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Hospitals in Southern Region Now Providing Cutting Edge Laparoscopic Surgeries

As part of its strategic plan to continuously improve the delivery of quality health care to patients and to also leverage resources, the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) is improving access to laparoscopic surgeries to residents in central Jamaica.

With the advances in surgical principles and techniques, laparoscopic surgery is now the standard of care and is now being offered at the Mandeville Regional and Percy Junor Hospitals (PJH) in Manchester, following the acquisition of two state of the art high definition laparoscopic towers, valued at \$17.8 million.

Senior Medical Officer (SMO) for the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH), Dr. Everton McIntosh explained that laparoscopic surgery, also called minimally invasive surgery is a modern surgical technique in which operations in the abdomen are performed through small incisions, rather than the larger incisions needed in open surgery.

"Laparoscopic surgery has proven advantages over open surgery, including less risk of bleeding, less risk of wound infections, less postoperative pain and so less need for pain killers. This surgery also results in less respiratory complications, quicker healing and recovery which translates into shorter hospital admissions and quicker return to work and overall reduced cost of care" Dr. McIntosh added.

For Regional Director of the SRHA, Mr. Michael Bent, the benefits of laparoscopic surgery are enormous for patients and the healthcare system. "This is a regional focus as we have planned that by the first quarter of next year all the hospitals within the region which covers Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth will be offering these services. It is part of our retooling plan as we aim to utilize whatever technology to offer more efficient and effective healthcare" Mr. Bent said.

The Regional Director pointed out that the acquisition of the laparoscopic towers was funded with fees collected through individual health insurance which is a means of assisting public health care facilities to achieve their development goals. He added that the Authority has been able to purchase several assets, including two ambulances which were converted from buses, a surgical microscope, an anaesthetic machine and an ultra sound machine, over the last 15 months.



Laparoscopic surgery in progress at the Percy Junor Hospital.

For SMO at the Percy Junor Hospital, Dr. Carlos Wilson, the hospital is pleased to be providing this type of surgery, which he noted is the standard for many operations including gallbladder removal.

"In less than two weeks since acquiring the laparoscopic tower, we have successfully performed three gallbladder removal surgeries. At present, patients spend three days in hospital, but with laparoscopic surgery we may soon be able to have patients come in, do the operation and go home the same day without being admitted. The recovery time and complications for patients are also much less with laparoscopic surgery" Dr. Wilson said.

Meanwhile, Dr. McIntosh pointed out that the acquisition of the laparoscopic equipment will enable surgeons operating at MRH to "now practice what they have been trained to do and be better able to adhere to modern standards of surgical care. This will greatly benefit our patients as well as greatly enhance the prestige and reputation of the hospital as an institution where quality care is standard."

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Use Physical Activity as a Prescription-Hospital Physiotherapists



The team of physiotherapists at the Mandeville Regional Hospital.

The team of physiotherapists at the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH) in Manchester is encouraging the general public to use physical activity as a prescription for healthier lifestyles.

Manager and Head of Department for Physiotherapy Services at the MRH, Mr. Denzil Williams explained that part of the objective of the commemoration of World Physiotherapy Week is "for patients and prospective patients to understand that exercise is a prescription and we want it to be prescribed by physical therapists who are the specialists in this area. We also want the public to understand that physical activity is for everyone."

Mr. Williams was speaking on Friday, September 8 at a health fair and exposition, which culminated a week of activities to mark World Physiotherapy Week, September 4-8 under the theme, "Physical Activity for Life". The health fair featured several activities including free blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol checks; free fitness testing and consultations.

The week's activities also included several educational sessions regarding physiotherapy for orthopaedic and paediatric patients; pre-operative and post operative care in gynaecology and surgical patients; exercise during pregnancy and exercise for renal, diabetic and hypertensive patients.

Mr. Williams explained that the physiotherapy team also used the week's celebration to sensitize patients about the importance of physical activity in various aspects of one's life including the impact on non-communicable diseases.

"Sedentary lifestyle has little or no physical activity and this is what we want to minimize among the population. We want to keep our workforce and the populace healthy and moving and at less risk for non-communicable diseases" Mr. Williams added.

Meanwhile, Mr. Williams explained that a Physiotherapist is a trained professional who is a rehabilitation and movement specialist, adding that "we bring a person back to functionality, we bring them back to the workforce to add meaning and value to work."

