



Ministerial Statement

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SENIORS,
THE HON. PATRICIA GORDON-PAMPLIN JP, MP**

ON: Industrial disquiet by CCU Staff

**19th July, 2013 at the
House of Assembly**

Mr. Speaker,

I rise to inform this Honourable House of the industrial disquiet that has occurred, resulting in a march by some of the BHB Continuing Care staff yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, this action was apparently taken in response to my comments in the House of Assembly last Friday concerning future plans for the CCU.

I thought that my comments were clear, in that the situation concerning the CCU is not just a hospital matter, it is a community matter. I stated that meetings will be held with interested stakeholders to determine how capacity may be provided to ensure that our seniors are accommodated in a dignified, safe and appropriate environment.

Mr. Speaker, you will know that the new hospital acute care wing is in the process of construction at a cost of \$234M. You should also be made aware that in setting aside the funding for this new construction, there had been no provision made for

the upgrading of the existing CCU. With the funding projections, there will not be any way to manage both the new acute care wing and to do a major overhaul of the existing CCU.

As such, this government is not prepared to allow our seniors to continue to reside in an environment that needs major overhaul. The reality is that the building which houses the CCU is stated to be some 90 years old, and it is no longer fit for purpose.

Planning for the future is the prudent and pragmatic approach, and in the course of such planning, the first thing that must be determined is how our seniors can be transitioned from a facility which is not appropriate, into better surroundings.

This plan is still in the very early exploratory stage. In fact, next week is the first joint meeting that will be held to examine feasibility.

I would like for the staff at the CCU to know that under no circumstances will they be just put out of a job. I am as concerned as they are to ensure that they are not displaced, and that any alternative plan will have both staff and patients included at the heart of the equation.

Careful planning requires that staff and patients have equal right to consideration. Any plan for our seniors must ensure that there is adequate staff to meet their needs.

As mentioned, the existing building has major challenges. Plumbing and electrical infrastructure are so beyond their useful lives that renovation is not an option.

No stone will be left unturned in ensuring a workable solution to this problem that includes accommodation, staffing and ancillary services to care for our patients.

Once the preliminary discussions have been completed, this Honourable House and the people of Bermuda will be fully apprised.

In addition, I wish to inform staff that any concern that they have may be discussed with me at any time. My door is always open, and staff can be assured that this government does not do retaliations or repercussions, hence, no one needs to feel timid about expressing himself. There is no need for fear of discussion. At the request of the Unions, I will have meetings with them at their earliest convenience in order to further explore the possibilities and to receive from them their input into finding the best way forward.

There are no secrets; there will be no withholding of information, as this situation affects all of us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker