



The Southern Pulse

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Care With Compassion- Health Ministry Aims to Improve Customer Experience

Despite the challenges in the public health sector, Health Minister, Dr. Christopher Tufton believes the sector has been responding well.

Minister Tufton shared that in 2017, 1.8 million persons visited the health centres across the island, while 1.2 million persons accessed services at hospitals, with 185,000 spending an average of 5 days, noting that of the 185, 000 persons admitted to hospitals, the mortality rate was 4.5 percent.

“In a country with so many challenges where you have an unusually high case of trauma, in one way or another; a country that has an unusually high case of non-communicable diseases all leading to one direction ultimately, the public health system. We (public health system) are so heavily depended on and I believe for the most part, risen to the challenges in providing good clinical care and the manifestation of that are in the statistics” Minister Tufton explained.

The Health Minister added that the demand for Jamaican clinicians internationally also speaks to the quality of professionals in the public health system. He noted that public perception of the public health system, which is not always based on personal experience, sometimes puts the public health system in a negative light.

“Oftentimes it is based on what people hear, what they see on the television because it only takes one dissatisfied person to create a national perception. It is a disservice to those who serve and who serve well. Too often, sometimes it’s not a patient issue but perhaps one worker who may have been frustrated that day and administered care in a manner that is uncaring and that perception is multiplied several times.”

The Minister said an important part of the overall response to public health, is a mechanism to firstly ensure that all public health employees begin to enhance, develop, build and strengthen a culture of customer service.

Minister Tufton pointed out that this mechanism is the compassionate care and volunteerism programme, which was launched at the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth on Thursday, September 20. The programme seeks to begin a process of emphasizing the customer service component of public health and delivering care with compassion.

The compassionate care programme comprises three components including training of staff in customer service and enhancing basic infrastructure such as the accident and emergency areas to ensure that patients wait in areas of comfort with pictorial messages of advice and encouragement. The third component is volunteerism, which seeks to boost partnerships and engage Jamaicans in offering compassionate care with the supervision of staff.

Some 200 staff members at the Back River Hospital were trained in customer service and have expressed commitment to delivering quality care with compassion. Renovation works at the hospital’s accident & emergency department included enhancement of the aesthetics to include murals with health messages, refurbished bathrooms, installation of air conditioning and the placement of a television set to display health messages.



Minister of Health Dr. Christopher Tufton speaks to a patient in the renovated Accident and Emergency department at the Black River Hospital, as part of the compassionate care programme.

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Increased Physiotherapy Services for the Southern Region



Some of the physiotherapists from the Mandeville Regional Hospital.

persons being new patients.

He added that plans are in place for the services to be offered to outpatient customers.

Turning to the role of physiotherapists, Mr. Williams explained that physiotherapists help to restore function and mobility in persons affected by injury, illness or disability, adding that this is done through exercise, education, movement and education.

“Physiotherapy is a science-based profession and we are now in a better position to ensure lifelong possible injuries, deformities and rehabilitative anomalies are addressed with early physiotherapy interventions. The offering of services at the additional facilities will decrease the demand on the other facilities” Mr. Williams added.

The Physiotherapy Manager noted that: “it is even more important going forward for the constant monitoring and control to aid its growth and frequent reassessment of the services performance to optimise its advancement to ensure quality and timely delivery of the physiotherapy services to the populace.”

The Physiotherapy team commemorated Physiotherapy Week, September 2 to 8 under the theme, “Physical Therapy and Mental Health” and used the opportunity to educate the public about the importance of physiotherapy with emphasis on mental health, in an effort to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.



Patricia Brown (left) questions Lasco Sales Ambassador, Shavonnie Graham (centre) about their offerings at the recent health fair hosted by the physiotherapists from the MRH. Photographed also is Sales Ambassador, Sandra Moxam.



Patient Care Coordinator from Professional Eye Care in Manchester, Oshane Hayles (left) does a glaucoma screening on Nurse at the MRH, Latonia Watson, at the recent health fair staged by the physiotherapists at the MRH.

The Black River Hospital (BRH) in St. Elizabeth and the Percy Junor Hospital (PJH) in Manchester are now offering inpatient physiotherapy services.

Manager and Head of Department for Physiotherapy Services at the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH), Denzil Williams explained that patients requiring physiotherapy treatment will no longer have to be transferred to the MRH in Manchester and the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon to access services.

Mr. Williams noted that physiotherapy services were introduced to BRH in January 2018 and for the period, January to June 2018, 281 patients were seen, with 219 persons

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Mommy, The Breast is Best



Community Health Aide at the Mandeville Comprehensive Clinic, Sasha Rankine Sweeney, who exclusively breastfeeds, shows the correct way to breast-feed.

No man, it won't hurt them at all," said one woman as she placed a piece of chicken leg on the lips of her four-month old baby at her home in rural Manchester.

This scenario is common among mothers who feel that it is necessary for babies to acquire the taste of real food as early as possible. But according to nurse Mernel Genius, this must never happen.