\$2.6 Million in Medical Supplies and Pharmaceuticals Donated to Mandeville Regional Hospital



General Manager for MDS, Mr. Kurt Boothe explained that Medical Disposable Supplies has recognized that the most

Meanwhile, Dr. McIntosh in expressing gratitude for the life saving gifts, noted that such a significant contribution will make a big impact in providing care for patients. The Senior Medical Officer lauded the company as good corporate citizens, noting that this contribution follows a donation to the hospital by the company in June.



On the Lighter Side

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Leadership Training Used to Optimize Potential of Staff

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) has embarked on several Leadership Training Workshops, in an effort to boost the competencies of its supervisory and managerial staff. On Thursday, September 28, the second Workshop was held under the theme, "Leadership Matters", at the Mandeville Hotel. The training was tailored to equip managers and supervisors with useful, relevant and current information "about various aspects of leadership by utilizing resource persons with expertise from varying backgrounds

Please see below highlights:



Former CEO of the Registrar General's Department, Dr Patricia Holness delivers an engaging presentation on 'How Leaders Offer a Course of Action to Effectively Meet Challenges'.



A section of the captivated audience.



Staff members note important observations.



Associate Vice President of Academic Administration at the Northern Caribbean University, Dr. Vincent Peterkin makes a presentation on the church's perspective on the actions and decisions of leaders.

Facilities on the Move

St. Elizabeth Staff Fusion

On Thursday, August 31, staff members from the St. Elizabeth Health Services converged at the BREDS Sports Complex in Treasure Beach, St. Elizabeth for a day of fun, physical activity and health screening, to promote and strengthen physical activity and proper nutrition among staff, in an effort to reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

Please see below photographic highlights.



Staff Highlight

Congratulations Manchester Hometown Hero



Custos of Manchester Sally Porteous (front, second left) and Mayor of Mandeville Donovan Mitchell (back, second right) with recipients (front, left to right) Brenda Ramsay, Gloria Bogle and Reverend Joan Smith on behalf of Daisy Morgan. (Back, left to right) Desmond Harrison, Sonia Edwards Black, Enoch Cornwall, Pauline Roberts and Dudley McLean on behalf of Peter 'Pierre' Morris.

Photo Credit: Jamaica Observer

The Jamaica Cultural Development Commission in collaboration with the Manchester Municipal Corporation honoured eight community members in Manchester on National Heroes' Day.

Among the hometown heroes was, Mrs. Sonia Edwards-Black, Dental Nurse at the Mandeville Comprehensive Clinic, who was nominated by her colleagues for recognition for humanitarian service.

In 2014, Mrs. Black was asked to foster a baby girl - Timera Brown, who was only 6 weeks old. At 2 years old, little Timera was diagnosed with Retinoblastoma – Cancer of the Retina, in both eyes.

Mrs. Black sought assistance at the St Judes's Hospital for children in Memphis, Tennessee- USA. Having received positive response, she applied for her vacation leave and taking time away from the rest of

her family, travelled with little Timera, to Tennessee, so she could receive the best treatment.

At the end of her vacation leave, the treatment for Timera was not completed. So, in January 2017 Mrs. Black made exceptional sacrifice by applying for no-pay leave for a period of - nine (9) months, in order to remain with Timera in the USA for continued treatment. She returned to Jamaica with her on September 4, 2017, but will have to make monthly trips abroad with Timera to continue the treatment for her condition. The love, care, sacrifices and commitment that she has lavished on this little girl is just amazing.

The Manchester Health Services and in particular the team at the Dental Department congratulate Mrs. Black on this prestigious award.

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

Latoya Laylor Brown, Public Relations & Advocacy Officer

Email: latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

Deadline: November 15, 2017



Staff Highlight

Eating to Live... it Works

By: Barbara Ellington, SRHA Resource Mobilization Officer



July 2016

Prior to October 20, 2016, I was among many overweight Jamaican women who love to eat what they cook. It helps that I do not have any food allergies and besides susumber and all the so called man-made vegetarian foods, there aren't many things that I don't eat. Worst of all, I love sweets. I can skip all other courses and be satisfied with dessert!

