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## J\$80 Million Worth of Equipment Handed Over to the Mandeville Regional Hospital Under PROMAC



Equipment valued at €580,000 or approximately J\$80 million was on Friday (June 24, 2016) handed over to the Mandeville Regional Hospital as part of activities under the Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (PROMAC). The equipment is for the development of the neonatal High Dependency Unit (HDU) at the hospital.

As part of the component on newborn care and emergency obstetric care under PROMAC, eleven HDUs are to be established - five (5) Maternal and six (6) neonatal - in six (6) referral hospitals in Jamaica. They are Mandeville Regional, Victoria Jubilee, Cornwall Regional, Spanish Town and St. Ann's Bay Hospitals as well as the Bustamante Hospital for Children.

Three categories of equipment consisting of thirty (30) different types with a quantity of eighty-one (81) units were handed over to the Mandeville Regional Hospital.

Speaking at the handing over, Minister of Health, Dr. Christopher Tufton said the equipment will facilitate highly specialized radiographic technology, critical care ventilation and specialized patient monitoring.

*Minister of Health, Dr. Christopher Tufton (centre) accepts equipment for the Mandeville Regional Hospital from Charge d'Affaires of the European Union, Jose Luis Martinez Prada (3rd left). The equipment, valued at €580,000 or J\$80M, is intended for the neonatal High Dependency Unit which is to be established at the hospital as part of the Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (PROMAC). Sharing the moment are (left-right) CEO of the Mandeville Regional Hospital, Alwyn Miller, France's Ambassador to Jamaica, Jean-Michel Despax, Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, Colin Bullock, Chairman of the Board of the Southern Regional Health Authority, Wayne Chen and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Dr. Kevin Harvey.*

Following the successful conclusion of an International Open Tender, in December 2015, the Planning Institute of Jamaica awarded three (3) supply contracts to an international firm – CEDI Europe based in the Netherlands – to provide this equipment to the Ministry of Health for utilization at the hospital.

The specific objectives of PROMAC include reducing the incidence of neonatal and maternal deaths, improving the quality of management of high risk pregnancies at both tertiary and primary care levels and enhancing public awareness and understanding of health care processes and patients' rights.

Credit: Ministry of Health

## In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Public Health Inspectors Always Present at Slaughtering Facilities for Meat Inspections in Manchester



*A Southern Regional Health Authority Public Health Inspector during an inspection.*

*Photo Credit: Jamaica Observer*

Chief Public Health Inspector for Manchester, Mrs. Charmaine Palmer-Cross says Public Health Inspectors are always present at slaughtering facilities in Manchester which could not result in the police carrying out inspections.

This was pointed out after a Gleaner article in May, titled “Meeting Public Health Safety Standards”, reported unsatisfactory conditions under which livestock is slaughtered at approved slaughtering facilities and which pointed to operations in Manchester. The report noted that “on several visits there were no Public Health Inspectors available instead; it was the police who conducted the inspections.”

Mrs. Palmer-Cross said: “Each zone (Health District) slaughtering facilities are covered by the Public Health Inspectors within that locality. Exemptions are made when there is a shortage of officers within a particular zone and officers are re-assigned in order to provide adequate coverage. All slaughtering facilities have designated day or days of slaughter therefore, officers are assigned accordingly. The Public Health Inspectorate

department does not have any knowledge of the police inspecting meat at any given time, as this is not in keeping with the Public Health (Butchers) Regulation 1989.”

The Chief Public Health Inspector said the inspection reports for abattoirs in Manchester indicates that during the last quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016, there are 18 active slaughter places in Manchester which were all inspected. “The current status is 5 were found unsatisfactory and 13 satisfactory. Unsatisfactory conditions for these facilities include: inadequate waste water management and insect proofing” she added.

She explained that: “The Manchester Health Department works closely with the unsatisfactory facilities in order to improve the status to a satisfactory one. At the municipal slaughtering facility, the Manchester Parish Council employs municipal police and their roles and functions are to ensure that law and order is upheld at all times. The Praedial Larceny Prevention Unit of the Jamaica constabulary Force works closely with the Public Health Inspectors in conducting investigations as well as carrying out ongoing operations within the parish.

## In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Fathers Call for More Opportunities to be Mentored and Equipped With Parenting Skills



*Some of the fathers along with their sons at the inaugural Father's Forum on June 30.*

Some 30 fathers are calling for additional support for fathers which they believe will help the nation's men to be better men and fathers.

The call was made by the fathers who attended the inaugural Fathers Forum by the St. Elizabeth Health Services on June 30 which recognized them for playing an invaluable role in their children's lives, equipped them with parenting skills and provided opportunities for mentorship. A Support Group will also be established for the participating fathers to support each other with varying challenges.

