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Bed Capacity Boosted in Southern Region Hospitals

The bed capacity in the hospitals across the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) has received a boost from local charity organization Food For the Poor (FFP) through a donation of 60 hospital beds and mattresses.

The items were handed over to the region recently at FFP's offices in Spanish Town, St. Catherine.

Regional Director for the SRHA, Michael Bent noted the SRHA is thankful for the donation as it will certainly improve quality of service delivery in the region's hospitals, as well as boost capacity to handle the demands.

He added that since the inception of the FFP in 1983, the charity organization has been doing a remarkable job in supporting public health

and improving patient care, especially to the poor.

The SRHA has a network of six hospitals including Mandeville Regional Hospital, May Pen Hospital, Black River Hospital, Percy Junor Hospital, Lionel Town Hospital and Chapelton Hospital.



Beds and mattresses donated to the Southern Regional Health Authority hospitals by local charity, Food for the Poor.

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

'Dignity in Mental Health' Takes the Spotlight for Mental Health Week

For Mental Health Week, the spotlight will be on 'Dignity in Mental Health' as awareness is heightened to ensure that persons with mental health conditions can enjoy dignity and human rights.

For its part the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) will seek to raise awareness and sensitize residents in central Jamaica about the theme, 'Dignity in Mental Health' through a week of activities from Sunday, October 4 to Saturday, October 10.

The activities will kick start with a church service on Sunday, October 4 at the New Testament Church of God in Clarendon at 8:30 a.m. followed by a 'School Invasion' of several high schools across the region on Monday, October 5 and Tuesday, October 6. This initiative is aimed at sensitizing students about mental health.

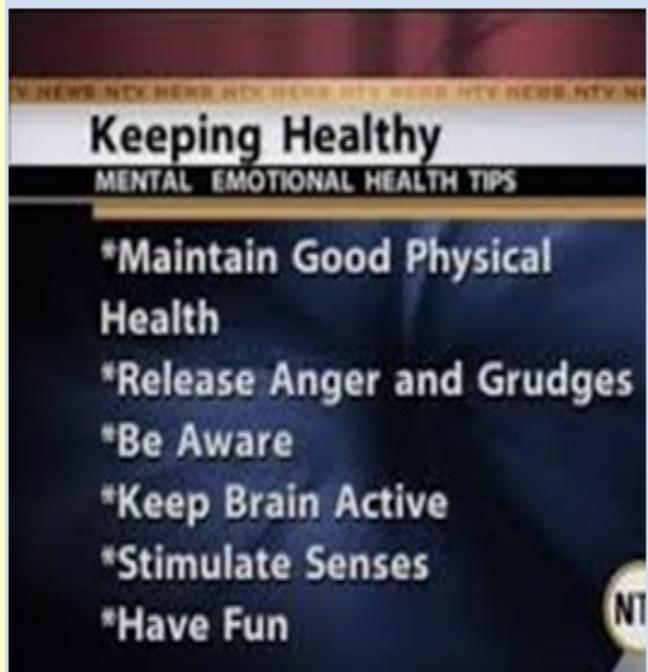
The week of activities will continue on Wednesday, October 7 with a public forum at the Santa Cruz Centre of Excellence, St. Elizabeth at 2:00 p.m. while for Manchester a forum will be held at the Cecil Charlton Hall at 3:00 p.m. and in the Chapelton square in Clarendon at 11:00 a.m.

On Thursday, October 8, the SRHA will be catering to its mental health team through presentations under the theme, "Mental Health of the Mental Health Worker" which will be followed by a national conference on mental health by the Ministry of Health and the four Regional Health Authorities at the National Stadium in Kingston on Friday, October 9.

The activities will culminate on Saturday, October 10 with a fun day and health fair for patients with mental health conditions at the Brook's Park in Mandeville.

Other activities that the region's mental health team will participate in include an awards ceremony for volunteers of the Street People Programme and the mounting of displays at major libraries and health centres across the region.

The SRHA Mental Health team is urging individuals to put an end to stigma and discrimination against persons affected by mental illness and treat them with love and care.



In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Health Facilities Developing a Culture of Good Customer Service

The health facilities in the Southern Regional Health Authority have been making strides in developing a service-oriented environment focused on continuous improvement in its operations. This has resulted in the Percy Junor Hospital and the Christiana Health Centre copping top prizes in the Public Sector Customer Service Awards Competition.

The awards ceremony which was held in Kingston on October 9 recognized the Percy Junor Hospital in Clarendon for being the best hospital in the island while the Christiana Health Centre in Manchester was awarded the Best Health Centre in Jamaica.

Regional Director for the Southern Regional Health Authority, Michael Bent noted that the health facilities in the southern region have been developing a culture of good customer service which has seen improved service delivery and customer satisfaction in several facilities.

