

APRIL 2019



# The Southern Pulse

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## At-Risk Persons Encouraged to Get Influenza Vaccine

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) is encouraging at-risk persons to get the flu vaccine, which is a safe and effective vaccine that provides protection against influenza infections caused by specific vaccine strains.

Persons at-risk include: health care workers; pregnant women; children with chronic illnesses; non-health frontline workers such as personnel from the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the Jamaica Defence Force, the Department of Correctional Services and the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency; individuals who are institutionalized or in state care including inmates in correctional facilities, residents in infirmaries, golden age homes, homeless shelters, children's homes and places of safety; pregnant women (all trimesters) and adults 65 and older with chronic illnesses.



The SRHA is advising the public that the vaccine is available daily at the following Type 3 and 4 health centres in the parishes of Manchester, Clarendon and St. Elizabeth.

### Manchester

- Mandeville Comprehensive Clinic
- Christiana Health Centre
- Mile Gully Health Centre
- Porus Health Centre
- Newport Health Centre
- Cross Keys Health Centre

### St. Elizabeth

- Balaclava Health Centre
- Maggotty Health Centre
- Black River Health Centre
- Santa Cruz Centre of Excellence

- Southfield Health Centre
- Junction Health Centre

### Clarendon

- May Pen Health Centre
- Spalding Health Centre
- Main Street Health Centre
- Race Course Health Centre
- Moccho Health Centre
- Kellits Health Centre
- Frankfield Health Centre
- Summerfield Community Centre (temporarily relocated from Chapelton Community Hospital)

## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Health Administrator Renews Call for Jamaicans to Take Greater Personal Responsibility for Health Amidst High Cost for Dialysis Services



**Life-Saving Gift- \$1 Million Support for Dialysis Patients: Regional Director from the SRHA, Michael Bent (3<sup>rd</sup> right), Acting CEO for the MRH, Marcia Francis (2<sup>nd</sup> right) and Ward Manager for the haemodialysis unit at the MRH, Marika Davis-Miller (3<sup>rd</sup> left) accept a cheque valued at J\$1 million from General Manager of Jamaica Standard Products Company Ltd, John O. Minott through its annual High Mountain Coffee Road Race. Participating in the moment are: dialysis patients Marva Swaby (left) and Que Morgan.**

With an annual cost of J \$65.8 million to treat persons with kidney failure at the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH) in Manchester; Regional Director for the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Michael Bent has renewed calls for Jamaicans to take greater personal responsibility for their health.

The Regional Director was speaking at a function on Thursday, April 4 where J \$1 million was handed over to the MRH renal unit by the Jamaica Standard Products Company Ltd. (JSP) through its annual event, the High Mountain Coffee Road Race.

Mr. Bent welcomed the donation, which he noted will greatly impact the lives of the 58 patients and their families who access services from the unit's 12 dialysis stations. He commended the JSP for their selfless service over the years, noting that for the past five years, the company has donated more than J\$ 4 million to the MRH renal unit.

Pointing out that some 103 persons are on the waiting list to access haemodialysis services, the Regional Director said the demand for these services outweigh the hospital's resources and capacity; however, the hospital will make additional adjustments to accommodate an added 11 patients in need of the critical service.

"We are going to stretch the resources and our staff a little more to assist the additional patients; however, we will effectively manage the staff and machines to ensure sustainability of service" Mr. Bent said.

Mr. Bent noted that the challenges associated with non-communicable or lifestyle diseases must be tackled from several angles, including Jamaicans taking personal responsibility for their health. He pointed to several initiatives by the Ministry of Health including the Jamaica Moves programme, which encourages Jamaicans to live healthier lives through physical activity, proper nutrition and screening.

He also called on corporate Jamaica and individual Jamaicans to partner with the public health sector, noting that: "If each Jamaican can donate even \$100 monthly, it would be able to go a far way in ensuring the sustainability of the service."

Meanwhile, patient at the MRH renal unit, Que Morgan commended the staff members for delivering "first class care".

