



AMPUTEES GET GREATER STANDING IN SPORTS IN ST LUCIA

Programme aims to tackle lack of opportunities for disabled people to get involved in community activities and sport

SAINT LUCIA, Castries: Twenty-five coaches, special ed teachers and community youth mentors from across St. Lucia attended a two day workshop to better understand how sport can offer a wide range of benefits to amputees, people with congenital limb deficiencies and persons with restricted use of limbs.

Supported by the Australian High Commission's Direct Aid Program (DAP) and facilitated by the Sacred Sports Foundation Inc (SSF), the workshop formed part of chAMPS, an active limbs saves lives programme focusing on adaptive sports, recreation and rehabilitation for persons with disabilities in St Lucia and took place at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground on April 28th and 29th in partnership with the England Amputee Football Association (EAFA).

EAFA founder David Tweed, a professional amputee footballer, qualified coach and British adaptive skier delivered the workshop alongside EAFA Head Coach Owen Colye Jr. who administers the EAFL National League and has worked extensively with disability and women's football.

The workshop participants, who included a number of amputees from St. Lucia, took part in sessions ranging from understanding amputee football, to developing and delivering amputee physical activity sessions of their own. In addition, communication styles, preparation of delivery and adaptability when delivering to an impairment specific group or an individual with a disability was also covered.

Diabetes is among the leading causes of morbidity, with 40% of Caribbean death resulting from cardiovascular diseases related to hypertension and diabetes. St. Lucia recorded 131 amputees in 2013 and 100 in 2014. There were 13,300 reported cases of diabetes in St Lucia in 2015 and by May 2015, there were already 41 limbs amputated due in large part to the obesity ravaging ailment.

To this end, a comprehensive programme of activity sessions and Limb Loss Outreach and Diabetes Education days were also incorporated into the **chAMPS** programme of activities. Together with The St. Lucia Diabetes & Hypertension Association (SLDHA) and the National Council of and for People with Disabilities (NCPD) some 150 amputees along with their care givers were identified in communities across St Lucia who received wound care and management advice, physical therapy and diabetes education.

“Amputation of a limb affects almost all aspects of an individual's life, therefore rehabilitation after limb loss is a challenge on many levels: physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and financial and may temporarily hinder one's ability to think clearly and solve problems” said Nova Alexander, Executive Director of SSF.

chAMPS overriding objective is to enhance the quality of life, improve overall health and provide opportunities to become re-engaged within their communities through a variety of adaptive activities, including physical education and inclusive community interaction.

Sacred Sports Foundation Inc is a FIFA Football for Hope supported Organisation, A network member of streetfootballworld and a partner with Peace & Sport.

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