



Volume 11

Issue 11

November 2025

Surviving Hurricane Melissa in the South



Team members from the Southern Regional Health Authority, along with the Jamaica Defence and Jamaica Constabulary Force and community members making the path clear to St. Elizabeth following the devastation by Hurricane Melissa.

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In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Surviving Hurricane Melissa in the South

A huge thank you and kudos to the brave team members of the Southern Regional Health Authority, particularly the fleet team, and other administrative staff, who chopped their way through the debris and disastrous impact left by Hurricane Melissa. The team spent days clearing the path, before they could reach to the staff and clients at the Black River Hospital, to assist them. We salute them, in addition to the Jamaica Defence and Jamaica Constabulary Force and community members, who demonstrated the true Jamaica spirit of love. See below highlights.



In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

CMO & Team Visits Southern Region To Assess Public Health Response Following Hurricane Melissa

Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Bisasor-McKenzie and a team from the Ministry of Health & Wellness visited the SRHA Regional Office and the Mandeville Regional Hospital on Thursday, October 30, to assess the team's public health response to the hurricane.

The discussions focused on coordinating movement and care of patients from facilities affected by the hurricane. The team also visited the Mandeville Regional Hospital, to assess the hospital's response, which included the accommodation of patients transferred from the Black River Hospital. Please see below highlights.



In The News: Southern regional Health Authority

Management Team Visits LTH Following Hurricane Melissa

On Friday, October 31, following the passage of Hurricane Melissa, Regional Director Mr. Michael Bent and Senior Director of Corporate Services Mrs. Marcia Francis-Thomas from the SRHA Regional Office visited the team at the Lionel Town Hospital. Together with the hospital CEO, Ms. Nadine Preddie, the team visited staff members to ensure their safety and offer encouragement and support.

Mr. Bent expressed heartfelt appreciation to healthcare workers who served throughout the hurricane and reaffirmed the authority's commitment to maintaining full operations, despite damages to some facilities. He also shared that the work of healthcare professionals extends beyond the disaster itself, as recovery and care efforts continue.

Please see below photo highlights.



Facilities on the Move

Heartbreaking Scenes From the Impact of Hurricane Melissa on St. Elizabeth Facilities

Heartbreaking scenes from Day 7, post Hurricane Melissa at the Black River Hospital and the Black River Health Centre in St. Elizabeth. Staff members share that these scenes are good ones compared to those from the immediate Aftermath of the hurricane.

Please see below photo highlight.



Facilities on the Move

Psychosocial Support for St. Elizabeth

Psychologists from the Southern Regional Health Authority, together with members of the Jamaica Defence Force, the Jamaica Psychological Society, the United Nations Population Fund, Tea House Therapy, the Caribbean Technical Assistance and Education Centre for Health and the Jamaica Constabulary Force, visited the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth to provide psychological support and deliver care packages to patients, staff, and first responders affected by Hurricane Melissa.

The team also reached out to shelters at Crawford Primary and Galleon Beach in St. Elizabeth, offering counselling, relief supplies, and practical assistance, with special care for the elderly, the sick, the mentally ill, and children. Amid the devastation, the resilience and gratitude of the communities continue to inspire hope.

The team made a two-day visit to the parish on November 3 and 4 and continued their support. See below highlights.



Facilities on the Move

SRHA Receives Major Hurricane Relief Support From AIDS Healthcare Foundation

A sincere thank you to the AIDS Healthcare Foundation for its generous support towards the recovery efforts of the Southern Regional Health Authority, following Hurricane Melissa.

Their contribution of water, tarpaulins, generators, sanitary items, food supplies and other essentials will provide critical relief to our staff, their families and clients who have been most severely affected.

This support will help us to restore key services across our health centres and continue delivering care to the communities we serve.

This partnership is strengthening our recovery and ensuring that vital healthcare remains accessible during this challenging period. See below photo highlights.



Thank you for standing with us as we rebuild together.

