the Ministry has set out its strategic direction for the next three years. Accordingly, the following strategies will be implemented:

Strategic Directions	Enablers
Reduce preventable and premature morbidity, mortality and disability due to NCDs	 ▪ Develop and implement the National Service Framework for NCD and NCD Action Plan 2023–2028 ▪ Ensure implementation of the Tobacco Control Action Plan 2022-2026, the National Breastfeeding Action Plan 2022-2027, the National Cancer Control Programme 2022-2025, National Action Plan for Oral Health 2022-2027, the National Action Plan on Alcohol 2020-2025 and the Integrated Care for Older People Action Plan 2022-2026 ▪ Enhance and scale-up the screening services for early detection of NCDs, including mental health, cancer and chest diseases ▪ Pursue Human Papillomavirus vaccination for girls and introduce the vaccination for boys (aged 9 to 14 years) ▪ Strengthen cardiac prevention services through Cardiac Risk Assessment Score and Cardiac Registry ▪ Fully operationalise the Mauritius Food Standards Agency ▪ Implement the mandatory Food Fortification Programme for wheat flour
Upgrade public health infrastructure for improved health care service delivery	 ▪ Implement the National Health Laboratory Services Centre, new Cardiac Centre, new Modern Warehouse for medicines and new Victoria Hospital projects with private sector participation ▪ Operationalise the National Cancer Hospital, the New Eye Hospital, the Flacq Teaching Hospital and construct the Renal Transplant Unit to provide specialised clinical care ▪ Operationalise additional five Mediclinics and five Community Health Centres during Financial Year 2023-2024 ▪ Construct additional Mediclinics, Area Health Centres (AHC), Community Health Centres (CHC) and Health Offices and upgrade existing primary healthcare infrastructures ▪ Establish an AYUSH Centre of Excellence with the collaboration of the Indian Authorities and the World Health Organization (WHO) ▪ Set up a dedicated unit for the timely maintenance and construction of health infrastructure

Strategic Directions	Enablers
Reinforce health resilience against emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases	 ▪ Finalise and implement the National Action Plan for Health Security ▪ Set up the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre ▪ Improve Infection Prevention and Control measures in all healthcare institutions ▪ Scale-up services of the Government Analyst Division
Ensure health for all and enhance the quality of patient-centred services	 ▪ Improve Primary Healthcare services to provide a comprehensive care and treatment to patients ▪ Strengthen personalised-patient services, including care for the elderly, palliative care and community-based rehabilitation and community psychiatric services ▪ Modernise the legal framework for Private Health Institutions ▪ Undertake quality assurance and audit of hospital services to improve overall care ▪ Continuous capacity building for medical and paramedical staff ▪ Implement the Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan 2022-2027 and the Action Plan for the prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections 2023-2027 ▪ Enhance logistics for HIV treatment and implement the HIV National Action Plan 2023 – 2027 ▪ Scale up the existing Fertility Clinic services at the SSRN Hospital and extend these services to other Regional Hospitals ▪ Set up facilities in all health regions to integrate patients with autistic spectrum disorder ▪ Enhance tertiary health care services including renal transplant, spine surgery, endodontics and orthodontics ▪ Modernise the Public Health legal framework to cater for genomics, human tissue transplant, cord blood and assisted reproductive technologies ▪ Improving the procurement framework of medical supplies
Achieve efficiency through digitally enabled health care delivery	 ▪ Accelerate the implementation of the eHealth in public health institutions ▪ Enhance the District Health Information System (DHIS-2) with the support of the WHO for vaccination programmes, diseases surveillance and HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment ▪ Implement the “SMART Health Mobile App” with the support of the WHO ▪ Implement real-time monitoring of healthcare expenditures and operations of public health facilities through eHealth

Strategic Directions		Enablers
		Reinforce the Digital Health Office for the effective implementation of Digital Health initiatives
Encourage community participation for wellness of population	⇒	- Restructure Local Health Committees to implement health literacy programmes - Strengthen the collaboration with NGOs and peer to peer patient support groups - Revamp the competencies of community health care cadres to address evolving health and wellness needs - Optimise ICT tools in sensitising the population on healthy lifestyle - Reinsert rehabilitated patients of Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre in Residential Care Homes - Operationalise the Drug Users Administrative Panel for a holistic approach for victims of substance abuse

Source: Budget FY 2023-2024