



  **TAKE ALONG!**

JUNE 2020 EDITION



Zorg en Jeugd Caribisch Nederland
Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,
Welzijn en Sport

SIGUR!

Doing together what is required



Organizing help together and
delivering tailor-made work



Working together for the best possible care in the Kingdom



INTRODUCTION

The world no longer turns!

Dear reader,

We live in a time where nothing is normal or certain anymore. COVID-19 has a hold on the world and thus on the islands of the Dutch Kingdom. The daily activities of the ZVK - medical referrals to healthcare providers abroad - have gone from 8,000 referrals per year to 0. All countries in the region have closed their airspace. Most hospitals have postponed their regular care to give full attention to COVID-19.

This means that Health and Youth Caribbean Netherlands (ZJCN) must find solutions for urgent cases on an increasingly smaller playing field. Insured persons who require kidney dialysis or oncological care need continuity. Fortunately, the hospitals of the Dutch Caribbean have made agreements to assist each other.

This requires tailor-made work each day. Time consuming, due to all permits that must be applied for each flight. Expensive, due to the deployment of the air ambulance. Intensive, with daily video conferencing with hospitals and island authorities; as well as coordination with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) on the latest developments.

We arrange transport between the islands for medicines and protective material from Colombia and Netherlands. Moreover, we provide assistance to the Island Policy Team (EBT). The screening at the airport, for example; and a call center for guiding people in quarantine.

Every day is different. We must always be prepared for the unexpected. Also from collegial perspective this time is very interesting: many colleagues do walk that extra mile, despite the craziness of the day or their schooling children at home.

This gives a very good feeling, contrary to the uncertainty about what awaits us when COVID-19 will have released us again.

Angel R. Bermudez
Head of the Health Insurance Office BES (ZVK)



Working together for the best possible care in the Kingdom

At the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) in The Hague, the Crisis Team Caribbean Netherlands provides support in the COVID-19 crisis. The Program Directorate Health and Youth Caribbean Netherlands (ZJCN) is responsible for the COVID-19-related care for all six islands: Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, Saba (BES); and Curaçao, Aruba, Sint Maarten (CAS). How do we work together? And what is being achieved?

Consultation at all levels

"We consult daily with the ZJCN teams on the BES islands. We have weekly consults with the Public Health Department (PG) of the Public Entities and the hospitals on all six islands; more often where necessary. Also on political level there is weekly consultation, or more often. On the BES islands with the governors, on the CAS islands with the health ministers."

"In order to combat this crisis we have to consider many different factors. Like flight distances, logistics, stock management. Airspaces and ports are closed. Exceptions only after agreement at the highest political level. We also consult with other ministries, Defense for example, for special transports. Or with Foreign Affairs for agreements with Colombia."

Strengthening regional care

"Colombia has also closed its airspace, except for premature births. There are also still islanders on medical referral, which they are allowed to finish. But there is no capacity for emergency care. The country badly needs its IC beds itself."

"So urgent care now must be provided regionally. To do this, we had to increase the number of IC units on the Caribbean islands. That IC capacity is not only for COVID-19 patients. Other urgent care must also be able to go on."

Presence within VWS

"Since early 2020, ZJCN is a separate program directorate at VWS. That gives us good presence within the ministry. We can switch faster and consult at a higher level. Previously there were 3 employees in The Hague for the Caribbean Netherlands. Now there are 9. Because of the crisis, employees from other departments are now also collaborating. Together with the employees on Bonaire, Statia and Saba, it is a real team effort."



Annechien Alkemada was a medical advisor at the ZVK on Bonaire. She is now a senior advisor at VWS and a member of the Crisis Team Caribbean Netherlands. She talks about the work, on both sides of the ocean, to curb the crisis and let the care continue.

"Our task now is to provide the six Caribbean islands with what they need: IC beds, equipment, medicines, protective equipment, tests, medical personnel. But in the Netherlands healthcare is also overloaded. There is a scarcity of resources. The stronger presence of ZJCN works out favourably as the Caribbean islands are now much more of a priority."