Khaneel Farquharson, a father of two said he thoroughly enjoyed the forum and noted that: "It was an excellent forum and I wish we could have these more often to impact more fathers. Today's forum has challenged me to be more financially and mentally focused to ensure that the wellbeing and education of my children comes first."

He is appealing to men to live up to their responsibilities as fathers which is also a charge from the bible.

For organizer of the forum, Paul Smith who is the Parish Medical Social Worker for St. Elizabeth, the forum was a success. "I am impressed by the reaction of the fathers. It's overwhelming as I have received several calls and seen many posts on social media telling the impact of the forum. We are exploring the option of having a second part for the fathers" he added.

Regional Technical Director for the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Dr. Michael Coombs who was the guest presenter told the fathers that research has shown that: "Children who grow up without a father are significantly more likely to be involved in crime and violence, to be incarcerated or placed in juvenile centers, to run away from home and become victims or perpetrators of crime, to be sexually abused and experience teen pregnancy, more likely to abuse drugs, to be mentally ill, more likely to have violent behavior and perform poorly in school among other things."

Dr. Coombs noted that for too long the walls of fatherhood around families have been broken down exposing children to abuse, gangs, crime and violence, failure in school, mental illness, drugs and teen pregnancy. He appealed to the fathers to be the agent of change in rebuilding the walls of fatherhood around families.



*Some of the fathers clap in agreement to a point being made.*

## Facilities on the Move

### Residents Urged to Cooperate With Health Workers as Manchester Steps Up Vector Control Activities

The Manchester Health Department has heightened its vector control activities in the parish and is appealing to residents to cooperate with the health workers when they enter the community to employ vector control measures.

Chief Public Health Inspector of the Manchester Health Department, Mrs. Charmaine Palmer Cross explained that persons who refuse the health team access to their premises to employ vector control activities can be charged a maximum fine of \$1,000,000.00. She explained that the Public Health Act gives Public Health Inspectors the power to enter premises to execute these functions and failure to do so can result in prosecution. Persons who do not take steps to rid their premises of mosquito breeding sites can also be prosecuted and charged a maximum fine of \$500,000.00

The increased vector control activities include: employment of temporary workers who assist with the search and destruction of mosquito breeding sites across the parish; weekend intervention to execute search and destroy activities; increased health education about mosquito borne diseases and the serving of notices on persons who fail to reduce the breeding of mosquitoes on their premises.

Turning to the precautions persons should take when their areas are being fogged, Mrs. Palmer Cross said persons should open their doors and windows for the fog to penetrate their homes, protect persons with asthma or any other respiratory illness by using a damp rag or towel to cover the face and protect bees by stuffing access to bee boxes with wet news papers.

The public is being reminded to take personal responsibility in reducing the breeding sites of mosquitoes by covering all water storage containers with a suitable material including mesh; punch holes in tins before placing them in bins; wash and scrub the inside of water storage containers properly to destroy mosquito eggs; keep areas free from excessive vegetation and properly store garbage.

*(From second left) Councillor for the New Green Division McArthur Collins, Health Minister, Dr. Christopher Tufton, Manchester North Western Member of Parliament Mikael Phillips, and Chief Public Health Inspector for Manchester Charmaine Palmer-Cross during an inspection at the Manchester leg of the Operation: Mosquito Search and Destroy recently.*

*Photo Credit: The Jamaica Observer*



## Facilities on the Move

### Percy Junor Hospital Stages Series 4th Laparoscopic Conference



On Friday, June 24, the Percy Junor Hospital hosted its 4th Laparoscopic Conference. Laparoscopic surgery which is also called minimally invasive surgery, is a modern surgical technique in which operations in the abdomen are performed through small incisions.

The Conference featured live laparoscopic surgeries which enabled the surgeons and the audience to engage.

The Conference was streamed at sites including: the Southern Regional Health Authority, the Santa

Cruz Centre of Excellence, the Lionel Town Hospital, the Mandeville Regional Hospital, the Black River Hospital, the Clarendon Health Department, the Cornwall Regional Hospital and the University Hospital of the West Indies.

Please see below highlights:

*(Top)*

*Senior Medical Officer for the Percy Junor Hospital, Dr. Carlos Wilson explains the process during a live laparoscopic surgery. Seated is Systems Development & Implementation Manager at the Southern Regional Health Authority, Mr. Rohan Smith.*



*SRHA Board Chair, Mr. Wayne Chen addresses the audience at the Laparoscopic Conference.*

## Facilities on the Move

### St. Elizabeth Health Services Takes Health Information to Communities Through Series of Town Hall Meetings

The St. Elizabeth Health Services has been hosting a series of town hall meetings across the parish dubbed, 'Let's Talk Health' in an effort to increase public awareness of the Zika Virus, mosquito related diseases and other health issues.