But when I received the results of my cholesterol test (12.5) along with a diagnosis of angina last October, I knew I had been digging my grave

with my knife and fork. I also failed the stress test badly; I could only manage three of the 10 minutes. My GP had to give me a few hits of nitroglycerine immediately, my breathing was so bad, I thought I was dying. Not pretty at all.

Things got worse when my GP sent me to a cardiologist who concurred with his diagnosis. On November 17, 2016, I was admitted to the Tony Thwaites Wing, thinking (actually hoping), that I would do an angiogram and all would be well. My mother, uncles, aunt and one sister have lived with mild heart conditions for years, so I figured all would be well.

Throughout the entire procedure, both cardiologists – Drs. Ho Sang and Crooks kept speaking with me; but grew very quiet after a while, forcing me to ask – ‘is everything ok, how oono so quiet all of a sudden?’ They replied: “This is more challenging than we thought but everything is fine.” My confidence returned.

The result was that I now wear two expensive pieces of plastic in my heart called stents, which are supposed to open the way for blood to flow more freely through... oh the wonders of modern medicine.

But my work had only begun. The doctors showed me on a diagram what they had done and then told me that my left artery was entirely blocked, leaving me with the following symptoms that I had felt more than six months: difficulty breathing; constantly tired; always sleepy; persistent coughing; difficulty sleeping because of discomfort in the breathing canal and extreme tiredness even after doing the slightest task.

Post Surgery

Later that night, I was told by the cardiologist how close I had come to a heart attack and that for the rest of my life I would have to do many things including, take



Almond milk, oats, papaya, ripe banana and strawberry smoothie



April 2017

cholesterol meds, lose weight and maintain it, exercise, eat better and avoid stress. My GP had already given me a Cholesterol Guide; so since that time, I have been following it.

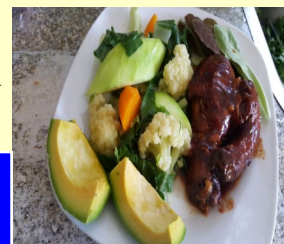
I have now lost more than 40 pounds just by changing the way I eat. Many family members and friends think it's discipline, but it's actually **FEAR OF A HEART ATTACK**.

For the first three months after my angioplasty, if I ate too much or the wrong things, I would convince myself that it had gone directly to my heart... 'lol'. It was hard and I experienced hunger pangs often but began to see food as the enemy. I still have a hard time eliminating sweet things like peanut brittle/cake, puddings, icebox cake, tiramasu, crème brule, gateaus, several bottles of Guinness weekly, regular glasses of wine, daily cups of perked coffee and fruit crumble, but I persevere. Where I would eat a whole bulla, I now eat half. And now, I can no longer eat a large serving of anything.

I have eliminated margarine, sugar, rice, processed foods and eating after dark. I have added bulgur, couscous, chick peas, more dasheen, more sweet potato, sugar-free muffins, breadfruit and cassava wraps. I have also introduced meat/fishless days weekly, I began with one and I am now up to three. Every morning my breakfast is a blend of oats, almond milk, ripe banana, strawberries, mango or any three fruits in season.

Perked coffee is my treat two mornings a week; I enjoy a glass of red wine on very special occasions or on a Sunday with dinner. For the first time in my working years, I now take my lunch hour to eat and recharge; I do 15 minutes of gardening in the mornings and up to two hours every evening and I eat five small meals a day. More importantly, I grab every moment to do absolutely nothing except give God thanks for life and I avoid negative people, videos, local TV news and I have almost stopped cursing bad words.

Sadly, having always hated to exercise, this is the only area that my doctor is not happy with. Gardening is not enough; and having lost 40 pounds without it, to me that is proof that eating less and better, are what make you lose weight. Here at the SRHA, the staff is on to a good thing health-wise, keep moving and teach your children healthy eating habits while they are young.



Meal with carrot, cauliflower, pak choy, squash, avocado, lettuce leaves and oven barbeque chicken.



Ida Ford

**Registered Nurse/Midwife
May Pen Hospital**

“Skilled Martial Arts Nurse”



Well known quote from Arnold Schwarzenegger, "Strength does not come from winning, your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardship and decide not to surrender, that is strength" has been a guiding philosophy for Registered Nurse/Midwife at the May Pen Hospital (MPH), Ida Ford.

