



**Office of the Prime Minister
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Bay Street
Kingstown**

**Ministry of Health, Wellness
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Ministerial Building
Kingstown**

For Immediate Release

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT ON CARE AND MANAGEMENT OF RAYDEN DAVIS

Rayden Davis first presented to the medical team at the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital (MCMH) in June 2022. Sadly, he was discovered to have been born with a weak immune system (congenital immunodeficiency). This condition was further complicated by other disorders which remained not fully diagnosed up to the time of his passing on 18th January, 2023.

The health care team of the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital (MCMH), inclusive of the Paediatric Department, Haematology Department and Psychosocial Department, provided the indicated medical care to Rayden throughout the entire period of his hospitalisation. This care was determined by a continuous, consultative process which drew on the expertise of specialist paediatricians in this country, Trinidad and Tobago, the Hospital for Sick Kids in Toronto, Canada, and our World Pediatric Project (WPP) partners.

In an attempt to have the patient transferred to a hospital overseas, MCMH personnel requested support from the Office of the Prime Minister. Immediately, authorisation was given for payment for a private charter to facilitate air transfer to Trinidad and Tobago. This was actively pursued: contact was made with an airline, and arrangements were made for a doctor to accompany and provide support to Rayden during the flight and, also, for other forms of support to his mother for her stay in Trinidad and Tobago. However, these plans were placed on hold at the request of the Trinidadian medical authorities who had initially agreed to accept Rayden as a patient.

Efforts continued to secure confirmation from overseas medical specialists of their willingness to accept the child as a patient in order to facilitate his transfer to a medical facility outside St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These included formal requests, in writing, from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer to several regional health systems. Unfortunately, this confirmation was not forthcoming and, up to the time of his passing, no overseas medical team had committed to accepting Rayden as a patient.

Extensive tests utilising the services of local and overseas laboratories, and a full series of consultations between MCMH medical personnel and specialist paediatricians in the Caribbean and North America did not yield a definitive diagnosis. This uncertainty impeded overseas referral and care.

It must be noted that the following procedures are followed in cases where patients require overseas medical care:

- Contact is made with the regional or international health system/ facility, and the requisite medical reports are forwarded for preliminary assessment. This contact may be initiated by the patient's family or by local medical personnel, the latter at the request or with the permission of the individual's next-of-kin.
- The receiving doctor and institution will then indicate whether or not they are able to accept the patient for further evaluation and/or treatment. This is usually communicated in writing to the local medical team and the family.
- Once such communication is received, arrangements are put in place for the transfer of the patient, based on the advice of medical personnel. This will be done with the consent of the next-of-kin and the requisite support from the health care team.
- Financial support may be provided by the State, if required.

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment is fully committed to the continuous improvement of the range of quality healthcare services available to the public, inclusive of the strengthening of our collaborative partnerships with regional and international healthcare systems.

We express sincere condolences to Rayden's parents and all his loved ones. The MCMH team, and other ministries and departments of the public service will continue to support Rayden's mother, cognizant of how difficult it is for a parent when her child has suffered gravely for a prolonged period. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family during this difficult period.

Dated January 20, 2023.