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### SRHA Saves \$25 Million- Implements Chairlift to Open Access to Additional Bed Spaces

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) has been committed to providing quality and effective healthcare through innovative solutions. The Authority recently implemented a wheelchair lift at the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth which has resulted in savings of \$25 million.

Speaking at the opening ceremony on Friday, November 11, Chairman of the SRHA Board, Mr. Wayne Chen said the wheelchair lift was procured and implemented at a cost of \$5.4 million. He explained that an elevator would have cost some \$30 million.

The wheelchair lift was one of several short term solutions which have created additional bed spaces for the hospital. The lift has now allowed access to the upper male ward which was underutilized because only ambulatory patients could be accommodated.

Mr. Chen explained that these solutions include the transformation of the Hospital's old maternity ward previously used as an Outpatient Clinic to an overflow Ward for Accident & Emergency patients and retrofitting of two containers to house the Outpatient Clinics. This overflow ward now houses 12 additional bed spaces while the upper male ward accommodates 16 added bed spaces.

He added that this innovative solution follows the initiative by the SRHA to convert and customize two buses into ambulances which resulted in savings of \$7.6 million in October.

SRHA Regional Director, Mr. Michael Bent pointed out that the



The newly installed wheelchair lift.

wheelchair lift is just as effective as the elevator adding that the maintenance cost of the lift is more cost effective than that of an elevator. He said the SRHA team has realized that its resources are limited but have committed to providing quality and effective healthcare while finding creative solutions to do so.

## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### SRHA Aims to Create Healthier Communities Through Targeted Interventions



This group of young men listen intently to a presentation on being responsible men and fathers at the launch in the Georges Valley community in Manchester.

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) has embarked on a series of interventions in communities across Manchester, Clarendon and St. Elizabeth in an effort to reduce or eliminate health issues and other factors impacting the behavioural practices of community members.

The Targeted Community Interventions aim to impact positive behaviour changes in relation to health and wellness, behavioural practices and environmental health practices. The programme is being implemented in the communities for a year through the SRHA Health Promotion and Education teams.

Speaking at the launch ceremony of the initiative in the Georges Valley community in Manchester on Thursday, November 17, SRHA Regional Technical Director, Dr. Michael Coombs said the Authority realizes the importance of interacting face to face with community members.

“We can’t just stay in our hospitals and our clinics but we realize that it is extremely important to come in the communities and meet with you. We have selected some communities that we plan to go into and discuss health. We have lots of health challenges... but as a Ministry and Government we cannot do it alone, it has to involve every single one of us” Dr. Coombs told residents.

Turning to the importance of the cooperation of residents in adopting and practicing healthier behaviours, Dr. Coombs said: “Matters like ZikV and how we respond to mosquitoes have to involve every one of us. We cannot come in to your homes and ensure that you do what you are supposed to do. We need your involvement and you have to take responsibility for these activities in the interest of your health.”

A critical area of focus of the Targeted Community Interventions is the rolling out of the Good Health Begins at Home initiative launched earlier in 2016. A key component of this initiative is the education and empowerment of parents in particular fathers, in light of the established social and public health impact of fatherlessness. Also, the prevention of non-communicable diseases, training of peer educators, demonstrations of condom use and the establishment of condom access points will be an integral aspect of the initiative.

Community interventions have been launched in the Greenvale and Georges Valley communities in Manchester and in the Summerfield community in Clarendon. The second intervention in Clarendon will be held in the Canaan Heights community on Sunday, December 4 at 10:00 a.m. while St. Elizabeth will have their Targeted Community Interventions at a later date.



## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Inaugural Motivational Conference for Health Workers a Step in the Right Direction



**Dr. Nsombi Jaja (right) engages the audience.**

An inaugural Motivational Conference which will become an annual staple for the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) has been described as a step in the right direction for healthcare workers.

The Conference which was staged under the theme, “Ain’t no Stopping us Now” was held on Tuesday, November 29 at the Mandeville Hotel in Manchester and targeted some 100 employees from the SRHA facilities in Manchester, Clarendon and St. Elizabeth. It was organized as one of the strategies to resolve issues that may hinder performance, personal growth and also to boost employee morale.