“Customer service is essential to effective service delivery particularly in the health sector and as a region we continue to work to improve our standards of delivery” Mr. Bent added.

For Parish Manager for the Manchester Health Services, Earl McLaughlin, there are many hospitals and health centres in the island “and for the facilities in the southern region to emerge from this field and be regarded as the best of them all is a phenomenal achievement.”

Mr. McLaughlin who is the former CEO of the Percy Junor Hospital noted that earlier in the year the staff at the Percy Junor Hospital revised their Vision Statement, which now states that "PJH will be the leading example of a health care facility within the Caribbean that promotes the health and well-being of both the customer and the environment".

“This is a clear indication that they are well on their way there” he added.

The Percy Junor Hospital also received several public sector awards including Most Creative and Innovative Agency, Best Hospital and Most Innovative Agency in the past.

Acting CEO of the Percy Junor Hospital, Sharon Pitter, former Parish Manager of the Manchester Health Services Stanhope Scott (centre) and Parish Manager of the Manchester Health Services Earl McLaughlin (right) proudly display the Best Hospital and Health Centre awards received at the Public Sector Customer Service Awards ceremony.



Facilities on the Move

Manchester: Mandeville Regional Hospital 11th Annual Research Day

The Mandeville Regional Hospital in association with the South Central MAJ presented the 11th staging of its Research Day on September 28, 2015 at the Golf View Hotel, Mandeville.

The initiative provided a platform for professional development for medical professionals in addition to keeping them up-to-date with the latest medical technologies while showcasing original research from health facilities in the southern region. The research was presented in verbal and poster formats.

See photographic highlights below.



Facilities on the Move

St. Elizabeth: Community Health Aides Undergo Training

New members of the Community Health Aide team in St. Elizabeth are undergoing a series of training to better equip them to work with families in the community, conduct face to face interventions, participate in information gathering and data collection activities.

Some of the training sessions include: roles and functions of Community Health Aides in Primary Health Care, developing oral and written communication skills; basic first aid, procedure for undertaking visits to the community, pre-natal development, epidemiology of communicable diseases, family planning methods and sexual health for women among others.

See below highlights of the Community Health Aides in training.



Facilities on the Move

Clarendon: Community Health Aides Enthusiastic About Training

For the Community Health Aide (CHA) training in Clarendon, the new CHA's are being exposed to numerous training and practical experiences.

Some of the training sessions include exposure in areas of: family health, cervical cancer, breast cancer, chronic diseases, human growth and development, caring for the elderly, reproductive health, healthy life-styles, pregnancy nutrition, gastroenteritis, nursing techniques, interpersonal relations and customer service, communication skills and infection control.

See below photographic highlights of the Community Health Aides in training.



Health Ministry's Corner

Present Rainfall May Increase Mosquito Population

The Ministry of Health through the Parish Health Departments continues to routinely fog selected areas to eliminate adult mosquitoes. Persons may contact the health department in their parish to report any area that they believe may need to be fogged. Persons are however reminded that fogging cannot be done during the rain and will continue once the rain has stopped.

The Ministry is also urging persons to destroy mosquito breeding sites and protect themselves from mosquito bites as the rainfall which is now being experienced is expected to result in an increase in the mosquito population.

Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Marion Bullock DuCasse says householders, school officials, churches and operators of business establishments should spend at least ten minutes per week to search for and destroy anything in which mosquitoes can breed.

“The mosquito population is expected to increase in light of the present rainfall especially since we were experiencing a drought. Mosquitoes can lay their eggs during the dry season and these will hatch as soon as enough water is available. The rainfall has facilitated that environment,” Dr. DuCasse said.

She says in light of this it is important that we do not create the environment for the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which spreads dengue and chikungunya, to breed and therefore need to keep our surroundings free of anything that can become mosquito breeding sites.

Individuals should get rid of mosquito breeding sites by looking for anything in which water can settle and either cover it, keep the area dry, clean it regularly, fill it with soil or sand, punch holes into it and recycle or properly dispose of it. If mesh is used to cover containers then the holes should be small enough so that mosquitoes cannot enter.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito transmits diseases including dengue and chikungunya.

For more information persons may contact the Ministry of Health or the nearest health centre and visit our website at moh.gov.jm. Also like and follow us on www.facebook.com/themohgovjm; <https://twitter.com/themohgovjm>; <https://instagram.com/themohgovjm>.

**Contact: Communications Unit
Ministry of Health**

Wellness Bytes

Health Benefits of Eating Beets

- **Beets are high in many vitamins and minerals-** potassium, magnesium, fiber, phosphorus, iron; vitamins A, B & C; beta-carotene, beta-cyanine; folic acid.
- **Beets cleanse the body.** They are a

- wonderful tonic for the liver, works as a purifier for the blood, and can prevent various forms of cancer.
- **Beets help your mental health.** Beets contain betaine, the same substance that is used

certain treatments of depression. It also contains tryptophan, which relaxes the mind and creates a sense of well-being, similar to chocolate.

