

## PRESS RELEASE

### Section 13 of Bermuda Health Council Act aims to strengthen patient protection

**(Hamilton, Bermuda 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016)** The Bermuda Health Council today announces the tabling of legislation by the Minister of Health and Seniors, which seeks to strengthen patient protection by bringing into effect Section 13 of the Bermuda Health Council Act 2004, governing the regulation of healthcare businesses.

Section 13 of the Bermuda Health Council Act 2004 provides authority for the Council to license health service providers. It is being proposed to bring Section 13 into effect and create the required Regulations to control the entry of high risk health technology, and monitor financially-vested referrals (including self-referrals).

In Bermuda, there are approximately 334 health service providers and some 2,470 registered health professionals who will all be contacted by the Council to ensure that:

- Health Service Providers and their equipment meet specific safety and operational standards
- The people delivering healthcare services are registered and appropriately trained to perform the services they deliver
- Any high risk health technology especially medical equipment is monitored and permission sought for its entry into the health system
- There are appropriate controls for Health Service Providers who refer people to a service in which they have a financial interest

Chief Executive Officer of the Bermuda Health Council, Tawanna Wedderburn added: “By enhancing the quality of healthcare in Bermuda we are protecting the patient, and the reputation of health service providers. This legislation will support patients in making educated decisions about where they receive care. It will assist the Council with better health system planning by knowing what care is available and working well. It will also give us an opportunity to improve patient protection against avoidable harm by sharing better information about health services.”

The Council has been monitoring the performance of the island’s health professionals since 2013. The new legislation is a further step in its strategic plan to enhance quality care across the island. In the coming months the Council will ensure professional inspectors monitor facilities and recommend improvements as required.

Minister of Health and Seniors, the Hon. Jeanne Atherden, CA, CPA, J.P. M.P., commented: “Based on our findings, we know that the majority of Bermuda’s healthcare facilities are run effectively and efficiently and that the services provided meet best practice standards. This new legislation which has been Tabled

in the House of Assembly today, will further protect patient safety and ensure that there is a consistent, high quality experience for patients island-wide.”

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**About Bermuda Health Council**

Established in January 2006, the Bermuda Health Council (Health Council) is tasked with regulating, coordinating and enhancing the provision of health services in Bermuda. Led by a Board representing a broad range of sectors in Bermuda’s community, and staffed by a team of committed professionals, the Health Council works with health system stakeholders towards achieving a quality, equitable and sustainable health system.