Logistical puzzle

"That greatly helps the logistical puzzle that we have to solve. How do you get 'hospitainers' (isolation places in containers) where they must be, even on a small island like Sint Eustatius? Heavy equipment travels with large cargo planes and is further transported by boats. Lighter material flies to Curaçao weekly with KLM. From there it continues with local airlines."

"Stock management is also complicated. You don't want to keep too much stock, because there is scarcity. But what is realistic if you know that a delivery can take a week? Meanwhile, there is material, such as tests and medication, that is specially cooled. A transport like that should not remain at an airport for a day."

'Regular' care also continues

"During the course of April 2020, the IC capacity for all six islands has been fairly properly organized. But 'regular' care also must continue, such as cancer treatments and kidney dialysis. Just as other treatments, contracts with care providers, youth care, with special attention to vulnerable children. And long-term care and elderly care."

It is tailor-made work, time and again. That also makes it a challenge. And you get tremendously creative. Is there a flight going? what more can be carried, who else can join?"

Close cooperation with the countries

"Because of the emergency measures, CAS and BES are now cooperating more in the area of care. It is an enhancement of regional care that can also be valuable for the future. This crisis shows what is possible if the islands within the Kingdom work closely together."



CONTENT



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- Transatlantic teamwork

Delivering tailor-made work together

- Hospitainer if possible, IC flight if necessary

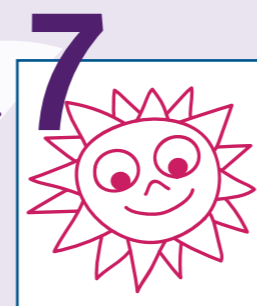


Organizing help together

- What is needed now?
And who does what?

Watch each other!

- Is all well at home?



'Hub' for help

- Aid materials flown in from The Netherlands

News

- King Willem Alexander at video conference with Caribbean Netherlands



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COVID-19: ORGANIZING HELP TOGETHER

On March 14, 2020, Bonaire closed its airspace for flights from Europe. Travelers still coming from risk areas had to be screened and monitored during 14 days of quarantine. The Public Health Service (PG) of the Public Entity Bonaire (OLB) was faced with a major challenge and needed support.

A day of intensive consultations followed between the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), the program directorate Health and Youth Caribbean Netherlands (ZJCN) and the Island Policy Team (EBT). Fundashon Mariadal proposed to work together and to have the Health Insurance Office (ZVK) coordinate. It was the start of a three-week peak bustle at the ZVK office.

CORONA MONITOR TEAM

For passengers from risk areas, a screening and monitoring team had to be available as soon as possible. On Sunday morning March 15, Edilse Goeloe, Team Leader Policy and Account Management of the ZVK, had a room full of volunteers. Pharmacists, nurses, tour operator employees and many others volunteered. Including 5 employees of the ZVK, in addition to their regular work. This allowed a team of 15 people to get to work almost immediately.

Seven days a week

A room in the ZVK office was set up as a 'call center'. From March 15, the team was ready for screening every flight that arrived. Every day, seven days a week, they called the people in self-quarantine. All team members were required to sign a nondisclosure agreement to protect privacy and medical information.

A call script was made for the monitoring: how do you approach someone by phone, what questions do you ask, what do you pay attention to? How do people feel, what do they need, do they have complaints? In case of problems and even vague physical complaints, people were called twice a day.



Edilse Goeloe

Daily calling

The call sessions were followed every day by consultation and advice. What do we do with complaints, how do you deal with angry reactions, how do we solve problems with, for example, wrong telephone numbers or people who go out in public anyway?

Each volunteer always called the same people in quarantine.

In this way, trust could be built and miscommunication prevented as much as possible. Sometimes a real bond formed. This was evident from positive comments - "we miss your calls!" - gratitude and even flowers when quarantine was over.

Transfer to Public Health

From March 15 to April 6, the Corona Monitoring Team screened around 400 arriving travelers and made daily calls during their quarantine. Since then, the influx of travelers from risk areas is greatly reduced. On April 6, the screening and monitoring were transferred to Public Health.