"No ordinary Jamaican can afford the cost of renal failure. I am calling on all Jamaicans to come together and contribute so we can give to this cause and also build a modern renal unit at the Mandeville Regional Hospital. I commend the staff members at the JSP who show love and commitment in staging the road race annually and in continuing to make donations to the unit" Mr. Morgan said.

## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Patients Welcome Laparoscopic Surgeries- SRHA Makes Strides Using Cutting Edge Technology

Patients in the southern region are welcoming laparoscopic surgeries which are now being offered by the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), as part of its strategic plan to continuously improve the delivery of quality and advanced health care to patients.

Laparoscopic surgery or 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.

With the advances in surgical principles and techniques, laparoscopic surgery is considered the standard of care and is being offered at the Mandeville Regional and Percy Junor Hospitals (PJH) in Manchester and the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon; following the acquisition of four state-of-the-art high definition laparoscopic towers.

In 2017, the three hospitals completed 61 surgeries, while in 2018, 201 surgeries were performed and 65 have been done so far in 2019.

Senior Registrar from the Department of General Surgery at the Mandeville Regional Hospital, Dr. Ashok Kotagiri explained that the type of surgeries performed using this type of cutting edge technology includes: laparoscopic cholecystectomy, laparoscopic appendectomy, diaphragmatic repair, hernia repair and diagnostic laparoscopy.

He added that other surgeries done regularly include: bilateral tubal ligation, hysterectomy, ovarian cystectomy, diagnostic laparoscopy and peritoneal stripping, nasal polypectomies and sinus surgeries.

As probably one of the biggest advancements in modern-day surgery, Dr. Kotagiri noted that: "Our patients have been very receptive and thankful for getting minimally invasive surgeries. Some people even ask us before we tell them; it is laparoscopic surgery I am going to get right? It is difficult to imagine health care without minimally invasive surgery going forward" "Dr. Kotagiri said.

For Regional Director of the SRHA, Michael Bent, laparoscopic surgery has proven advantages over open surgery, including less risk of bleeding, less risk of wound infections, less postoperative pain and less need for pain killers.

He added that this surgery results in quicker healing and recovery of patients which translates into shorter hospital admissions and quicker return to work and overall reduced cost of care. Mr. Bent also pointed out that the acquisition of the laparoscopic towers was funded with fees collected from individual health insurance which is a means of assisting public health care facilities to achieve their development goals.



**A team of doctors perform a bilateral inguinal hernia surgery in April 2019 at the Mandeville Regional Hospital.**



## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### 212 Students and 52 Teachers Now Trained as Ambassadors for Healthier Lifestyle in Schools



Students and facilitators participate in a session at the camp, which informed the students about the importance of physical activity.

212 students and 52 teachers from the parishes of Clarendon, St. Elizabeth and Manchester are now trained ambassadors who will strengthen the capacity of their schools to become a healthier setting for working and learning.

117 students and 25 teachers from 29 high schools were trained, while 95 students and 25 teachers were trained from 14 primary schools. The ambassadors were trained as part of the Jamaica Moves in Schools programme, which is a partnership between the Ministries of Health and

Education, through the Jamaica Moves initiative.

Regional Health Education and Promotion Officer at the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) Faith Lyttle explained that as ambassadors the students and teachers will now strengthen the health capacity of their schools through a programme designed by the Ministries of Health and Education.

“They will do this through several initiatives and by following the guidelines of the designed programme. The schools will host fruit days, water days and vegetable days and will also have three five minutes physical activity breaks daily. There is also a one hour physical activity session which will be done once per week. The programme also encourages schools to follow the Government’s policy which restricts certain types of sugary drinks in schools” Mrs. Lyttle explained.

The Health Education and Promotion Officer noted that a teacher at each of the participating 43 schools is assigned to strengthen the school’s health advisory committee which will steer the programme. She added that ambassadors will encourage their peers through small groups to make healthier lifestyle changes.

