



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Health and Environment

**Ministerial Statement to the
House of Assembly
by the Minister of Health, Seniors and Environment
The Honourable Jeanne J. Atherden, JP, MP
On 21st November, 2014**

“MERGER OF OPPORTUNITY WORKSHOP AND ORANGE VALLEY”

Mr. Speaker,

In the Speech from the Throne which was presented earlier this month, the Government announced that the Opportunity Workshop and Orange Valley will merge to become one unit providing a full range of day programmes for their clients.

Mr. Speaker,

I am pleased to announce that the Orange Valley Centre (OVC) relocated its services from the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute to 21 Robert’s Avenue on Thursday where it will share a home with the Opportunity Workshop (OWS).

This relocation meets best practice standards in that there will be a more efficient and effective delivery of services. Clients will now have the opportunity to socially interact with more of their peers and participate in a larger variety of programs such as music, woodwork, exercise, group outings and various other activities.

The consolidated programme will be able to provide a wider range of services to a greater number of clients including several students who will be transitioning from the education system.

Clients from both the OVC and the OWS will also now have greater access to support services in the form of Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists who will be able to service select clients at one central facility now, instead of two separate facilities.

Mr. Speaker,

The OWS provides meaningful employment for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) through the production of goods and services for both the private sector and community businesses.

The Production Centre is an equal opportunity facility where emphasis is placed on individual work ethic, skills development and productivity. Services and programmes offered include:

- food and crafts production,
- in-house contract work,
- training and employment,
- a wellness program,
- a music/woodwork program,
- a greenhouse/gardening program,
- a money management program and
- a functional skills program.

OWS clients range in age from 18 years to 50 plus years. Their cognitive challenges span from mild to moderate, resulting in learning disabilities secondary to Down's Syndrome, Autism, or other congenital disorders.

The OVC functions as the Adult Day Center Program for clients aged 40+ with moderate cognitive challenges. Programs have been designed to support individual needs and are not vocational in nature, but, rather, address skills development in the activities of daily living.

Mr. Speaker,

I have been assured that the move was coordinated with no additional resources and no additional staff. We were able to work within the parameters of both budgets (OW/OVC) and save Government additional expenses during these difficult economic times.

Parents and staff have been looking forward to the move, as we can now better service all of our clients and meet their individual needs.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**