With some 26 years of remarkable service to the public health sector, Nurse Ford explains that her tenure began with the May Pen Hospital in 1991 as a Medical Records Clerk; however in 1997 she pursued her dreams of becoming a nurse and graduated as a Registered Nurse in 2000. She continued her ambitions and completed studies in 2004 to become a Registered Midwife, followed by certification in Nursing Administration in 2006 and training up to the Master's level in Nursing Administration, which she completed in 2012.

Presently, Nurse Ford serves in the capacity of Ward/Nurse Manager, where some of her duties include assisting in the organizing and overseeing of orientation programmes for staff, guiding and supporting staff in the administration of patient care; providing nursing care and support to clients and their families; establishing and reinforcing the standards and practices of nursing procedures; encouraging and facilitating staff development and ensuring the effective utilization of operational resources.

Describing her experience with the health sector as rewarding, Nurse Ford notes that it has not been without its challenges; however, “over the years, the challenges have made me into a stronger person while preparing me for the wider world.” She adds that her experience with the Southern Regional Health Authority has given her numerous opportunities to achieve her goals and to increase her knowledge and expertise, which has boosted her ability to deliver quality and efficient patient care.

Inspired to do her best by her own ambitions and her family, particularly her son; Nurse Ford relates that she considers obtaining a Master's degree in Nursing Administration, her greatest achievement. A jovial but a no nonsense person, Nurse Ford has been recognized on numerous occasions for her dedication and hard work at the MPH. In 1995, she was awarded Worker of the Year at the MPH, and in 2007 received a special award for client centred health care delivery at the MPH. Also in 2007 she was placed the 1st runner up-Nurse of the Quarter for the Accident and Emergency Department, MPH, and recognized for the ‘Best Case Study Hospital Nursing Administration’ from the Nurses Association of Jamaica. Nurse Ford adds that she has also been awarded Kiwanian of the Year from the Kiwanis Club of May Pen 2007-2008 and also recognized as Distinguished President of the Kiwanis Club, May Pen, 2011-2012.

With special skills in the area of martial arts, Nurse Ford notes that her favourite singer is George Michael and enjoys movies with Sidney Poitier. She points out that on a weekend when she is not at work, she can be found involved in community work, doing house chores, reading or surfing the internet.

Her professional advice to her colleagues is to work as a team, and “whatever is the task, do it to the best of your ability as hard work is rewarding. Last but not least, nurses model their profession so always act in a professional and dignified manner.”

Wellness Bytes:

“Health Hazards of Skipping Meals ”

Credit:
Jamaica Observer

MANY of us at some point have been so desperate to lose weight that we move beyond merely following a strict diet to even skipping meals in the hope that ingesting fewer calories will increase the speed of weight loss.

But nutritionist Chloé-Faith Perez says that while this may seem ideal, this formula for weight loss, though harmless when done occasionally, could have a significant impact on your health.

“Skipping meals actually has a lot of negative effects. All bodily operations are fuelled by what we eat. In fact, the body's main source of energy is glucose; skipping meals robs the body of this and could result in every organ in the body being impacted,” she said.

She pointed out that a drop in the level of glucose in the body will lead to decreased energy levels as well as decreased intellectual functioning – such as concentration, focus and memory. In addition, a very low glucose level could also affect the mood, leading to increased irritability.

She notes that brain-related functions, including those listed above, are often more severely affected because the brain is completely dependent on glucose.

“The brain uses only glucose as its energy source. When there is none available, the body has to undergo processes which break down fats and proteins to convert them to glucose. This puts extra strain on the body, which starts relying on the muscles as a source of body fuel, especially since the body does not know when next it will get a supply of calories,” Perez explained.

Another downside to skipping meals, according to Perez, is that when the body goes without food for an extended period, it goes into what is called starvation mode.



“This is where the body will basically hoard the next meal, storing as much energy as possible in case the body has to undergo starvation again. This actually decreases or slows the metabolic rate and allows weight loss.”

This, she explained, is counterproductive to dieting. In addition, when the body goes into starvation mode or when you skip meals for long periods, research shows that you will feel hungrier and will overeat at the next meal. This behaviour, Perez reasoned, can lead to repetitive starving and bingeing which can lead to eating disorders.

“When you skip meals you also run the risk of not consuming enough nutrients, which affects overall health. Prolonged skipping of meals may also lead to the development of conditions such as ulcers, increased flatulence, gastric reflux and stomach pains,” Perez shared.

