

# Raising awareness of Alzheimer's

THE Alzheimer's Association of Trinidad and Tobago (AzATT) remains dedicated to raising awareness of this disease across T&T. This public awareness has taken many forms including: outreach programmes, lectures, discussions, seminars and DVD presentations, as well as providing support to persons living with the disease, their families and caregivers. The 4th Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) Non-Latin Caribbean Conference on Alzheimer's and other dementias was also included as part of AzATT's public education campaign.

The conference, themed "Dementia in the Caribbean: No Time to Lose" took place at the Radisson Hotel, Port of Spain from June 8-10 and marked AzATT's first foray into hosting an event of this kind.

The Massy Foundation's annual contribution to the association was directed to offsetting the cost of the conference. Newly appointed president of the AzATT, Ann Smith, expressed the association's appreciation for the Foundation's donation: "The funds received from the Massy Foundation are historically used for the association's educational programmes and for this we are truly grateful. As we all know, education is fundamental in reducing the stigma associated with Alzheimer's, and with knowledge comes a better understanding of the disease and how to cope with afflicted persons."

"The Massy Foundation is pleased to be associated with the Alzheimer's Association of Trinidad and Tobago, as it continues relentlessly in its efforts to give support to and improve the quality of life for individuals with dementia. Your drive and passion are truly an inspiration to the Foundation," commented Adele Rose, manager of the Massy Foundation.

AzATT's new board of directors is keen to set up a volunteer programme. A number of areas have been identified where volunteers can participate effectively. The first area to be launched later this year is expected to be a "Befriending Service", a service intended to provide support and companionship to persons with Alzheimer's and their family members on a one-to-one



INFO ON THE CONDITION: One of the many informative brochures, left, available at the Alzheimer's Association of Trinidad and Tobago.

Speaking on the disease, Smith emphasised, "Family members and caregivers should learn about the disease and what to expect at each stage as the disease progresses. They will need to exert a lot of patience and learn how to communicate as the person's behaviour and ability to communicate can become challenging." She continued, "You must be flexible, as every day will not be the same. There will be good days and bad days. Please be willing to share your experiences, so others can learn and be able to cope."

The Alzheimer's Disease Programme started in 1996 as a project of the then incumbent president of the Soroptimist International Club of Port of Spain, Norma Inness. It became the Alzheimer's Association of Trinidad and Tobago and was registered as a non-profit organisation in June 2000. In 2004, it became a full member of the ADI – the International Federation of Alzheimer's Associations around the world, and was twinned with the Alzheimer Society of Canada in 2006.

For more information visit the website: <http://www.alztrinbago.org>, e-mail: [alzcarib-conf2017@gmail.com](mailto:alzcarib-conf2017@gmail.com)

Anyone who is interested in volunteering with the Association may call 225-8764 for additional information.



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IN DEEP DISCUSSION: Beryl Stuart, from left, vice president and Ann Smith, president of AzATT; Adele Rose, Massy Foundation manager; and Joanne Shurland, treasurer, also of AzATT.