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Israeli Medical Team Supports Southern Region's Hurricane Recovery Efforts

A special thank you to the medical delegation from Israel who was in Jamaica providing humanitarian relief support in response to the impact of Hurricane Melissa. The initiative, organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness complemented Jamaica's response by providing specialised medical expertise and technical assistance in affected areas.

A team including Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Bisasor-McKenzie, the management team from the Mandeville Regional Hospital and the Israeli delegation met on Thursday, November 6, to discuss the response and support, which will be provided to the Mandeville Regional Hospital in Manchester.

The SRHA expressed sincere appreciation to the delegation for their compassion, expertise and commitment to patient care, after concluding their support on November 17, 2025. The team also donated small medical equipment to the hospital.

See highlights below from both occasions.



In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Southern Parks and Markets Team Helps Black River Hospital to Clean Up Following Hurricane Melissa Devastation

The Southern Parks and Markets (SPM) team visited the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth on Saturday, November 8, to help clean up and restore the facility after Hurricane Melissa.

From clearing debris to bringing order and renewed hope, their hard work is helping the hospital see a clearer path forward. A heartfelt thank you to the SPM team, who showed up to make a difference. Together, we're bringing back a sense of normalcy and community spirit. See below highlights.



In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Maternal Health Outreach Reaches Communities in Southern Jamaica

Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Wellness Hon. Krystal Lee joined health teams in Black River for the first in a series of maternal health outreach activities across southern and western Jamaica in November.

Mothers received vital services — from health checks and counselling to ultrasounds and care packages with hygiene items, food supplies, and mosquito nets.

With mobile clinics, outreach teams and community health workers on the ground, the Ministry is ensuring mothers in hurricane-affected areas continue to get the care they deserve.



In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Public Urged to Stop Attacking Vector Control Workers

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) is urging members of the public to desist from attacking vector control workers, while carrying out their duties.

The call comes against the background of a stoning incident of a vector control team in Siloah, St. Elizabeth on the evening of Tuesday, November 18.

The team stopped to address a machine malfunction, when one team member was struck on the shoulder by a stone. Another team member was then hit and the team retreated after observing additional stones being thrown at them.

Two team members suffered physical injuries and pain and had to seek medical attention. The matter was reported to the police.

The SRHA is reminding the public that vector control workers are properly identified by uniforms and identification cards and operate from marked Ministry of Health & Wellness vehicles.

The chemical used in the fogging process is certified and approved for use, and is safe to operate or be applied around an environment with residents.

Additionally, the team has ramped up its environmental health activities to minimize adverse health related outcomes in the parish. They have been doing health education, inspections, activities and assessments in areas of food safety, waste water management, water quality monitoring, vector control (fogging, oiling) and general sanitation.

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Environmental Health Teams Strengthen Community Safety After Hurricane Melissa

Following the passage of Hurricane Melissa, the environmental health teams have been on the ground helping to restore safe living conditions in affected communities.

The team has been doing health education, inspections, activities and assessments in areas of food safety, waste water management, water quality monitoring, vector control (fogging, oiling) and general sanitation.

The team from the St. Elizabeth Health Department was in the Brompton area, supported by the Manchester Health Department.

They identified several sanitation challenges across the community, including multiple areas of mosquito breeding. Immediate treatment was carried out to reduce the risk of mosquito-borne illnesses.

This work is vital as post-hurricane conditions significantly increase the likelihood of water contamination, vector breeding and environmental hazards. Prompt intervention protects residents, reduces disease risk and supports a safer recovery for the parish and the wider region. See photo highlights.



Facilities on the Move

Minister Lee Assists With Distribution of Care Packages to Staff Impacted by Hurricane Melissa

On Monday, November 24, State Minister in the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Ms. Krystal Lee, joined Mrs. Simone Hibbert, Senior Human Resource Officer with responsibility for Staff Welfare, and her team from the Southern Regional Health Authority Regional Office to deliver care packages to healthcare workers affected by Hurricane Melissa.