"I have heard mothers saying that babies do not get enough from the breast and the babies want formula or supplementation. They say the breast will get long and saggy if they breastfeed and that is not true. If the breast is long and saggy, it is not as a result of breastfeeding."

Genius, who has been a nurse for 18 years, has seen it all and says that giving your baby food outside of breast milk can cause malnourishment and even severe cases of allergic reactions.

"Some mothers give their children water, bush tea, even ackee and salt fish, milk, mackerel, simply anything they are having. They claim wiping it across the baby's mouth will not harm the baby. People will continue to have their bizarre beliefs, but we are saying anything outside of breast milk for the first six months is a no-no. No food, no fruit juice, no supplement breast milk only."

There are mothers who find it difficult to breastfeed for a number of reasons. Nurse Genius suggests that the mothers try breast pumps and help the baby get lactation right.

"It will hurt if the baby is not properly latched on the breast. The dark area on the nipple, called the areola, is to go into the baby's mouth as much as possible so the baby is sucking directly on the nipple."

At a recent breastfeeding awareness campaign at the Mandeville Regional Hospital to promote, protect and support breastfeeding, regional dietitian at the hospital Marie Powell said the breast is able to feed many children.

"We are of the assumption that the breast will not provide enough milk for the child to have adequate nutrition and that is not true. Our breasts are able to feed twins and triplets. The more you empty the breast, the more it fills up."

Regional director at the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) Michael Bent, who was also present, encouraged fathers to play their role in facilitating breastfeeding.

"Breastfeeding is a social responsibility. Lack of breastfeeding can cause malnutrition, and, fathers, I am encouraging you to give the mothers the emotional support so they can produce the milk. Imagine saving the money you would use to buy formula for six months to be used for something else".

"Love your children and bond with them. I want you to help us spread the message of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months to mothers and fathers to avoid life-long effects, ensure food security, and break the cycle of poverty," he ended.



Nurses at the Mandeville Regional Hospital in role play mode at the Breastfeeding Awareness campaign recently.

Facilities on the Move

Health Centre for Robins Hall: Residents Informed

On Thursday, September 13, the Manchester Health Services hosted a town hall meeting at the Malton Shiloh Apostolic Church in Robins Hall to inform residents of the opening of the Robin's Hall Health Centre, which was a maternity centre but closed in the 1980s. The building was renovated and will function as a Type 11 Health Centre, offering services including maternal and child health; postnatal, curative, immunization, nutrition, pharmacy environmental health and dental in the future.

The health centre will be opened on Thursday, November 15. Please see below highlights.

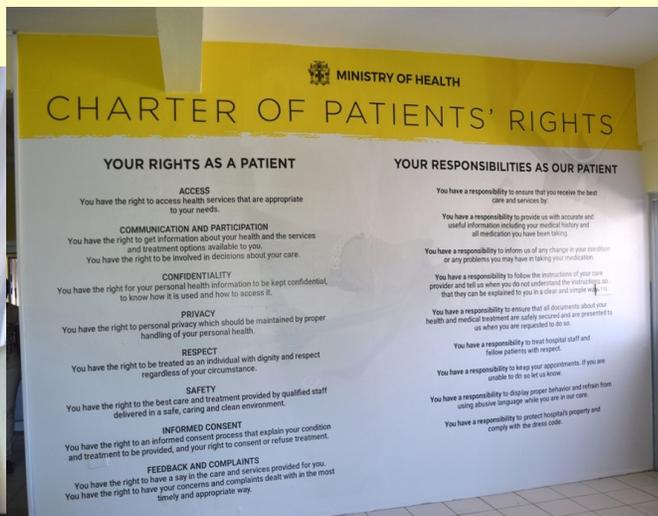


Staff Highlight

Compassionate Care & Volunteerism Programme for Black River Hospital

The recently launched Ministry of Health Compassionate Care and Volunteerism Programme seeks to utilise the services of volunteers to improve the daily care of patients in the public health system. The programme was launched at the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth on Thursday, September 20 and is geared towards enhancing psychological wellness of patients within the public health system as a means of promoting quick recovery.

Please see below highlights.





Dr. Stephen Chung

**Medical Officer
Percy Junor Hospital**

“Serving Others With God at the Forefront”



It was Steve Pavlina who said: “Hard work is painful when life is devoid of purpose. But when you live for something greater than yourself and the gratification of your own ego, then hard work becomes a labour of love.”

For Medical Officer at the Percy Junor Hospital (PJH) in Manchester, Dr. Stephen Chung, it has been a labour of love working in the medical field. Dr. Chung shares that he loves his profession, noting that: “It is a passion for me but the passion that burns even brighter within me is to serve God and in so doing treat each person I have to attend to as if they were placed there by God for me to serve them.”

Dr. Chung has been in the medical field since 2007, but has been working with the Southern Regional Health Authority since 2013, describing his experience as rewarding and invaluable. In 2017, he received the awards for Doctor of the Year and Worker of the Year from the PJH, testament of his outstanding service.