The Jamaica Moves in Schools programme aims to increase the number of students engaging in moderate level of physical activity by five percent; increase the number of students that make healthier food choices by five percent; increase the number of schools that have integrated identification of at-risk students for non-communicable diseases and facilitate appropriate intervention by 20 percent from baseline.

The ambassadors were trained in three phases at overnight camps, which focused on the importance of healthy eating, physical activity and screening.

## In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### \$200 Million Cataract Surgeries Performed by Committed Overseas Team



**Representatives from the Mind, Body and Soul Ministry, the Kiran and Pallavi Patel Family Foundation and staff members from the SRHA and MRH on the final day of the medical mission on Monday, April 29.**

For five years, the Florida-based Mind, Body and Soul Ministry (MBSM) has been performing hundreds of free cataract surgeries at the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH) in Manchester, resulting in \$200 million of savings over the period for the MRH.

The MBSM in collaboration with the Kiran and Pallavi Patel Family Foundation has performed 1,409 surgeries to date. In 2014, the mission performed 225 cataract surgeries and 227 in 2016. Two hundred and fifty one surgeries were done in 2017, 338 in 2018 and 368 performed at the mission held on April 27-29, 2019.

Co-founder of MBSM, Horace Morgan, explained that his organization was created to make a difference in the lives of those who are underserved, adding that the medical team comprises persons primarily from India and the USA, with only two Jamaicans, himself and his wife Hillary.

“Our very first mission was in 2014 and since then we have had very successful missions. I must say that the team at the MRH Ophthalmology department comprises some of the best doctors and nurses we have encountered in all of Jamaica. We will keep coming back. This is a well-oiled machine and the team makes our jobs easier” Mr. Morgan added.

Regional Technical Director at the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Dr. Vitillius Holder explained that cataract is one of the most common eye conditions that contribute to more than 50 percent of blindness. “The team assists the hospital and the southern region immensely in reducing the back log of cases. We are indeed grateful and wish them God’s continued blessings for their selfless service and sacrifice” Dr. Holder said.

Consultant Ophthalmologist at the MRH, Dr. Gavin Henry explained that the hospital is extremely grateful for the continued assistance from the team, pointing out that planning for the mission begins from as far as September 2018.

“The three day process for this mission was very smooth and patients came from as early as 3:00 a.m. to access services. We have patients coming from as far as western Jamaica because of the reputation that we have gained over the years of offering good service” Dr. Henry said.

Free optometry services and glasses were also offered as part of mission.

## Health Ministry Corner

**Welcome to the Ministry of Health and Wellness**



# MINISTRY OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

Effective Tuesday, May 7, 2019, the Ministry of Health is officially the Ministry of Health and Wellness. The name change is a part of the overall vision for public health and the role and function of the Ministry in driving behaviour change towards personal responsibility for health outcomes.

Wellness is one aspect of the overall health responsibilities and marks a focused approach to promoting, in a more significant way, the need for preventive measures in achieving health outcomes. As officially defined by the World Health Organisation, health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Accordingly, the Ministry's mandate rests in the creation of a state of well-being for the Jamaican people.

The new name is not only symbolic, but is a direct indication of the Government's message for an increased focus on health promotion and prevention and the creation of wellness. This is to be supported by the requirement for greater involvement of the individual in their health choices through healthy lifestyle interventions. The Ministry has also developed a draft 10-Year Strategic Plan - Vision for Health 2030, which takes into account this new direction for the Ministry. This plan will be shared with you for discussion and input.

By highlighting the wellness aspects of health, the Ministry will also be increasing the promotion of:

- Healthy lifestyle choices;
- Healthy eating habits;
- Healthy sexual and reproductive decisions for men and women;
- Improvement in health-seeking behaviours;
- Life cycle approaches to health promotion and prevention strategies; and
- Improvement in early detection of NCDs through improvements in early screening.

Welcome to the Ministry of Health & Wellness!