Director of Human Resources Management and Industrial Relations from the SRHA, Mrs. Nicolette

Thomas-Edwards noted that the health and wellbeing of the staff of any organization is paramount to its success. She added that the SRHA is committed to providing avenues that will assist employees who face difficult situations.

She explained that some of these avenues include: “Re-launch of the Employee Assistance Programme which provides confidential support to employees including direct access to Counsellors; mentoring within occupational groups; more efficient Human Resources departments; funding to assist employees with medical procedures which attract small fees and are offered only in the private sector; Staff Welfare Fund which provides loans to employees at reduced interest rates and physical trainers for after work sessions”.

Mrs. Thomas-Edwards pointed out that it is also the Authority’s intention to establish at least one Day Care facility in each parish within the southern region and added that the plans are ongoing.

The SRHA Regional Director, Mr. Michael Bent reiterated that the human resources are the most important asset in the organization noting that the SRHA firmly believes in keeping the staff motivated and focused so that they can perform at optimum levels.

For his part, Chairman of the SRHA Board, Mr. Wayne Chen said that though one Conference will not deal with all the challenges, it is certainly a good initiative in addressing the motivation and morale of staff members. He encouraged the workers to always be reminded that health care is a calling and to maintain a positive attitude.

The staff members received riveting life messages and information from Certified Management Consultant and President of Quality Management Consultancy Incorporation, Dr. Nsombi Jaja. She urged the workers to always pay attention to details while aspiring to make excellence in service a minimum standard.

Dr. Jaja who is also a motivational speaker encouraged the audience to always deliver quality service. “Learn to appreciate what you have before time makes you appreciate what you had” she urged.



**A captivated audience listens to Dr. Nsombi Jaja.**

## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Issues in Home Must be Addressed for Fundamental Shift in Population Health

Regional Technical Director of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Dr. Michael Coombs says if there is to be a turnaround in the health of the population and economic development of the country, the issues affecting our homes must be addressed.

“From the chronic diseases to the mental health problems, substance abuse, murders, performance in schools...you name it, if we are going to have a sustained impact on these issues then we have to address the issues that are affecting our homes,” Dr. Coombs pointed out while addressing over 100 men at a Man-Up Exposé on Tuesday, November 22 in Mandeville.

The Man-Up Exposé targeted men from the facilities of the SRHA and focused on self development, mental health, sexuality and responsible fatherhood and manhood. The initiative is part of the interventions, “Good Health Begins at Home” and “Man-Up- A Call to Healthy, Responsible Manhood” which have been targeting and empowering parents and men to foster healthy and happy homes in an effort to impact the society positively. Both initiatives were launched earlier in 2016 through a partnership between the SRHA and the National Association of the Family (NAF).

The Technical Director who is also the founder and chair of the NAF and the pioneer of the interventions said “the foundation for health and wellness is established in the homes and therefore men need to set the right examples. Fathering and male development is a key component of the “Man-Up” initiative because it is my belief that the way to break the cycle of fatherlessness and violence is targeting the young men before they become fathers.”

“Research has shown that the most important factors driving the breakdown of homes and marriages are male related, in particular our approach to our sexuality and family life. If there is to be sustained change then we need interventions such as “Man-Up Jamaica”, because women cannot do it alone. We have to educate men about the importance of fatherhood and the importance of commitment to family,” he added.

Dr. Coombs explained that among the core values of the “Man-Up” initiative are: commitment to family as a priority; responsibility and purity in sexual conduct; servant leadership in the home, community and country; marriage as the union of one man and one woman; fathering in the context of marriage - to provide for, protect, nurture and mentor; respect and loving regard for all women; being an example and positive influence for other men.

For Chief Public Health Inspector in St. Elizabeth, Mr. Everod Lewis who was a participant in the Exposé, the initiative is a boost for the family because “Man-Up Jamaica indicates that as men we need to be a little more responsible because it will chart the way for family and if the family is healthy then it is good for society. We as men need to provide the direction in which our families should go and based on that we will be the beacon so to speak where our generations and our sons and daughters will be able to look at what we are doing as men and to be able to follow it.”



Some of the men from the Man-Up Exposé engage in a physical activity session.



