



## **LGBTI Organisations**



**CHAP – Dominica**  
**CARIBBEAN HIV AIDS PARTNERSHIP**



### **CHAP Dominica – Dominica Chapter of the Caribbean HIV/AIDS Partnership (CHAP)**

CHAP Dominica is one of a number of small groups of MSM/LGBTI in the Eastern Caribbean. They have for the past years been instrumental in implementing various programs targeting the prevention of the transmission of HIV/AIDS and other STIs. We have also been at the forefront of advancing human rights, especially for vulnerable youths and other Marginal Populations in Dominica and in the Eastern Caribbean.

CHAP Dominica recognizes the need to develop a framework to help reduce HIV/AIDS, STIs and any forms of human rights violations affecting marginalized populations along with related stigma and discrimination.

Our aim is to provide HIV/AIDS prevention and human rights information to MARPS in Dominica. Our objectives are:

- Promote the health of key populations through education for prevention and skills building
- Build and assist support networks of key populations.
- Engage in public education drives to sensitize and humanize issues facing key populations
- Advocate for policy & legal reform to promote equality and universal access to healthcare
- Facilitate advocacy on human rights violations.

Our concerns are to provide HIV prevention and Human Rights information to adults and young MSM/LGBTI community in our countries, who are especially vulnerable as to social stigma & discrimination against them, is very great. We have realize however that we need to come together to discuss strategies and to see how we might collaborate to strengthen programming for MSM/LGBTI grouping, including MSM youth in our countries with an emphasis on preventing the transmission on the HIV.



### **MiRiDom - Minority Rights Dominica**

**Minority Rights Dominica** seeks to represent people in the Dominican Community, who due to their natural orientation are denied their Human Rights.

**Mission** - To ensure that the minorities in Dominica receive the same human rights as the majority.

Our focus at present is on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTI) rights. The laws of the Commonwealth of Dominica make it illegal for people who are attracted to their gender to engage in sexual activity, even if it does not have anything to do with anyone else. This law that is said to be based on the moral teachings of the Holy Bible fuels hate, intolerance and the stripping of the human rights of the minority LGBTI in the community. Homophobia seems to be generally accepted and needs to be addressed with a view to its eradication.



### **Commonwealth of Dominica LGBTI Statistics**

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## Speak Out – LGBTI Rights Supporters

**Assistant Director General of Health Systems and Services at the World Health Organization  
Dr. Carissa Etienne**

One of world's leading health practitioners is supporting calls to ban Dominica's buggery laws. Dr Carissa Etienne said buggery laws are preventing homosexuals from accessing care and counselling. Dr Etienne said the laws regarding homosexuals are clear that anyone found guilty of that practice will be criminalized.

She said, "Two consenting adults in their bedrooms if they have sexual relations they can be brought to court and this law militates against these people seeking care and counselling and this is a barrier. That is a problem not only for them but because they must hide they take the infection into the heterosexual community".

The prominent doctor explained further that this poses a risk for the other community. 'I think that we gain nothing by keeping our laws on the book that makes it a crime for homosexuality'. Dr Etienne said while she is not supporting the act of homosexuality but according to her, the current law is not being enforced and has no meaning, hence it should be repealed.

"This act will occur whether we have the law or not but what the law is doing is preventing these people from coming for counselling and testing". Dominica's Health Minister John Fabien came under intense pressure recently when he told a meeting in Jamaica recently that he would attempt to influence the Roosevelt Skerri Cabinet to ban the country's buggery laws.

**Former Chief Environmental Health Officer and Minister of Health and the Environment  
Honourable Dr. John Fabien**

"I think we need to take this to another level, I think the level of prime ministers, so that the caucus of Heads of CARICOM can address this issue of buggery," Dominica's Health Minister John Fabien told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC). In an article recently published in the Dominican Sun News entitled: Ban Buggery Laws – where Minister of Health, John Fabien wants buggery law banned to help reduce HIV/AIDS.

Speaking at the Eight Annual Meeting of the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS where it was revealed that HIV prevalence among homosexual and bisexual males in the Caribbean was high, and they're 19 times as likely to contract HIV as the rest of the population. According to Minister Fabien, when people see themselves as excluded or discriminated against and stigmatized, it promotes risky behaviour, and by removing the Buggery Act will send a clear signal to the community that they are included in the society.



**Commonwealth of Dominica LGBTI Statistics**

## **Former Attorney General and Former Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Sir Brian Alleyne**

Sir Alleyne has lent his voice to the raging debate of homosexuality and laws pertaining to it in Dominica.

Speaking on the television program 'Parbel Talk' hosted by Parry Bellot on July 25, Alleyne said homosexual acts in the law books are criminal acts and are subject to imprisonment but they are not practical. "It is actually impractical because you cannot actually enter into someone's house to catch them in the act," he pointed out.

Alleyne continued, "I think it is totally wrong. What a person does in the privacy of his home with another person is his business; he is answerable to the Lord and not to anyone else."

He said the fundamental issue is whether homosexuality is a crime. "Is it a crime? Should a person be sent to prison for what he does in his bedroom with the consent of the other party?"

Alleyne said he thinks it is wrong to imprison people for their sexual practices in private between consenting adults and suggested that the Prime Minister show 'moral leadership' and act to correct it.

## **Government Productivity Consultant and Former Government Press Secretary Mr. Parry Bellot**

Mr. Bellot gave his opinion on Wednesday morning on Angelo Allen's "Rise and Shine" talk show on Q95.

"I support gay rights because it is an issue that I have given lots of thought to," Bellot said.

"Quite frankly, when it first became an issue in the world, by people demanding gay rights up to the level of civil unions and gay marriages, I wondered about that and I certainly wasn't in favour because I was brought up in a Christian home where we frowned upon these activities. There was no way homosexuality should exist (back then) and people would think it was an abomination and terrible things would happen to you," he said.

He said gays are entitled to their rights, civil unions and marriage.

## **Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Law, Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies Ms. Tracy Robinson**

Ms. Robinson was speaking at a public lecture at the Fort Young Hotel organised by the UWI Open Campus and the National Bank of Dominica on the topic "Family Law's Institutions in Transition: Rights, Rhetoric and Reform"

"I think it hard to justify the law today", she said in an interview with the Sun Newspaper. Robinson said although Caribbean people have strong views on the issue of homosexuality these laws are hardly enforced.



“I can’t think of any case recently in the Caribbean where the law was used to arrest somebody who was engaged in consensual sex with someone...whether it’s a man and a man or a man and a woman” she said. Robinson went on to state that she is “fully supportive” of the idea of decriminalising these laws because it may assist in the control of HIV and AIDS. She called for greater discussion on the topic and inclusion of the church.