Dunstan E. Bryan  
Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Health & Wellness





## Cynthia Carter

**Manchester Health Department  
Administrative Assistant**

**“Excellence at all Times”**



At a time when health professionals are continuously encouraged to deliver care with compassion and excellence, Cynthia Carter is resolute in having excellence as a habit and not as an act. In fact, this Administrative Assistant to the Parish Manager, who executes her duties at the Manchester Health Department, believes that excellence must be taken everywhere, adding that, “excellence must be done at all times and in all things, with the assurance that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Though her tenure with the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) first began in January 2000 for 11 months and then again in 2017, Ms. Carter has been making a positive impact, through her humble, quiet and compassionate demeanor. She explains that her experience with the SRHA has been very interesting, noting that: “having to interact with all groups, including external stakeholders and clients demands that poise, dignity and professionalism are employed at all times.” She adds that by God’s grace, she strives to be consistent with these attributes.

An internationally certified Professional Secretary, Ms. Carter points out that this feat was achieved at the first attempt in 1994, when she achieved 100 percent pass. She notes that the course was being offered for the first time at the Management Institute for National Development, with 15 participants; however, only four finished and were all successful.

Ms. Carter points out that other accomplishments she is very proud of includes: completing with distinction the Supervisory Management and Advance Computer courses at the UWI, Open Campus, attaining certification in Guidance and Counselling, successfully completing courses in Public Speaking; Protocol and Social Graces, Dress and Deportment, Time Management, Quality Customer Service and Marketing Techniques.

She adds that she also successfully liaised with HEART Trust/NTA and undertook the planning and coordinating for the institution to partner with the Manchester Health Services in the delivery of the Event Planning and Coordinators’ Course, which resulted in three cohorts of staff members (2 from MHS and 1 from SRHA Regional Office) successfully completing the course; the first such training for the parish.

“Life without a personal relationship with God is meaningless,” is one life lesson, which Ms. Carter regards as most important. She believes that everyone should seek to establish a personal relationship with the Almighty God as, “life is very uncertain, therefore keep short accounts with God and man; hold material things loosely, treat people well, you never know how the tides of life will turn. Very recently I have seen evidence of this statement, years ago there was a young lady whom I took under my wings and walked with her through some difficult times. I did this from a Christ-like perspective, a heart of love and concern. To my surprise she was featured in the Gleaner and in the article she mentioned what I did for her. This moved me to tears, I felt so humbled! After so many years she never forgot.”

With several recognitions including outstanding leadership for Chair of the Civic and Program & Entertainment Committees– Manchester Chapter, JASAP, Certificate of Recognition from the Office of the Prime Minister/Cabinet Office for Outstanding Secretarial Service, MIND, Parish Manager’s Award, MHD- 2017, among others, Ms. Carter believes that “experience is the greatest teacher, when it is finished with you, you will never forget the lessons you have learnt.”

# Wellness Bytes

"Influenza A"

Credit:  
Ministry of Health



## Health & Wellness

# Influenza A (H1N1)

Influenza A (H1N1) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by a virus which is easily spread from person-to-person.

## How is Influenza A (H1N1) spread?

- Breathing in the virus when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- Contact with objects that have been recently touched by an infected person e.g. door knob and telephone

## SYMPTOMS:

- Fever (but not always)
- Sore throat
- Watery, red eyes
- Headache
- Diarrhoea
- Cough
- Runny and stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Extreme tiredness
- Nausea and vomiting

## PREVENTION:

**COVER  
COUGH &  
SNEEZE**



**CLEAN  
HANDS WITH  
SOAP & WATER**



**CONTROL  
SPREAD OF GERMS**

- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with dirty hands
- Avoid close contact with persons who have flu-like symptoms eg. hand-shaking, hugging, kissing

## If you are sick:

- Stay home until you are well
- Drink lots of fluid
- Rest
- If you have SEVERE flu-like symptoms, contact your doctor immediately.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

- 1-888- ONE LOVE (1-888-663-5683) or 633-7914
- Your Parish Health Department
- Website: [www.moh.gov.jm](http://www.moh.gov.jm)