A section of the audience of men pay keen attention to stirring presentations.



## Facilities on the Move

### Black River Hospital Adds 28 Bed Spaces Through Creative Solutions



**Retrofitted containers housing the Outpatient Clinics.**

Described as simple yet profound, the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth has implemented several creative solutions which have created 28 additional bed spaces.

The initiatives include the transformation of the hospital's old maternity ward previously used as an Outpatient Clinic to an overflow Ward for Accident & Emergency patients; retrofitting of two containers to house the Outpatient Clinics and installation of a wheel chair lift to access the upper Male Ward which features a retrofitted verandah space which will house patients.

Speaking at the opening ceremony on the hospital grounds

on Friday, November 11, Chairman of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) Board, Mr. Wayne Chen lauded the hospital for its creativity which has resulted in savings of \$25 million. He explained that the procurement and installation of the lift costs \$5.4 million while an elevator would have cost some \$30 million.

CEO of the hospital, Mrs. Diana Brown-Miller said these solutions are short term as the hospital's long term plan will guide the future infrastructural development of the facility. She added that this development will move the hospital from a Type C facility to a Type B to offer enhanced services to residents.

Mrs. Brown-Miller explained that the Black River Hospital is registered as a 97 bed facility, "however the demand for health care has seen the bed count rising to 145 and counting...in fact we have at one instant 167 admitted patients and have been running at an average monthly occupancy rate of 153 % of occupancy." This, Mrs. Brown-Miller says has created overcrowding challenges for the hospital.

The retrofitting of containers to house the Outpatient Clinics now gives the hospital an additional twelve bed spaces to house female patients in the vacated area which housed the Clinics while the second solution is the implementation of a wheel chair lift to access the upper male ward. The lift also gives access to a renovated area which now houses an additional 16 bed spaces.

Special Advisor to the Health Minister, Dr. Stephanie Reid who represented Dr. Christopher Tufton lauded the hospital for its efforts in finding creative solutions to better serve residents of St. Elizabeth.

## Facilities on the Move

### Retirees Challenged to Mentor Youngsters



**The retirees in high spirits.**

Some 58 retirees have been challenged to keep adding valuable service to their communities through avenues such as the mentoring of youngsters.

The call was made at a Retiree Awards Gala by keynote speaker, Rev. Rohan Ambersley on Thursday, December 1 at the Wembley Centre of Excellence in Clarendon. The event was organized by the Clarendon Health Services in an effort to recognize and award the retirees who had given up to 42 years of service to health care delivery within the parish.

Rev. Ambersley who is also the CEO for Gas Pro Jamaica told the retirees that their talent, energy and experience are still needed to add value to the development of their community and country.

“Take some time and rest, take some time and reflect and refuel because we still need your drive. You have a lot of wisdom and experience to pass

on. Find someone you can mentor in your community. Find a youngster you can speak some sense into because your words will make a positive difference. Find a young person you can talk to because as you rest you are refueling so that you can pass on fuel to the next generation” he added.

Turning to current employees, Rev. Ambersley encouraged them to give of their best because of their responsibility to add value in service and transform lives. “Ensure you fulfill your responsibility and generate positive results” the CEO noted.

For his part, Regional Director for the Southern Regional Health Authority, Mr. Michael Bent lauded the retirees for their valuable years of service to the health sector. He pointed out that the retirees have made many sacrifices to give valuable service and should be treated with sustained dignity.

Mrs. Sonia Pollack-Young who retired as a Chief Public Health Inspector and served for 38 years in health care thanked the Clarendon Health Services on behalf of the retirees for recognizing and awarding their services to the parish of Clarendon. She added that such a gesture is greatly appreciated.

Three retirees, Marline Leslie-Lowe, Cecil Godfrey, Lilieth Smith were awarded posthumously for their services to the Clarendon Health Department of 21 years, 29 years to the Lionel Town Hospital and 37 years to the Chapelton Hospital respectively.



**Mr. Joseph Boothe receives his award for 42 years of service as a Public Health Inspector from the SRHA Human Resources Director, Mrs. Nicolette Thomas-Edwards.**



## Facilities on the Move

### More Comfort for Visitors as Mandeville Regional Hospital Receives 125 Visitor Chairs



Some of the 125 chairs donated by the Friends.

The Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH) has received 125 visitor chairs which Regional Director of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Mr. Michael Bent said is timely and in line with the mandate of the Authority to make customers, patients and visitors as comfortable as possible.

The chairs valued at \$480,500.00 were donated by voluntary group, Friends of the Mandeville Regional Hospital which have been supporting the hospital for 35 years. The chairs were handed over on Tuesday, November 15 on the hospital's compound.

The Regional Director pointed out that given that the public health sector faces financial constraints coupled with the competing demands of the Government, some things which are the desire of the

Authority cannot be done. This, he said requires the support of others such as the Friends of the Hospital.

Mr. Bent noted that despite the limited resources, the managers and staff within the Authority are motivated to ensure that all systems are compatible while finding ways to be creative.

“We must ensure that we find ways and means to optimize the resources we are allocated and seek to form and maintain relationships with benefactors like the Friends of the MRH. We have to make the process easier for charitable donations as we are aware that there is much goodwill both locally and within the Diaspora. That is why we within the Southern Regional Health Authority are taking steps to have a person within the region who will coordinate these resources. We believe that this will go a far way in making the process smoother,” Mr. Bent added.

In his remarks, CEO of the MRH, Mr. Alwyn Miller expressed gratitude to the group for its unwavering support over the years noting that the simplest of gifts to a hospital should not be underestimated because it can make a significant difference in the life of a patient.

Senior Friends of the Hospital cut the ribbon placed on some of the 125 chairs.



Mr. Michael Bent delivers the keynote address.





**Karen Elliot**  
**Nurse Practitioner (Mental Health)**  
**St. Elizabeth Health Department**

**“A Passion for Mental Health & Volunteerism”**



If we were to rewind to the childhood of Karen Elliot, it would be no surprise that she is a nurse today as from an early age, her parents affectionately called her “Nurse” and “Matron”, based on the qualities she displayed from childhood.

This hardworking, fearless, honest, resourceful and high achiever has served for some 15 years in the nursing profession. She is stationed at the Santa Cruz Health Centre in St. Elizabeth as a Nurse Practitioner (Mental Health) and describes her experience as one that she will always cherish. “The experiences I have gained will never be taught in universities or seen in a textbook. I have learnt practical skills to last me a lifetime” the devoted volunteer adds. She notes that working in mental health is rewarding yet humbling particularly after seeing the recovery of an ill patient after treatment.

Not many persons find the time or realize the importance of volunteerism, but for Nurse Elliot, goodwill is something she enjoys. This is indicative by her involvement in several charitable groups and organizations including the Kiwanis Club, St. Elizabeth Care Committee for Street People, St. Elizabeth Mental Health Advocates, and more recently, the Gratitude Foundation.

Inspired by her patients and their families to give of her best irrespective of the challenges, Nurse Elliot is passionate about mental health. This passion has led to the launch of the St. Elizabeth Care Committee for Street People, a support group for family members of persons with mental health challenges. This, she considers to be one of her biggest professional achievements.

Driven by the profound words of Mahatma Ghandi, “you must be the change you wish to see in this world”, Karen believes that we must “never look down on anyone unless you plan to help him up” and that “there is a thin line between sanity and insanity”. She is encouraging her colleagues to do the best they can and treat others as how they would want to be treated.

This business minded nurse admits that she would have definitely chosen the business profession if she had not chosen to be a nurse. She was a finalist in the 2016/2017 LASCO/NAJ Nurse of the Year competition which for her was an honour. She describes the experience as “flabbergasting yet humbling”. She notes that being a part of the competition has taught her much about her professional organization and its importance to nation building.

Like a true volunteer, if she was to get an unexpected visit on the weekend, she would be found volunteering or working in her business. Her favourite singer is the late Whitney Houston and favourite actor, Tyler Perry.



## Staff Highlight

### “Men Call For More Man-Up Exposés”

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) hosted a Man-Up Exposé on Tuesday, November 22 in Mandeville which targeted some 100 men from the facilities of the SRHA and focused on self development, mental health, sexuality and responsible fatherhood and manhood.