The outreach began at the Mandeville Regional Hospital, continued at the Manchester Health Department, and concluded at the Lionel Town Hospital. A total of 127 care packages with essential supplies were distributed. This initiative marks the first of three months of support, with distributions scheduled twice per month.

The SRHA previously delivered care packages to staff at the Black River Hospital and the St Elizabeth Health Department. Team members affected by the hurricane has also been receiving psychosocial support.

Please see below highlights.



Facilities on the Move

Chief Medical Officer and Team Visits St. Elizabeth

Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Bisasor-McKenzie and a team from the Ministry of Health & Wellness, were in St. Elizabeth on November 13, visiting the Emergency Operations Centre, the Mental Health Clinic at the Black River Health Centre and the Black River Hospital to support clean-up efforts and review the wards at the hospital, as part of restoration efforts of our health facilities after Hurricane Melissa.

See below highlights.



Facilities on the Move

Supporting our Youngest Minds Through the Recovery Process

The Southern Regional Health Authority joined partners at the temporary school space in Black River, bringing structured play therapy to children affected by Hurricane Melissa. Led by Regional Clinical Psychologist Amanda Fraser, the programme engages students ages 3 to 12 through puzzles, role play and interactive activities that help them express emotions, rebuild confidence and cope with recent challenges.

A special thank you to our educators and parents for trusting us as we provide a safe and nurturing environment for recovery, growth and healing.

See photo highlights from an outreach session conducted on November 25, 2025, as part of SRHA's ongoing post-disaster psychosocial support efforts.



Regional Director's Post Hurricane Melissa Message

Healing, Hope, and Resilience in the Aftermath of Hurricane Melissa

Colleagues, without a doubt, none of us could have predicted the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Melissa. We were cautioned of its potential damage but what Jamaica endured, is simply unbelievable.

As a country, we have all been impacted, but some of our people have experienced immeasurable loss and devastation. This is truly a heart breaking experience.

To our colleagues who have been particularly affected in St. Elizabeth and other parts of the region, we want you to know that as a health authority, we are truly saddened by what you and your families are facing. You have lost homes, assets, offices but based on my interactions, you have not lost your hope and resilience.

In fact, despite the devastating conditions of some persons have showed up to work to provide care for others. This is nothing short of heroic, a trait that our healthcare heroes have continued to display over the years.

Four our team members who have been severely displaced, please know that as a region, we will continue to provide the necessary support as we plan our way forward. We will continue to utilize the available channels we have in place to provide welfare and psychological support.

I also want to emphasize with the team in St. Elizabeth on the passing of Mr. Denton Patrick, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Technician, who was assigned to the St. Elizabeth Health Department, who died before the hurricane.

We extend sincere condolences to his family, colleagues and friends as we recognize how significant his loss is to them. We pray that during this difficult time, you will find comfort in cherished memories and the impact of his service.

To our colleagues in Clarendon and Manchester, I pray you will keep strong as we continue to provide support to our colleagues who have been severely impacted. Thank you for the care you have shown during this difficult phase of our country's history.

It is a challenging time, but let us heal and recover together; as families, as a nation and as a Regional Health Authority.

Regional Director
Michael Bent

A Life of Service

Honouring the Life and Service of Mr. Denton Patrick



Mr. Denton Patrick

AC & Refrigeration Technician
St. Elizabeth Health Department

The Southern Regional Health Authority is deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Denton Patrick, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Technician, who was assigned to the St. Elizabeth Health Department.

We extend sincere condolences to his family as we recognize how significant his loss is to them.

To his family, friends, and colleagues, we pray that during this difficult time, you will find comfort in cherished memories and in the fact that he embodied excellence, kindness and a strong work ethic.

We will continue to support you as you process this loss and go through this difficult time.

May his soul rest in peace.



HR And You:

“Interim Corner”

INTERIM CORNER

WHY SHOULD I MAKE A COMMENT BEFORE SUBMITTING?