Since then the Island Policy Team (EBT) decided, in the public interest, on compulsory quarantine of incoming travelers to Bonaire. For this Public Health set up a special Task Force, which takes care of the location, logistics, monitoring and supervision and support.

The ZVK is grateful for the flexible, driven and attentive volunteers and ZVK employees who were able to support the Public Health Service in a hectic period.

'HUB' FOR HELP



The ZVK office in Kralendijk also became a 'hub' for aid flown in from The Netherlands: equipment, personal protective equipment and medicines. Not only for the BES islands, but also for Sint Maarten, Aruba and Curaçao. The Corona Monitoring Team worked tirelessly organizing incoming aid and re-packing it for further distribution.

This was materials which can be transported by passenger aircraft, with KLM to Curaçao and from there with local flights to Sint Maarten, Aruba and Bonaire. Bonaire takes care of the delivery on St. Eustatius and Saba.

IC units

Cargo planes are used for heavier equipment such as respirators, IC beds and the so-called 'hospitainers' (an IC unit in a special container). Thanks to three shipments in April, there are now 42 extra Intensive Care places on the islands: 6 on Bonaire, 12 on Curaçao, 12 on Aruba and 12 on Sint Maarten (6 in the hospital, 6 in a hospitaier).

ORGANIZING TOGETHER: TALKING TOGETHER

Crisis consultations and requests for assistance

The Crisis Team in The Hague, the RIVM, the ZJCN teams on the BES islands, and the hospitals on all six islands hold daily crisis consultations. There are weekly consultations about requests for assistance that the hospitals submit: the need for medical staff, respirators for IC places, medicines and personal protective equipment.

Want to read more about the team in The Hague? See the interview on page 3!



MEDICAL REFERRALS ABROAD: DOING TOGETHER WHAT IS REQUIRED

Acute treatments

Mid-March 2020, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten and Colombia closed their airspace for passenger transport from the Caribbean Netherlands islands. As a result, so-called 'elective' medical referrals (for treatments of a non-life-threatening nature) had to be postponed. For acute medical emergencies, referrals are possible to Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. Oncology and dialysis treatments are designated as acute emergencies.

Repatriation

The repatriation of insured individuals on medical referral started from the third week of March. After consultation with the Ministry of VWS and OLB, the ZVK was able to arrange charter planes. They were given special permission to fly from Colombia to Bonaire.

Insured individuals from Bonaire (and their companions) are screened and quarantined in accordance with the Public Health protocols. Those from St. Eustatius and Saba fly directly from the airport to their residential island.



Delivering tailor-made work together



Mid-March 2020 was the last regular flight from The Netherlands to Sint Maarten. Then the airspace was closed. Precisely on board of that flight, two passengers were found to be infected with COVID-19. Not much later an infection appeared on Saba from an unexpected source. Meanwhile, the number of infections on Sint Maarten grew. A solution had to be found. And it came - by boat.

Guzeliën Hermans is team leader Windward Islands at the ZJCN team in The Hague. She arrived on Sint Eustatius in mid-February and had planned to return in mid-April. For now she has her hands full on Statia. A report.

First infections

On Saba mid-April a person was hospitalized. The complaints were nothing like a COVID-19 infection. The person had not traveled either. But tests showed it to be COVID-19. A housemate also tested positive. The patient has been admitted to Sint Maarten. The housemate has been quarantined. Anyone who had had contact with these people, even medical staff, was quarantined.

The two passengers who had traveled to Sint Eustatius in March immediately went into self-quarantine. Therefore it seems that these are the only two infections on Statia. But as the number of infections in Sint Maarten grew, so did the concerns.

Like many places in the world, Statia was not prepared for a pandemic. There is a small health center, without an isolation room. An isolation chamber cannot just be made: you need material and technical knowledge.

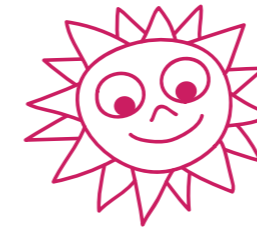
Hospitainer if possible, IC flight if necessary

Therefore it was decided to bring a 'hospitainer' to Statia. Literally: a hospital in containers. It has 6 isolation chambers where oxygen can be delivered. This allows COVID-19 patients to be taken care of without endangering other patients.

