



PRESS RELEASE

May 20, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Community Mental Health Boost in Southern Jamaica

Some 35 persons participated in an intensive five-day Problem Management Plus training, which will boost access to timely, practical and evidence-based mental health support in communities.

The training workshop which is an initiative of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), the Ministry of Health & Wellness and the Pan American Health Organization, equipped frontline workers and community-based providers with skills to identify psychological distress early, provide structured emotional support, and appropriately link individuals to additional care when needed.

"This is particularly important in communities recovering from disasters and other stressful life events, where many persons may experience anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, or difficulty coping but may not readily access specialized mental health services," SRHA Regional Psychiatrist, Dr. Janique Baldwin-Miller explained.

She added that the workshop forms part of the health authority's ongoing commitment to strengthening mental health and psychosocial support services across the southern region.

"The workshop was an intensive forty-hour, face-to-face training, which equipped the participants with practical, evidence-based skills to support individuals experiencing psychological distress and other mental health challenges" Dr. Baldwin-Miller said.

The psychologist added that the Problem Management Plus training is a psychological intervention developed by the World Health Organization to support adults experiencing adversity, stress, and emotional difficulties. The intervention focuses on practical strategies that empower individuals to better manage problems, strengthen coping skills, and improve overall well-being.

(more)

Chairman: Michael Stern; **Vice Chairman:** Simone Scarlett; **Board Members:** Wayne Chen, Lorraine Green Mason, Marcus Greenwood, Winston Maragh, Dr. Lloyd Reynolds, Omar Miller, Denise Edwards, Sherill Morgan, **Permanent Secretary's Nominee:** Howard Lynch, **Regional Director and Secretary:** Michael Bent; **Regional Technical Director:** Dr. Vitillius Holder; **CEO, Mandeville Regional Hospital:** Alwyn Miller; **SMO, Mandeville Regional Hospital:** Dr. Everton McIntosh

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“This initiative comes at a critical time as the region continues to strengthen mental health services in the aftermath of disasters and in response to the growing demand for accessible, community-based mental health care.

The training, which was held in Manchester from May 11- 15, 2026, will also help to build local capacity by creating a larger network of trained personnel and reduce stigma surrounding mental health by increasing awareness.

Picture 1



Participants during the Problem Management Plus training.

(more)

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Picture 2



Participants learning practical strategies to boost community mental health.

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