Please see below highlights from the town hall meeting held in Santa Cruz on Thursday June 30.



*Persons who turned up early engage in reading of pamphlets.*



*Parish Manager for the St. Elizabeth Health Services, Mr. Sean Brissett delivers the welcome while sitting is the Chair and Chief Public Health Inspector of the St. Elizabeth Health Services is Mr. Everod Lewis.*

On the  
Lighter Side



I'm not short..  
I'm just more  
down to  
earth than  
most people !

*Parish Education Officer, St. Elizabeth Health Services, Ms. Marion Waysome interacts with the audience as she gives an update on the Zika Virus.*





## PUBLIC RELATIONS CORNER

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

### 'The Use of National Emblems, Symbols'

The Chancery and Protocol Division of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is responsible for authorizing the use of the national Emblems (the Coat of Arms and the National Flag), the National Anthem, the National Symbols (Tree, Flower, Fruit and Bird) and the National Pledge.

Please see below some of the key principles concerning the use of national symbols.

1. The Coat of Arms may not be used without the prior permission of the Chancery and Protocol Division of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).
2. The National Flag of Jamaica may be used freely provided when an image or representation of the National Flag is being used for advertising, commercial or promotional purposes, it should:

- always be used, represented or shown in a dignified manner; be represented in the approved colours of black, gold and green; not be defaced by way of printing or illustration or be masked by other objects, but should be displayed in a manner which is described as 'aloft and free' whereby all symbolic parts of the Flag can be seen; never have placed on it any mark, insignia, letter, word, number, figure or drawing of any kind.

Factors which the OPM may take into account in considering an application to use the national symbols may include whether the intended purpose is for educational or non-educational use, whether the product will be commercially free or freely distributed.

Exercise sessions at 5:15 p.m.  
**Monday– Percy Junor Hospital**  
**Tuesday– Southern Regional Health Authority office**  
**Wednesday–Manchester Health Department**  
**Thursday– Mandeville Regional Hospital**  
**Friday– Football-lawns of the SRHA**

**Netball and Football Competitions**  
**Look out for more details!!!!!!!**





**Dr. Michael Coombs**  
**Regional Technical Director,**  
**Southern Regional Health Authority**

**“A Champion of Public Health”**



When the call is echoed across the land for a champion to step forward and stand up for what is true and right, when our country cries out for men who will ‘Man Up’, in steps Dr. Michael Coombs answering the call like Isaiah, “Here am I send me”.

His entrance to the field of public health can be linked to that of Abraham in the Bible having booked his room to go off and study engineering in Trinidad but a soft voice whispered “bigger plans do I have for you Coombs” and so he went to medical school. A fire was shut up in his bones ever since 1983 when he came to the southern region as an intern at the Mandeville Regional Hospital. He has then been blazing a pathway of greatness and has given 33 years of indelible service to public health in several areas including: Junior Resident Doctor at the Percy Junor Hospital, District Medical Officer for Mandeville and Christiana, Medical Officer (Health), Manchester, Regional Technical Director, Acting Chief Medical Officer and Chair of the Steering Committee for Joint Technical Cooperation between Jamaica and Japan International Corporation Agency.

He has also served on several Boards including the Boards of: the Southern Regional Health Authority, the National Bioethics Board of Jamaica, the National Parent Support Commission, the Medical Council of Jamaica and the University Hospital of the West Indies.

Spiritual, teacher, conciliatory, thinker and family advocate are just a few words that are associated with Dr. Coombs who is described as a giant in the field of public health. Having fierce beliefs that “broken families are the single most important social and health issue of our generation” and that “fatherlessness is the most significant factor that contributes to broken families in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries,” Dr. Coombs has channelled this energy into being an unwavering advocate for initiatives that will positively impact families and manhood. These initiatives include ‘Good Health Begins at Home’ and ‘Man-Up, a Call to Healthy, Responsible Manhood’ which are being steered by the Southern Regional Health Authority where he serves as the Regional Technical Director and the National Association for the Family where he is the Chair and Founder.

But what is it that keeps this champion of public health stepping into the ring time after time? He proudly responds that it is the words of Jeremiah, “For I know the thoughts I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” When he is not in the ring fighting for the cause of ‘Good Health Begins at Home’ and ‘Man-Up, a Call to Healthy, Responsible Manhood’, you can find him doing one of three things including taking his wife on a date, gardening or at his ‘Mt. Carmel’ where he reconnects with his Creator.

He describes this period of his life as his true calling where he has purposed with the help of God and other stakeholders to rebuild the nation one family at a time. Like a true champion Dr. Coombs knows that dedication to the task at hand is key and he has mentally fortified his mind for any opposition that he may encounter. His family is of great joy and inspiration to him and he believes he has done his duty to God and his country by raising children that will positively impact the word. Like a true champion Dr. Coombs has words of wisdom and encouragement for his colleagues. He says: “Your profession is a tool that you have been given, use that tool to build a life and teach others to do the same.” Don’t believe these are his parting words as he has fastened his gloves and entered the ring once more as he embarks on the campaigns, ‘Good Health Begins at Home’ and ‘Man-Up, a Call to Healthy, Responsible Manhood’.