As Medical Officer, Dr. Chung notes that in addition to working on the surgical and medical wards, the operating theatre, the outpatient departments and the accident and emergency department, he is particularly involved in the pre-operative, operative and post-operative treatments and procedures of surgical patients.

Dr. Chung considers his ability to harness his knowledge over the years into his daily interactions into managing an individual’s health, a great achievement. He is advising his colleagues to remember that there is always someone or a situation to learn from.

Guided by the philosophy, “Work while it is day for the night cometh when no man can work”, Dr. Chung notes that he is described by others as helpful and meticulous. He adds that he is inspired to do his best by his family, which he describes as happy and well-balanced and also as one of his greatest achievements.

“Today we are here, tomorrow we are gone; so, we need to make the best of the opportunities that come our way, and that includes serving our fellow men with an attitude that says, “I am doing this as unto God” Dr. Chung says, adding that this is the most important life lesson he has learnt.

A lover of movies by Morgan Freeman, which he adds do not disappoint, this Medical Doctor notes that he is able to repair almost anything.

His desire for Jamaica at this time is “that we become a Godly nation, not just in words but by deeds.”

Wellness Bytes

"Earthquake Safety Tips"

Credit:
Jamaica Information
Service



Health & Wellness

General Tips:

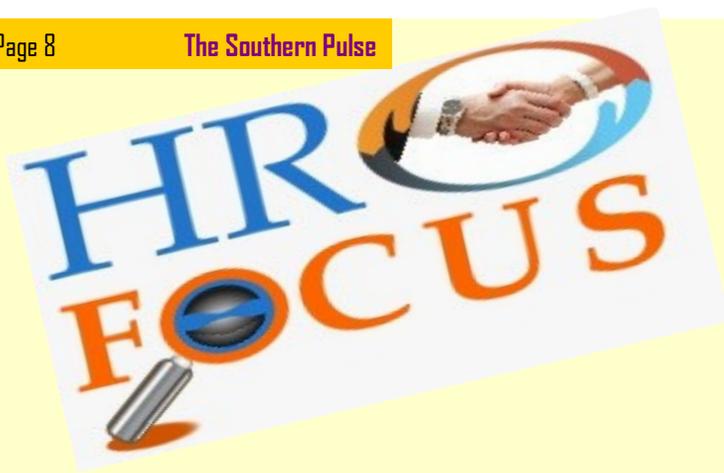
- Drop down; take cover under a desk or table and hold on.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you're sure it's safe to exit.
- Stay away from bookcases or furniture that can fall on you.
- Stay away from windows. In a high-rise building, expect the fire alarms and sprinklers to go off during a quake.
- If you are in bed, hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow.
- If you are outdoors, find a clear spot away from buildings, trees, and power lines. Drop to the ground.
- If you are in a car, slow down and drive to a clear place. Stay in the car until the shaking stops.

New seatbelt design: 45% less car accidents!!



The Lighter Side





HR And You:

“BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS”

4.2.1 Absence From Duty

i) Absence from duty due to illness or other emergencies must be communicated to the appropriate authority within the organization as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the first day of absence.

ii) Absence from duty for other reasons should be pre-arranged and authorized by the appropriate authority within the Ministry or Department.

iii) Permanent Secretaries are required to notify their respective Ministers and the designated Head of the Civil Service of any absence from duty.

4.2.2 Dress Code

Officers should be appropriately dressed for work at all times, in a manner which demonstrates professionalism, decency and a respect for colleagues, clients and members of the general public. In certain circumstances, specific attire (e.g. uniform) may be required.

Standard of Behaviour

All officers are expected to demonstrate the highest level of professional conduct and personal integrity in the performance of their duties and in serving the public. The following are some examples of behaviour which are unacceptable:-

a) Excessive noise which disturbs others - colleagues, clients, or customers; b) Illegal possession and/or use of fire-arm, weapons or explosives; c) Fighting or other forms of physical disturbance; d) Any act of sabotage; e) Careless abuse or theft of government property; f) Larceny or theft from others - colleagues, clients, customers; g) Use of obscene or threatening language; h) Insubordination (failure to obey a reasonable order from a supervisor).

4.2.4 Service Standards

i) Officers are expected to treat everyone, including other

public officers, clients and members of the general public with courtesy, respect, fairness and objectivity;

ii) Officers should display a positive attitude and be proactive in the exercise of their duties, seeking to understand and to satisfy the real needs of clients, volunteering information and services as appropriate;

iii) In the exercise of official duties, no officer shall confer any special benefit and/or give preferential treatment to anyone on the basis of any special relationship;

iv) Requests for services must be dealt with in a manner which is timely, accurate and complete;

v) The standards established in Citizens Charters must be adhered to.

4.2.5 Display and Decorations

i) Any item of display or decoration should be presented in a manner which is tidy and in good taste;

ii) Care must be exercised to avoid the display of items which may be offensive to good taste and public morals or which may reflect bias or discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or gender.



**We welcome your input.
Please submit your articles
and feedback for the
October edition to:**

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