@themohgovjm



## Salary!



**What I Get**

**What My  
Friends Think**

**What My  
Relatives  
Think**

## The Lighter Side





# Disaster Preparedness Tips

Credit:  
Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management



## At the Start of the Hurricane Season

- Check thoroughly the roof of your house, hurricane shutters, hooks and latches and repair where necessary.
- Make sure that galvanized sheeting on the roof of your house is properly fastened.
- Keep in stock extra plastic bags and sheets of plastic. Plastic is essential to prevent important documents, paintings, equipment and furniture from getting wet.
- Keep handy a supply of lumbar, plywood, timber, etc. for battening down purposes.
- Trim trees that touch power lines or hang over the house and other buildings.
- Make sure that emergency cooking facilities such as coal stoves are in good working condition as these may be necessary.
- Make sure you have a supply of kerosene and coal. Keep coal dry by wrapping in a plastic bag or other waterproof material.
- Latch down securely all small buildings in the yard such as outdoor kitchens, pit latrines, tool sheds, barns, etc.
- Store extra food, especially things that can be eaten without cooking or which need very little preparation. Electricity may be off during a hurricane, leaving you without refrigeration.
- Place emergency food supply in a waterproof container and store in a closed box, cupboard or trunk.

- Make sure you have emergency equipment in your home. These include waterboots, raincoats, flashlights, batteries, portable radio, kerosene lamps and matches.

Have simple first-aid equipment such as iodine, bandages, eye lotion, etc. at home.

## During a Hurricane

- Do not go outside unless it is absolutely necessary. When the winds get very strong, you are in danger of being hit by flying objects.
- Children should not be taken outside, since they may be in danger of being blown away.
- If you are away from home, remain where you are until the hurricane has passed. Many people have lost their lives trying to go from one place to another.
- Keep a hurricane lamp burning, as it may make the night more tolerable.
- If the house shows signs of breaking up, stay under a table or stand in a sturdy closet.
- Be prepared for material falling from the ceiling.
- If your glass windows have not been boarded up, place a large heavy object in front of the window to protect yourself and others from splintering glass.
- Be calm! Your ability to act logically is important.

Listen to the radio for information on what is happening.



# HR And You:

"HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE"

**12.1 AUTHORITY** The Ministry with responsibility for the Public Service has the authority for establishing the policies and standards to ensure the health, safety and well-being of employees at the workplace.

## 12.2 ADMINISTRATION

- i) Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments are required to implement the established policies and procedures to enhance productivity, improve customer service and safeguard the well-being of employees.
- ii) Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments should take steps to provide a working environment, which is safe, environmentally friendly and accessible to persons who might be physically challenged.
- iii) Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments should designate a senior member of management with responsibility for health and safety matters in the Ministry and its Departments.

## 12.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES

Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments should seek to access and make available to employees, services in consultation, referral and counselling on a range of health and life style issues such as:

- a) Occupational Health b) Physical fitness c) Sexually Transmitted Diseases d) Domestic Violence e) Mental Health f) Stress Management g) Depression h) Substance Abuse i) Violence in the Workplace j) Parenting Skills k) Life Skills l) Personal Hygiene

### 12.3.2 Staff Welfare

i) The Ministry with responsibility for the Public Service should continue to explore and expand the services it provides for the welfare and wellbeing of employees such as:

- a. Commuting Assistance b. Lunch rooms and canteens c. Child care facilities, including facilities for breast-feeding

mothers d. Flexible work arrangements (ref. Hours of Work)

ii) Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments should encourage and support activities which contribute to employee well-being and welfare, such as:

- a. Organized social activities b. Self-learning centres

### 12.3.3 Disaster Preparedness

- i) Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments should ensure that information and training exercises are provided to employees periodically, based upon the plans and procedures developed by the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM).
- ii) Regular drills should be conducted to ensure that employees become familiar with the procedures and remain alert in the event of a disaster or an emergency.
- iii) The plans and procedures should be posted at prominent locations as constant reminders.

## SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

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

**Latoya Laylor Brown, Public Relations Officer**

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

**Deadline: June 4, 2019**

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