

JUNE 2020



The Southern Pulse

Inside This Issue

In the News: SRHA	2
Let's Meet: "Most Courteous Employee" Suzette Ferguson	3
Wellness Bytes	4
Disaster Preparedness Tips	5
HR Focus	6

SRHA Calls for Public Support to Improve Food Safety

Against the background of the celebration of World Food Safety Day to be commemorated on Sunday, June 7, the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) is calling on the support of the public to successfully safeguard food safety.

According to Regional Food Safety Coordinator for the SRHA, Dahlia Plunkett, "the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over 600 million people in the world fall ill after eating contaminated food and 420,000 die every year."

She noted that food borne illness is still significant and as the world commemorates World Food Safety Day under the theme, "Food Safety, Everyone's Business," she is appealing to everyone to make food safety their business.

Ms. Plunkett stated that the SRHA provides oversight and monitors more than 7,695 food handling establishments and more than 20,000 food handlers in the parishes of St. Elizabeth, Manchester and Clarendon, with a 90 percent compliance rate. She notes that, while this is a good achievement, the support of the public is critical to achieving 100 percent compliance.

"As we work towards improving others that have fallen short, we are cognizant of the importance of partnership in this regard. The undeniable support of the public is critical to successfully safeguard our Jamaican people through the safe food handling practices employed in the preparation of food for human consumption" Ms. Plunkett added.

The Food Safety Coordinator pointed out that as the country prepares to engage the public in new ways amid the COVID-19 pandemic, she is encouraging the public to remain vigilant as they produce, prepare and consume food.

"As Public Health Inspectors, we are committed to creating the balance between ensuring the health and safety of our people and their livelihood through the provision of safe foods for our consumers" Ms. Plunkett said.



Public Health Inspector from the Clarendon Health Services, Debbian Grant (left) demonstrates how to dress properly in food establishments by covering the hair and wearing the proper clothing and foot wear. Participating in the demonstration at a food handlers training session is Chinese national Shuging Wu.

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

CB Group Provides Essential Workers With Cooked Meals



The CB Group through its “Recover Together” initiative has donated 950 cooked meals for essential frontline workers within the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), which administers public healthcare in Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth. The first batch of lunches was distributed on Tuesday, June 16 to the health-care workers in Manchester, followed by distribution in Clarendon on June 17 and in St. Elizabeth on June 19.

Pictured here are: (left to right): Regional Director for the SRHA, Michael Bent, Nurse at the Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH) Damani Turner, Patient Care Assistant at the MRH, Tracy-Ann Scott, CB Group Outreach Coordinator, Roxanne Isaacs and CB Group Sales Representative, Admarian Davis.

The CB Group through its “Recover Together” initiative, which is two-fold, is sharing the company’s gratitude to Jamaica’s frontline workers who have been working diligently through the pandemic. The company explained that it is also boosting the revival of the local restaurant industry following the impact of COVID-19, by employing restaurants in close proximity to the health facilities to prepare the meals.

Regional Director for the SRHA, Michael Bent (left) accepts the donation of cooked meals for essential frontline workers within the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) from the CB Group Outreach Coordinator, Roxanne Isaacs. The first batch of lunches was distributed on Tuesday, June 16 to the healthcare workers in Manchester, followed by distribution in Clarendon on June 17 and in St. Elizabeth on June 19.

The SRHA, which administers public healthcare in Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth received 950 cooked meals from the CB Group through its “Recover Together” initiative. The project, which is two-fold, is dedicated to sharing the company’s appreciation to Jamaica’s frontline workers who have been working through the pandemic and to also boost the revival of the local restaurant industry, following the impact of COVID-19.





Suzette Ferguson

**Hospital Attendant
Black River Hospital**

“Most Courteous Employee”



Helpful, friendly, kind and sociable with a sound work ethic are some of the words and phrase that would come to mind when someone mentions the name Suzette Ferguson. A hospital attendant since 1999 at the Black River Hospital (BRH) in St. Elizabeth, Ms. Ferguson is inspired by God and strives to do her very best.

As a hospital attendant, Suzette shares that some of her responsibilities at the BRH include assisting patients with personal hygiene needs and tasks, ensuring the hospital environment such as bathrooms and furniture are clean and suitable for use, as well as making the patients feel comfortable and cared for. She adds that she loves her job, as “I have gained a lot of experience and learnt things that I didn’t know.”

In keeping with her helpful nature, Ms. Ferguson points out that since working at the BRH, she has met a lot of people and thoroughly enjoys helping others in whatever way she can as she believes that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

“The first thing I think when I am coming to work is to do my job to the best of my ability. At the end of the day you can find yourself in the hospital and you would want somebody to take care of you and you have clean places to use. If my relative should come to the hospital, they should be able to say, yes the bathroom and floor was well cleaned and I was assisted with anything that I needed”, she says.

When she is not at work, one can find her in her garden, on her farm, in the kitchen or cleaning as she finds all these activities very enjoyable and really loves them. Ms. Ferguson’s personality also makes her a favourite among her colleagues. She shares that whenever she is absent from work, when she would return to colleagues expressing how much they missed having her around.

Since working at the BRH, Ms. Ferguson has been awarded Worker of the Year in 2010 and 2017. She also has been recognized as the Most Courteous Employee in the BRH Smile Campaign.

“Well to my colleagues, when you’re at work, just do your work as how you’re supposed to do it”, she said when advising her colleagues on their work ethic.

Her wish for Jamaica, especially at this time with the COVID-19 pandemic, is for the society to be like it once was. “My wish is for us to come back to the real Jamaica. Where everyone is happy with each other, we are friendly towards each other and when you go on the streets there is no fear in your heart. I would love Jamaica to come back to that standard where people love and respect each other” she says.

