GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health and Social Development Engages Senior Group in Second District

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The Ministry of Health and Social Development has reaffirmed its commitment to engaging with and supporting the well-being of senior citizens following a meaningful visit with the OASIS (Older Adults Sharing in Service) Seniors Group in the Second District.

The meeting, held at the Cane Garden Bay Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, was convened at the invitation of the Second District Representative and provided an opportunity for the Ministry's team to hear directly from seniors about the group's activities and impact within the community.

Honourable Vincent O. Wheatley, Minister for Health and Social Development, expressed appreciation for the initiative and its positive impact on the seniors in the district.

Honourable Wheatley said, "The OASIS Seniors Group is a shining example of what can be achieved when communities come together to support one another. I commend the organisers and participants for creating a space that promotes dignity, inclusion, and well-being among our seniors. These engagements allow the Ministry to better understand the needs of our older population as we continue exploring ways to strengthen support across the Territory."

Acting Chief Social Development Officer Ms Shirma George also underscored the importance of such initiatives and the Ministry's ongoing efforts.

Ms George said, "The Social Development Department continues to work towards strengthening and expanding senior engagement programmes throughout the Virgin Islands. The OASIS initiative demonstrates the power of community led action, and we are encouraged by the level of participation and support shown in the Second District. We will continue to assess how best to support and expand programmes of this nature in alignment with national policies and standards."

The OASIS Seniors Group, which has been operating for over a year, hosts weekly gatherings every Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The initiative focuses on fostering fellowship, promoting wellness, and strengthening social support among older adults. The programme is currently supported through community contributions and the assistance of the Second District Representative and other

community partners.

During the engagement, seniors shared their experiences, demonstrated aspects of their weekly programme, and highlighted the positive impact the initiative has had on their lives. The session also provided a platform for open dialogue, with the Ministry’s team listening to participants’ perspectives and commending the group for their commitment to community building and active ageing.

The meeting was attended by Honourable Vincent O. Wheatley, Honourable Melvin M. Turnbull, Deputy Secretary Mrs Sheniah Armstrong-Jones, Acting Chief Social Development Officer Ms Shirma George, and members of the OASIS Seniors Group.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to promoting the health, social participation, and overall well-being of our seniors throughout the Virgin Islands and will continue to explore opportunities to support initiatives that encourage active ageing and social inclusion.

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