- **Beets are a high source of energy.** At the same time they

are low in calories and high in sugar (although the sugar is released into your system gradually, as opposed to chocolate).

Credit: Fullcircle.com

Health Benefits of Eating Beets





HR And You: “Employee Assistance Programme”

What is an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)?

An Employee Assistance Programme is a service sponsored by the Employer and is designed to provide assistance, within a confidential framework to employees who are experiencing personal problems that may be negatively affecting their job performance.

These challenges may include but are not limited to:

- Financial Difficulties
- Legal Difficulties
- Work Related Issues
- Interpersonal Relations
- Changes in the organization
- Family Issues
- Health issues

What types of services are provided?

The Employee Assistance

Programme will provide individual counseling services which will include assessment and referral.

Who can use the Service?

All Southern Regional Health Authority employees, regardless of their status, age, job title or responsibilities.

Who will provide the service?

The EAP will be provided by a pool of trained counselors selected from within the organization as well as a pool of external resource persons.

Where will the service be provided?

Due to the fact that this is a confidential service, the employee will be informed of the location after contact is made.

How do I access the service?

- Self referral-If you recognize you need help, call 625-2114/318-0563 or email:wehelpsrha@gmail.com.
- Supervisor-assisted referral- A supervisor may make a formal referral on your behalf with your consent.
- Union-assisted referral- Your union may make a formal referral on your behalf with your consent.
- Peer-assisted referral -your peers may make a formal referral on your behalf with your consent.

Are the services confidential?

This is a confidential service. Your right to privacy is guaranteed.

Will I have to pay for the EAP service?

EAP is a free service. If however, a referral is made to an external facility, the cost will be borne by the employee.

Benefits to the employee.

- Enhanced personal problem solving skills
- Identification and resolution of personal and health related problems.
- Reduction in stress
- Higher level of confidence and self-esteem.
- Greater control over their lives and the challenges they face.

Benefits to the organization.

- Increased productivity
- Improvement in staff morale
- Reduction of time lost in absenteeism and sickness

Credit: SRHA brochure



Please submit your articles and feedback to:

latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

Deadline: October 30, 2015

Staff Highlight

Southern Region Hosts National Breastfeeding Week 2015 National Launch

The 2015 celebration of National Breastfeeding Week was observed under the theme, “Breastfeeding and Work- Let’s Make it Work”. This year the national activities was hosted by the Southern Regional Health Authority.

The launch ceremony for the week’s activities was held on Monday, September 21, 2015 at the Mandeville Seventh Day Adventist church grounds. Among the objectives of the celebration were galvanizing the support of all sectors to facilitate women to work and breastfeed, promoting actions by employers to become baby and mother friendly and facilitating and showcasing supportive practices that allow women working in the informal sector to breastfeed.

See below photographic highlights of the launch ceremony.



A Day in the Life of:

Erica Dennis-Smith
"Tenacious, Frank, Innovative"

Erica Dennis-Smith
Public Health Nurse
Santa Cruz Centre of Excellence



1. How long have you been working with the Ministry of Health/southern region?

22 years and 9 months.

2. What has your experience been like?

Rewarding and not so rewarding. Rewarding – In the early 90's at the Black River Hospital, working with four doctors some patients whose lives were spared because of our interventions (MVA's, mothers with complications in labour and post-delivery) and also those patients/clients who expressed heartfelt gratitude.

3. What inspired you to choose your profession?

I wanted to be a Nurse from I was a very small child and was encouraged by my parents after leaving high school to pursue my dream.

4. If you did not choose your present profession, what would you have chosen?

I thought of education but could not see myself as a Teacher.

5. Are you guided or driven by any philosophy or mantra?

Yes. "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me".

6. What do you consider to be your biggest achievement to date, personally or professionally?

Personally, having a family of three children and a home. Professionally, pursuing the Masters of Public Health although incomplete (Thesis to be submitted).

7. Who or what inspires you to do your best?

I'm motivated from within and close family members and friends.

8. What is the most important life lesson you have learnt?

To do the best I can to everyone regardless of whom they are.

9. Describe yourself in five words using letters that begin only with C and H.

Caring, Concern, Cautious, Honest and Humble.

10. If you were to get an unexpected visit from a colleague on a day off or on the weekend, what is the most likely thing you would be doing?

On Saturday, I would be home doing my weekend chores or visiting my elderly grandparents (93 years) in Newell, and on Sunday, I would be at church.

11. Who is your favourite actor and singer?

Actor – Harrison Ford. Singer – Kenny Rogers and Celine Deon.

12. Do you have any professional advice for fellow colleagues?

Yes. We need to be more caring to other colleagues and the general public we serve and extend ourselves more to those in need.