These complications are caused by an increase in the secretion of gastric acid in the stomach, which happens whenever the stomach remains empty for extended periods. This acid, in turn, affects the lining of the stomach, leading to acidity which results in the complications noted above.

To avoid having to deal with these negative consequences of skipping meals, Perez advised that it is best to have small meals frequently throughout the day. She said that snacking is also fine as long as it's healthy, and it is important that you listen to your body.

“Eat when you are hungry and stop when you feel satisfied. Pay attention to your portions and make healthy choices. You can also increase the time spent exercising; explore ways to achieve some amount of exercise, even at work. Walk when you can, jog, and incorporate any other exercise that you can to complement your diet,” Perez instructed.



PUBLIC RELATIONS CORNER

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

"How to Address Members of The Senate"

The President of the Senate

The President of the Senate is formally addressed 'Senator Honourable'.

The mode of address in:

Writing for the current President:

Senator Honourable Thomas Tavares-Finson

President of the Senate

[Address]

Dear President Tavares-Finson/Dear Mr. President

.....

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Formal speech/Subsequent referrals

'(Mister) President'

'(Madam) President'

If the holder of this office is a Minister of Religion, the usual 'Senator Honourable' is recommended, except in a primarily religious context where 'The Reverend and Honourable' could be used if preferred.

The Deputy President of the Senate & All Other Members of the Senate

The Deputy President of the Senate and all other Senators are referred to as 'Senator', without the use of 'Mr/Mrs/Miss' both formally and informally. Senators who are members of the Order of Jamaica or are Ministers of Government are addressed 'Senator Honourable.....

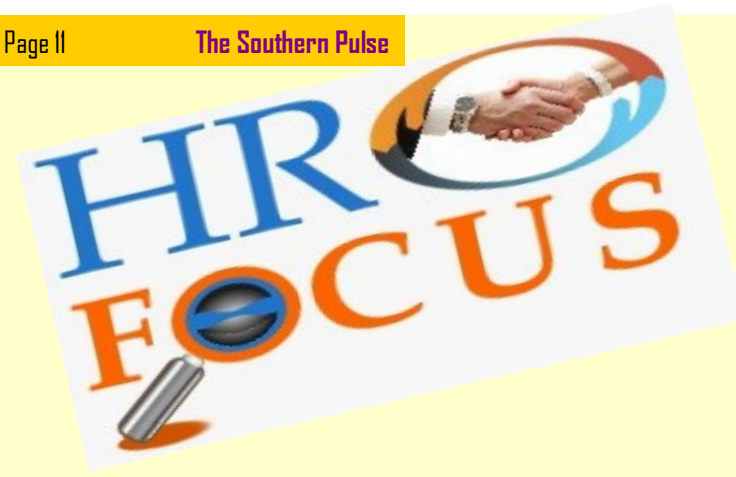
Article continues: <http://opm.gov.jm/1-devon-rd/protocol/how-to-address-members-of-the-senate/>

Facilities on the Move: Boost for Mandeville Regional Hospital Fleet



CEO of the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH), Alwyn Miller (3rd left) accepts the key to a 2017 Toyota Hilux pickup from Regional Director of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Michael Bent (3rd right) on Thursday, September 21, as part of the Authority's effort to boost the capacity of the hospital to provide increased effective and efficient services.

The Regional Director noted that the acquisition of the utility vehicle is a representation of the SRHA's objective to continuously improve its service delivery to residents in southern Jamaica. Photographed also is (left to right) Driver of the MRH, Mr. Owen Lewis, MRH Operations Manager, Ms. Marcia Francis, SRHA Director of Operations and Maintenance, Mrs. Herschel Ismail and SRHA Fleet Coordinator Mr. Robert Robinson.



HR And You:

“EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME”

1. 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

2. What types of services are provided?

The Employee Assistance Programme will provide individual counselling services which will include assessment and referral.

3. Who can use the Service?

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

4. Who will provide the service?

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

5. Where will the service be provided?

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

6. 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 be-half with your con-sent.
- 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.

7. Are the services confidential?

This is a confidential ser-vice. Your right to pri-vacy is guaranteed.

8. 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.

9. 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 es-teem.
- Greater control over their lives and the challenges they face.

10. Benefits to the organization.

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

Credit: SRHA brochure