Wellness Bytes

"Coronavirus"

Credit:
Ministry of Health
and Wellness



What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

What is a novel coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

Can humans become infected with a novel coronavirus of animal source?

Detailed investigations found that SARS-CoV was transmitted from civet cats to humans in China in 2002 and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to humans in Saudi Arabia in 2012. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. As surveillance improves around the world, more coronaviruses are likely to be identified.

What are the symptoms of someone infected with a coronavirus?

It depends on the virus, but common signs include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Can coronaviruses be transmitted from person to person?

Yes, some coronaviruses can be transmitted from person to

person, usually after close contact with an infected patient, for example, in a household workplace, or health care centre.

Is there a vaccine for a novel coronavirus?

When a disease is new, there is no vaccine until one is developed. It can take a number of years for a new vaccine to be developed.

Is there a treatment for a novel coronavirus?

There is no specific treatment for disease caused by a novel coronavirus. However, many of the symptoms can be treated and therefore treatment based on the patient's clinical condition. Moreover, supportive care for infected persons can be highly effective.

What can I do to protect myself?

Standard recommendations to reduce exposure to and transmission of a range of illnesses include maintaining basic hand and respiratory hygiene, and safe food practices and avoiding close contact, when possible, with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

Are health workers at risk from a novel coronavirus?

Yes, they can be, as health care workers come into contact with patients more often than the general public WHO recommends that health care workers consistently apply appropriate infection prevention and control measures.

Disaster Preparedness Tips

"Corona-Virus Preparedness Tips"

Credit:
Ministry of Health & Wellness

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



Plan



Prepare



Recover



HOW & WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

/// COVID-19



WET HANDS



APPLY SOAP



RUB HANDS PALM TO PALM



LATHER THE BACKS OF YOUR HANDS



SCRUB BETWEEN YOUR FINGERS



RUB THE BACKS OF FINGERS ON THE OPPOSING PALMS



CLEAN THUMBS



WASH FINGERNAILS AND FINGERTIPS



RINSE HANDS



DRY WITH A SINGLE USE TOWEL



USE THE TOWEL TO TURN OFF THE FAUCET



YOUR HANDS ARE CLEAN

After coughing or sneezing

After taking public transportation

When caring for the sick

Before, during and after you prepare and eat food

After toilet use

When hands are dirty

After handling animals or animal waste

WHEN



/// COVID-19

WHAT IS QUARANTINE?

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of persons who may have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become ill. It lasts long enough to ensure the persons are not showing symptoms of the disease.

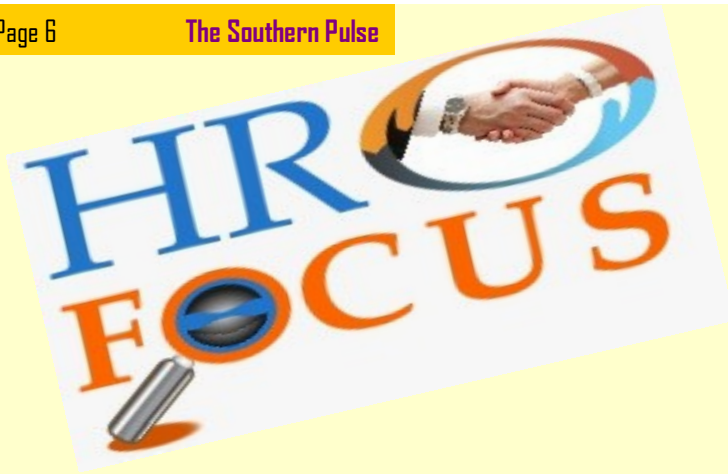


NEED THAT HAIRCUT



The Lighter Side





The Ministry of Health and Wellness is encouraging Jamaicans who may be experiencing anxiety or stress out of concern over the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to contact its mental health line at 888 NEW LIFE (888-639-5433).

“Anxiety and stress are normal responses to a public health challenge of this magnitude. Among other things, COVID-19 has required that people self-quarantine or otherwise physically distance themselves from others. This can be stressful for anyone and in some people can lead to feelings of isolation,” said Director of Mental Health and Substance Abuse at the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Dr Kevin Goulbourne.

“We urge Jamaicans to talk about their fears and anxiety. It is amazing how therapeutic it can be to share your feelings and with someone who takes the time to listen. The mental health team at the Ministry is here to listen and to support our Jamaicans through this public health challenge. We therefore welcome those calls,” he added.

It is now more important than ever that Jamaicans take care of their emotional health and there are a number of ways that they can do that from home.

HR And You:

“COPING WITH COVID-19”

- **Stay in touch with friends and family.** Give them a call or reach out to them via social media.
- **Take a break from social media.** While social media is a good way to stay in touch with friends and family, the excessive use of social media has been known to fuel anxiety among some persons.
- **Keep a journal.** It is always a good idea to have an outlet for self-expression. A journal is a good way to do so.
- **Exercise.** Feel free to work up a sweat, increasing, in the process, the body’s ‘feel good’ chemicals known as endorphins.
- **Smile.** A smile, research has shown, can work wonders in helping to reduce blood pressure while improving your mood and reducing stress.

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

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

Latoya Laylor Brown, Public Relations Officer

Email: latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

Like and follow us:

Facebook: [southernregionalhealthauthority](https://www.facebook.com/southernregionalhealthauthority)

Instagram: [southernregionalhealthJA](https://www.instagram.com/southernregionalhealthJA)

Twitter: [JaRegional](https://twitter.com/JaRegional)