If patients' health deteriorates, they must be transferred to ICU (Intensive Care) units. These units are available for patients from Saba and Statia on Sint Maarten and Bonaire. For transport a helicopter to Sint Maarten and an air ambulance to Bonaire are available 24/7.

Special transport, special work

The hospitainer was transported by special cargo flight from the Netherlands to Sint Maarten and then by ship to Statia. Right next to the health center, a site was prepared for placing the hospitainer. A special team took care of the interior arrangement, as well as the recruitment of additional medical staff. Mid-May 2020 the hospitainer was ready for use.



Protect yourself and the people around you



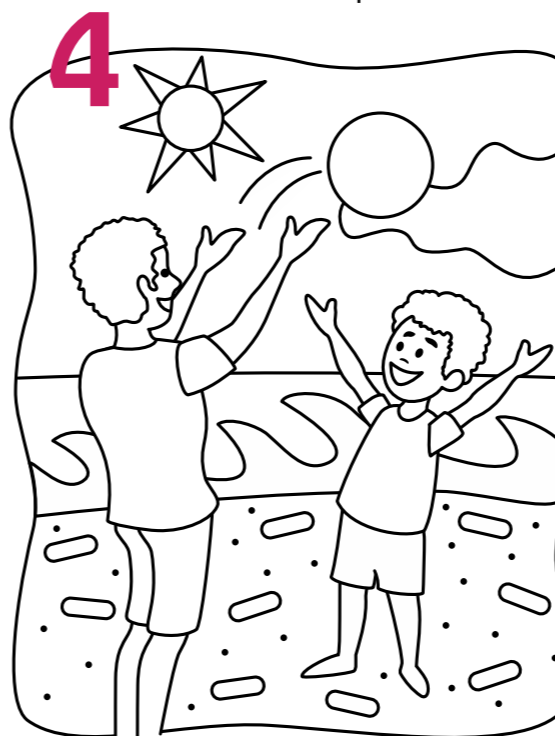
1 Wash your hands!
Clean your hands often and well!
30 seconds with soap and water.



2 Keep 1.5 meters distance!
Take extra care near elderly people.



3 Cooking together
Make tasty pancakes together with your family.



4 At the beach
Play with your family and friends.
Which animals live in the sea?



5 Don't argue
Count to 10 when you are angry and give each other a hug.



6 Storytelling
Tell stories with your family on the porch or in the garden.



Are you worried about the safety of children?
Call Youth Care and Family Supervision: Bonaire 715 7201 | Statia 318 3104/05 | Saba 416 3718/19



For acute reports of domestic violence, child abuse or other emergencies
CALL 911 (always available)

Bonaire: Kaya Prinses Marie 7 Kralendijk | Sint Eustatius: Fort Oranjestraat 12 Oranjestad | Saba: Gladiolastraat 1 The Bottom | info.jgcn@jeugdzorgcn.com

Working together to keep each child continuously safe!

King Willem Alexander takes part in video conference crisis teams Caribbean Netherlands



The Hague

On Friday 3 April 2020, His Majesty the King paid a working visit to the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) in The Hague. During this visit, the King took part in the daily video conference of the Crisis Team Caribbean Netherlands and the teams on Bonaire and St. Eustatius of ZJCN.

At VWS and on the BES islands, the Health and Youth Caribbean Netherlands (ZJCN) directorate is responsible for the implementation of care. ZJCN also supports the countries of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten in tackling the corona crisis.

Support and appreciation

Through telephone calls and working visits, King Willem Alexander and Queen Máxima inform themselves about the consequences of the corona outbreak. They express their support and appreciation for the efforts of so many in the fight against the pandemic.

(Source: RVD)



Kralendijk



Protect yourself and people around you

together against corona

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Zorg en Jeugd Caribisch Nederland
 Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,
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Colophon

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