The initiative is part of the interventions, “Good Health Begins at Home” and “Man-Up- A Call to Healthy, Responsible Manhood” which have been targeting and empowering parents and men to foster healthy and happy homes in an effort to impact the society positively. Both initiatives were launched earlier in 2016 through a partnership between the SRHA and the National Association of the Family (NAF). Please see below photographic highlights:



Parish Manager for the St. Elizabeth Health Services, Mr. Sean Brissett (left) gives it his all while Chief Public Health Inspector for St. Elizabeth, Mr. Everod Lewis gets ready to get in the groove.



One of the presenters, Professional Life Coach, Dr. Carla Dunbar shares a light moment with participants.



The men show that they too are physically fit.



# HR And You:

## “How To Write a Cover Letter That Gets Noticed”

Job seekers often underestimate the value of a cover letter to the application process and end up writing pieces that either go to the bottom of the recruiter's pile, or worse.

The cover letter is an opportunity for the job candidate to illustrate his/her communication abilities and market him/herself to recruiters. The quality of it determines whether you are called to an interview or not, so should therefore be well-written and targeted.

Please see tips on how to produce a letter that gets noticed.

1. Research the company and the position.

2. Tailor your letter to the particular job you're seeking.

3. Personalise the letter

4. Don't regurgitate your CV

5. Avoid fancy fonts

6. Avoid clichéd expressions

7. Watch your tone

8. Use positive and forward-looking language

9. Limit your letter to three or four paragraphs

10. Edit and proofread

**Credit: The Jamaica Observer-Career & Education**

On the  
Lighter Side

First of all... I CAN'T Read



**We welcome your input, please submit your articles and feedback to:**

**Latoya Laylor Brown, Public Relations & Advocacy Officer**

**Email: [latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm](mailto:latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm)**

**Deadline: December 31, 2016**





## PUBLIC RELATIONS CORNER

"The deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain a favourable public image of an organization"

**"The Blue Mahoe-Jamaican National Symbol"**

The Blue Mahoe (*Hibiscus Elatus*) is the national tree of Jamaica. It is indigenous to the island and grows quite rapidly, often attaining 20m (66ft) or more in height. In wetter districts it will grow in a wide range of elevations, up to 1200m (4000 ft.) and is often used in reforestation.

The tree is quite attractive with its straight trunk, broad green leaves and hibiscus-like flowers. The attractive flower changes colour as it matures, going from bright yellow to orange red and finally to crimson.



The name mahoe is derived from a Carib Indian word. The 'blue' refers to blue-green streaks in the polished wood, giving it a distinctive appearance.

The Blue Mahoe is so beautiful and durable that it is widely used for cabinet making and also for making decorative objects such as picture frames, bowls and carving.

The inner bark of the tree is often referred to as 'Cuba bark' because it was formerly used for tying bundles of Havana cigars. Cuba is the only other place where the Blue Mahoe grows naturally.

## Wellness Bytes:

**"Beware of These Christmas Foods"**

**Credit:**

The Jamaica Observer

Christmas is the time when everyone throws caution to the wind and just tries to enjoy themselves. After all, Christmas Day comes but once a year and even your little ones will catch on to the excitement.

But come the day after, if you're not careful, baby may have a terrible stomach ache, or even a baby hangover if you're not careful about what you allow him to try. There is no reason why your child should not enjoy Christmas as long as food handling is done in a safe way. Here are some tips for both you and baby.

1. As long as the food is safe, it can be consumed by the child. However, be careful of the small child swallowing big pieces of meat as this could result in the child choking. Portions served should therefore be closely monitored by an adult.
2. Don't give your children sorrel with alcohol added. The



child should also not be given rum or any other alcoholic beverages.

3. Pregnant women should eat a range of wholesome and nutritious foods during pregnancy, even more so at Christmas time. Pregnant mothers should not drink alcoholic beverages during this time. .

4. Too many sweet treats should also be avoided by the pregnant woman, however, Christmas cake eaten in moderation should be alright.

5. Take care to ensure that if you are cooking meats like a turkey – the meat is cooked properly. Be sure to follow the instructions about the length of cooking time and temperature.