



## STORIES of HOPE

### GUYANA

#### Ensuring a Safe Blood Supply



Dr. Clem McEwan, Medical Director of the National Blood Transfusion Service, works in partnership with the U.S. Government to ensure a safe blood supply in Guyana.

*With Emergency Plan support, the Ministry of Health now reports that 100 percent of the blood supply is tested for HIV, hepatitis B and C, syphilis and malaria.*



In Guyana, nine public and private sectors sites provide blood collection and storage services, and 10 sites perform blood transfusions. The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR) is working in partnership with the Guyanese Ministry of Health to ensure a safe blood supply in the country. With Emergency Plan support, the Ministry of Health reports that 100 percent of the blood supply is tested for HIV, hepatitis B and C, syphilis and malaria.

Eaton London, a young man suffering from sickle cell disease, puts his life in the hands of the Ministry of Health National Blood Transfusion Service every time he gets a blood transfusion. He noted, "Just last evening, I was a recipient of two units of blood, and I feel very comfortable receiving that blood. I can stand here today and speak about it because I know that six months down the road from now, the chances of me actually being tested HIV-positive as a consequence of that transfusion are next to zero."

Dr. Clem McEwan, Medical Director of the National Blood Transfusion Service, explained, "Guyana, being one of the countries within the Caribbean that is experiencing an increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS, has been a beneficiary of the PEPFAR initiative, which is going to be used to enhance not just ... the infrastructure, but improve human capacity, improve training, ensure that there are materials and the requisite equipment, so we can continue to carry out the job of trying to ensure the safety of our blood supplies."

Dr. McEwan added, "As an impoverished country within the Americas and within the world, we would have been really, really hard pressed to provide the level of health care and to fight this condition without the contribution from the United States. Because without it, we would have been losing this battle. As it is right now, we are there fighting and winning."

**The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief**

Department of State | U.S. Agency for International Development | Department of Defense | Department of Commerce  
Department of Labor | Department of Health and Human Services | Peace Corps

Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator  
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