

Mercy Hospital inpatient building ‘up and running’

- one operating theatre destroyed

Stabroek staff - May 12, 2010

In the aftermath of Monday’s fire which destroyed the main building of St Joseph Mercy Hospital, its administration has put a number of provisions in place to continue offering its services to patients while planning the way forward.



[1] A patient being helped out of the building minutes after the fire started (left)

Georgeina Mentore, Human Resources Director at the Mercy Hospital, said “while there was a feeling of sadness about the loss, there was so much more to be thankful for.”

Mentore noted that the inpatient building which houses the majority of the hospital’s patients is “up and running” and has not been affected at all.

But she made an appeal for persons to render whatever help they can to the institution. She said that the supplies in the housekeeping department were lost in the fire and the institution would be grateful for donations.

Patients who were evacuated from the burnt building are now being accommodated at Davis Memorial Hospital and Georgetown Public Hospital. However their dietary needs and their medical care are being provided by nurses from Mercy. It is expected that the patients will be accommodated in another wing of the hospital by weekend.

Commenting on the loss of hospital records, she said that a 2007 patient admission/discharge log was found intact in the rubble. She said it was a miracle that it had been found and there is hope that they might be able to recover more as they sift through the rubble.

However she pointed out that it was an uphill task to reconstruct the records, especially those of the private doctors who operated at the hospital. A decision on the hospital’s direction in this regard will be decided at a meeting of the administration.

As a result of the fire one of the hospital’s theatres was destroyed while the other is intact, but the extent of any damage has not been ascertained.

The MRI services provided by the hospital are still operational but due to the debris in the compound it can only be accessed by walk-in patients.

She also noted that officials from the insurance company visited the scene yesterday and are said to be awaiting word from their head office on how to proceed.

Calm

Alicia Spencer, one of the student nurses who was at the scene, said upon arrival at work a batch-mate told her that “it smoking in front.” Upon investigation she saw the smoke rising and reminded herself that she had to be calm for the sake of the patients.

She and other nurses then proceeded to swiftly move the patients.

She said she was in disbelief and a little shocked at the events of Monday but today she is coping with it. “The fact that everyone came out safe and was able to be taken to other institutions makes me feel better,” she said.

She added that it was “sad that so much past history of patients was lost, we can’t get that back but at least their lives are still there.”

Another student nurse, Misheia Harris said she was told by the police at the scene not to go into the compound but she persisted. She added that she saw the other nurses helping and she too assisted.

Meanwhile, the Red Cross building in Barrack Street is temporarily housing the out-patient department. While limited in its services, patients can access the pharmacy and laboratory.

The services of Drs. Campbell, Persaud, Okecana, Mitra, Jabour and Persaud can be had at the institution. And at the Catholic Relief Services building, the services of Drs. Mootoo, Butters, Devi and Perez are available.

Meanwhile, persons who are in need of US Medicals can access the service of Dr. Daniels at Young Street and Dr. Roach at Eureka Laboratory.

On behalf of the hospital, Mentore thanked the fire service, police and staff whose teamwork helped in containing the fire and reducing the losses. Thanks were also extended to the other hospitals and the Red Cross who provided accommodation.

Meanwhile planned activities to mark Nurses Week have been put on hold due to the tragedy. It is hoped that a Day of Appreciation will be held sometime later to honour the nurses. (Candace Phillips)

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