

## **Work is continuing towards the introduction of UHC – Universal Health Care – in St. Lucia .**

Members of the eight committees of the UHC met recently at the NIC Conference Room to assess progress so far and to decide on a path of action for 2006.

“It is important for us to maintain a momentum and stay on track in the planning for the implementation of UHC”, remarked Ms. Emma Hippolyte of the UHC Steering Committee and Executive Director of the National Insurance Corporation (NIC).

Ms. Hippolyte added: “A lot has been accomplished, but a lot still has to be done, so everyone in the process needs to know where exactly where each other is in the process.”

At the meeting attention was focused on eligibility and registration of St. Lucia to the UHC, quality of service, monitoring and evaluation and human resources, legal implication and financial stability of the UHC. These areas were addressed in the context of CSME - the Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

Ms. Hippolyte announced that a CEO for the UHC will assume duties on Monday, October 10, 2005 . She said having a resident manager will ensure a timely and paced implementation of UHC.

Four consultancies have been completed in the areas of Health Information Management, Human Resource Training and Development, Quality Assurance and Legislative . The UHC comprises the following:

- Health Information Management Committee
- Essential Package of Health Services Committee
- Human Resource Training and Development Committee
- Quality Assurance Committee
- Legislative Committee
- Communications and Marketing Committee
- Registration Committee
- Steering Committee

It was agreed at the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting that each committees will meet subsequently, on their own, to set priorities for the coming months.

Universal Health Care is being modelled along the lines of what some countries call a national health insurance service. Under the UHC in St. Lucia , citizen will be able to access quality emergency, secondary and tertiary health care services at affordable cost.