

## C.D.R.C & SAGICOR - "A WIN WIN PARTNERSHIP!"

The vision of a Chronic Disease Research Centre, to address the rapidly growing problem of life-style related chronic diseases, was first conceptualised more than fifteen years ago. It was put to the University authorities by the then Faculty of Medicine (now the School of Clinical Medicine and Research) in 1989, approved in 1990 and prioritised in the Cave Hill Campus 1992 – 97



Mr Steve Stoute presents Sagicor's Covenant cheque to Professor Henry Fraser of the CDRC

Strategic Plan. It started in a small way with two externally funded projects – the Barbados arm of the International Comparative Study of Hypertension in Blacks (ICSHIB), funded by the National Institutes of Health, and the Overseas Development Agency of the UK-funded Study of the Care of Diabetes and Hypertension. But the economic problems of 1991 – 94 almost caused the embryonic Chronic Disease Research Centre to fold.

Fortunately, discussions with Mr. Steve Stoute, Senior Vice President of the then Barbados Mutual, were very encouraging, and a fundraising committee was formed, with Mr. Stoute as Chairman. The Mutual led the way with our largest covenant, followed by several other private sector organisations and a large grant from the CDB. There were also donations from many private individuals such including Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Davis, some anonymous contributors, as well as assistance from some foundations. The Centre was thus able to continue and in fact grow on private sector funds, until it was formally established by the

University in 2000 as a unit of the centre-funded Tropical Medicine Research Institute of the UWI.

Mutual/Sagicor funds have been crucial in keeping key work going, and seeding new projects. They have continued their covenant faithfully, and their support has benefited the study of the cost of dialysis in Barbados, led by Health Economist, Mrs. Sarah Adomakoh, the SABE study of the elderly, led by Dr. Anselm Hennis and the Centenarians in Barbados, led by Mrs. Susan Archer, and presented at this year's Life Underwriters' Conference. It has most recently come to the rescue of our major study, the Barbados Register of Strokes, led by Dr. David Corbin, which is now in its third year. This project has had two years of Wellcome Trust funding, and is being maintained in large part by Sagicor, while we prepare a new grant application. The results of the first year have just been published internationally.

This kind of productive partnership is really a model of a "win-win" engagement between town and gown. Life insurance companies hope that policy owners will live past the termination of their policies, and not be cut down by a stroke or heart attack. Health insurance policies, not very profitable at best to the companies, rely on healthy subjects! And all employers lose money hand-over-fist from sick leave, early retirement and sudden death of employees with chronic diseases. So we at CDRC are both proud of the collaboration between Sagicor and ourselves, and grateful for the support in this mutually beneficial (pun very much intended!) partnership!

L - R, Mr Steve Stoute, Dr Clive Landis, Mr Edmund Cohen and Professor Henry Fraser at the CDRC

