"The PAHO Bahamas and Turks & Caicos Country Office has entered into an exciting new partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to bring one year of international epidemiological support to this region of the Caribbean. Through this partnership, three Canadian field epidemiologists will be participating in consecutive 4-month assignments in The Bahamas and Turks & Caicos Islands. The purpose of these assignments is to build national epidemiological capacity for communicable disease control through early detection of key epidemic-prone diseases and appropriate response in line with the countries' global responsibilities under the International Health Regulations (IHR).

Ms. Gillian Frosst, the first epidemiologist to participate in this collaboration, arrived in the PAHO Bahamas and Turks & Caicos Country Office in January 2012. She joins us from the Canadian Field Epidemiology Program, a specialized training program within the PHAC for health professionals in the field of applied epidemiology. Ms. Frosst brings with her a passion for health and global collaboration, as well as a comprehensive background in public and population health, surveillance evaluation, health situation analysis and outbreak investigation and response.

In The Bahamas, Ms. Frosst is currently providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Health (MOH) for implementation of the IHR through application of sound epidemiological principles and concepts for disease surveillance. She is also contributing to capacity-building activities to strengthen data management and epidemiological competencies in human resources. Ms. Frosst's work includes supporting the MOH's work towards achieving Millenium Development Goals #4 and #5 through a review of infant and maternal mortality, as well as providing epidemiological guidance in the development of a national health information system."