

## LUCELEC Funds Over \$75K Extension To St Jude Hospital Oxygen Generating Plant

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**Castries, September 29, 2021** – St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) has donated **nearly \$76,000** to the St Jude Hospital in support of the hospital’s efforts to power its Oxygen Generating Plant. LUCELEC is covering the cost of the electricity infrastructure to extend the power supply to the plant.

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The St Jude Hospital currently receives its oxygen supply through an external agency. That avenue is fraught with issues that include regularity and cost. St Jude Hospital CEO Diana Henry-Ernest says the hospital invested in the plant as part of its overall strategy to fight COVID-19.

“When the pandemic started we realized we might have some issues with oxygen and decided to find a way to generate our own oxygen [and] ventured into buying a plant. Right now at St Jude Hospital we buy oxygen. If we are generating our own we will not have to wait for a supply, we will always have a continuous supply. COVID clients are dependent on oxygen at a high concentration so us having our own plant [will eliminate] the need to import or buy from anybody else. We are so grateful that LUCELEC came to our [aid], a contribution of \$76,000 will go a long way for St Jude Hospital. COVID has actually put a dent in our pocket, our cash flow is reduced tremendously so LUCELEC coming on board and helping us with that gift, that donation is definitely going to give us the opportunity to have continuous oxygen for our clients” she says.

Chief Medical Officer Dr Sharon Belmar-George agrees that a reliable and cost effective oxygen supply is of critical importance in the national fight against COVID-19 and other respiratory ailments.

“With COVID-19, the need for oxygen on island has become a lot worse, so it is reassuring for us to have that capacity in the South of the island and support wherever else is needed for care with oxygen. Even without COVID, we have our asthmatics, increased numbers of patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) as a result of smoking so we get a lot of those admissions and persons who suffer a heart attack or stroke because of the burden of chronic disease. A regular, sustainable supply of oxygen is extremely important for our health facilities, both the hospital and the others within the communities,” she says.

The CMO describes the size and impact of the LUCELEC donation as significant. She says establishing the oxygen plant at St Jude will “ensure and support patient care in the South of the island.”

“[St Jude has] also had discussions with the Ministry to provide oxygen support to our other public health facilities in the South. [The plant] will not only support patient care in the South and the hospital but also assist us with our community respiratory clinics and our regular clinics.”

LUCELEC Managing Director Trevor Louisy says the necessity of the St Jude Hospital request is what spurred the Company to act.

“The donation to St Jude will enable the hospital to provide one of the most essential tools in the fight against COVID-19 and to meet Saint Lucia’s oxygen needs well into the future. We are committed to doing our part to strengthen the health sector’s capacity to respond to crises such as this pandemic, to save lives and, hopefully, get the country past this deadly virus, particularly this troubling fourth wave, as quickly as possible. This is one clear demonstration of that,” says Mr Louisy.

St Jude Hospital is also partnering with Invest St Lucia on the establishment of its Oxygen Generating Plant. The facility is located at the Vieux-Fort Free Zone.

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