By: Taj-Marie Whyte, Public Relations Intern, Northern Caribbean University

## Staff Highlight

### SRHA Staff Excited at Smoothie Lessons



*Nutritionist, Mrs. Debbie Ottey Golding demonstrates how to make fruit smoothies. She encourages persons to utilize fruits in season because of its cost effectiveness.*



*The Taste Test– Regional Personnel Officer, Ms. Karen Morris gives the smoothie a thumbs up.*



*Staff in line to sample the smoothie.*



Please see below from the Staff Orders as it relates to legal proceedings which includes public officers.

#### **4.7 LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICERS**

- i) The Government, further to the advice of the Attorney General, shall defend public employees against whom proceedings are threatened or brought in respect of acts done or liabilities incurred in the exercise of their duties;
- ii) In instances where such proceedings are threatened or brought the facts shall be reported to the Attorney General. Subject to paragraph (v) below, the officer against whom the proceedings have been threatened or brought, shall incur no legal or other expenses. No other action shall be taken in connection with any proceedings until the advice of the Attorney General has been obtained;
- iii) Where the Government defends proceedings against a public officer and the Attorney General decides to settle, the cost shall be indicated to the Financial Secretary and also the amount if any, which the Government shall contribute towards such a settlement;
- iv) Upon receipt of the decision, the Attorney General shall advise the public employee of the amount which he will be asked to contribute towards such settlement. His/her written agreement shall be obtained for the Attorney General to settle the proceedings.
- v) If the public employee does not agree to contribute the amount decided upon, the Government may refuse to continue to afford legal assistance to him/her.

#### **4.9 LEGAL PROCEEDINGS BY PUBLIC OFFICERS**

Officers may not institute civil proceedings in any Court in connection with matters arising out of the performance/discharge of their public duties or against a Minister or any other public officer for anything done in the performance.

## **HR And You:**

### **LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICERS**

#### **4.8 LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT CAUSED BY THE ACTIONS OF PUBLIC OFFICERS**

Where as a result of the act of a Public Officer, legal proceedings are successfully brought against the Government or another public officer and the Government deems it desirable to settle such proceedings out of court, disciplinary action may be instituted against the employee. In such an instance, the public officer shall have the right to own counsel. The public officer may be required to bear some of the costs of a successful action against the Government or another public officer.



**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: July 31, 2016**

## Wellness Bytes:

### Zika Virus



#### 1. What is Zika Fever?

This is a mosquito-borne viral illness caused by the Zika virus (ZIKV).

#### 2. How is ZIKV spread?

In Jamaica, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the only mosquito that can spread this disease. If the mosquito bites someone who is infected with ZIKV, the mosquito becomes a carrier of the virus and infects any one it bites.

This mosquito which is commonly found in Jamaica also transmits the dengue and chikungunya viruses.

#### 3. What are the symptoms of Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?

The most common symptoms are:

- mild to severe fever
- rash (which may itch)
- redness of eyes
- joint pains
- headache
- myalgia (muscle pain)
- oedema ( swelling) in lower limbs
- weakness

Persons may also experience:

- vomiting
- diarrhoea
- loss of appetite
- abdominal pain

#### 4. Who is at risk for more severe symptoms?

- Infants
- The elderly
- Pregnant women
- Persons with underlying medical conditions such as diabetes, heart diseases, hypertension and Sickle Cell Disease.

#### 5. What can be done to reduce the risk of getting Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection). The best prevention is to reduce or eliminate mosquito breeding sites as follows:

- Throw away or recycle water containers that are not needed.
- Containers such as drums should be fully and tightly covered, turned over or placed under a roof that does not allow them to fill with water.
- Clean and scrub flower vases and pet's water containers weekly and dump the water from overflow saucers under potted plants and flower pots.
- Clear roof gutters and eaves to prevent water from settling.
- Fill tree holes and other cavities in plants with soil or sand.
- Repair leaking pipes and outside faucets.

#### 6. What are the habits of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito?

- The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito bites at any time during the day or night. It is found in and around homes, schools, workplaces, and other places where people gather.
- One infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is able to infect several persons.
- The mosquito breeds in any container where water is allowed to settle. The most common breeding sites are drums, tyres, flower pots and containers in and around homes, schools, workplaces and communities.
- The *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes produce on average 100 to 200 eggs per batch. Laid eggs can survive for very long periods in a dry state, often for more than a year.

**Credit: Ministry of Health**