

Situation Report on FIRE AT ST JUDE'S HOSPITAL, SAINT LUCIA

THE EVENT:



During the night of September 8, 2009, a fire broke out at the second largest public hospital in Saint Lucia, St Jude Hospital in Vieux Fort, St Lucia.

THE SITUATION:

Sometime between midnight on September 8, 2009 and 1 am on September 9, 2009, fire broke out at the St Jude's Hospital in Vieux Fort.

At the start of the fire there were 47 patients in the hospital. Two patients succumbed in the fire and one patient died on route to the Victoria Hospital in the north of the country. A total of 44 patients were evacuated initially to the Vieuxfort Comprehensive School Campus B, about one mile from the affected hospital. Later on 13 were absorbed in the Victoria Hospital and the remaining 31 were sent home.

The burned out surgical ward is on the top floor of the middle wing of the hospital (see pictures). The floor below housing the laboratory, pediatric ward, supplies and laundry received water damage. The other two buildings accommodating the administrative office, stores, cafeteria, Accident and Emergency, X-Ray, Physio-therapy, Dental, Pharmacy, Medical Records, X-Ray, Outpatient Clinic (incl. Gynecology), Medical and Maternity wards, obstetrics, remained undamaged. The covered walkway connecting the outer wings 1 and 3 with the middle wing sustained fire some fire damage. Staff at the laboratory was able to cover equipment with plastic sheeting to prevent water damage.

An assessment of damaged equipment in this lower floor has not been completed at the end of the day and a list would be provided on Thursday 10 September. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

To accommodate these anticipated emergencies and A&E medical ward was set up at the Olympic Stadium some 2 miles from the hospital. This stadium now houses an improvised operating room, emergency room and resuscitation room.



**Fire at St.
Jude's
Hospital,
Vieux Fort,
Saint Lucia**



RESPONSE:

The Prime Minister of St. Lucia convened an emergency meeting with the fire service, the police and medical professionals

PAHO has been in contact with the Minister and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health in Saint Lucia and has initiated a preliminary assessment. Further updates will be provided as additional information becomes available.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and remain on standby to ensure our availability should this become necessary after full assessments have been undertaken.