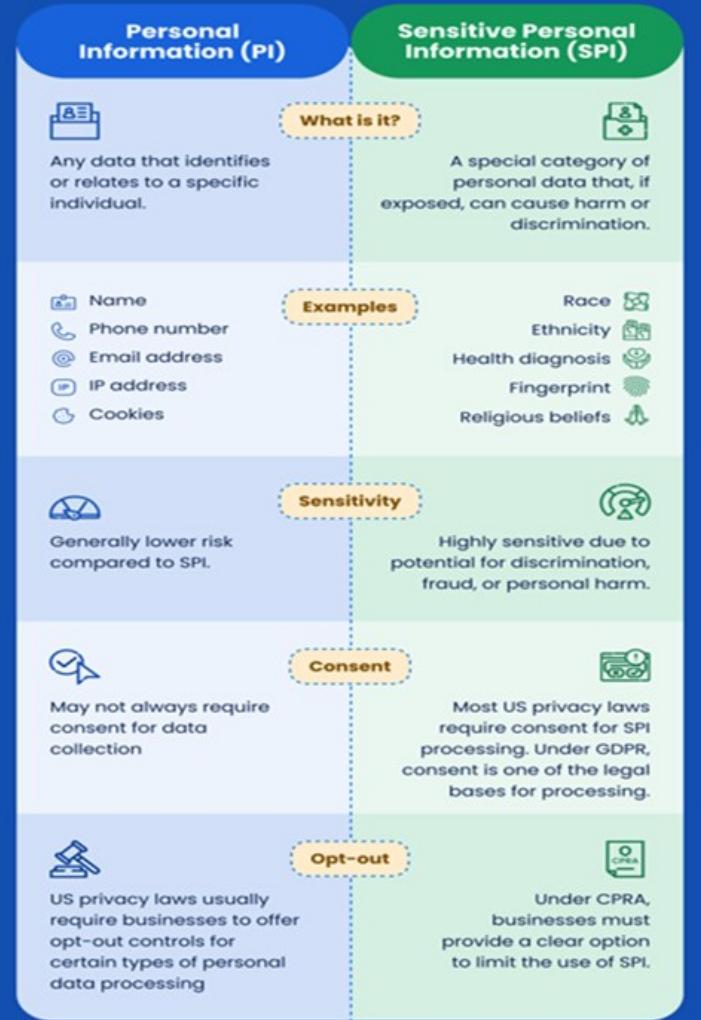
Supervisor: To summarize the employee's overall performance.

Employee: To respond to the feedback provided by the supervisor and share your thoughts on the assessment.

Reviewing Officer: To review the assessment, ensure fairness and equity, and discuss any discrepancy identified with the relevant parties.

HRM&D Unit

PERSONAL VS SENSITIVE INFORMATION



Infohub

Wellness Bytes

“Occupational Sitting and its Hidden Risk”



The industrial revolution of the 19th century led to many companies growing exponentially, increasing revenue and paper work. The owners of these businesses started to employ large quantities of a new category of worker to manage all this paper work, entire floors and buildings were dedicated to house these workers in confined spaces called offices. Over time more and more people were drawn to them because they were seen as profitable jobs with perceived esteem. These jobs reduce work related accidents; however, the office worker was faced with new dangers. It would take some time before researchers identified these risks. In the 1950s the number of office jobs increased by 83% while physically active jobs plummeted by 50 % to less than 20% today. The average human sits between 6 - 10 hrs. per day, most of which take place at work. This occupation puts the individual at a 16% risk of death from any cause and a 34% higher risk of cardiovascular disease-related death, compared to those who have less sedentary jobs.

How does prolong sitting affects the body

Sitting in itself is a welcome break, so why can it be so problematic? Sitting jobs require less muscular effort, so when you sit for long periods of time blood can start to pool in your legs because gravity pulls blood downward and your calf muscles which normally act as a “pump” to push blood back up to the heart are inactive. This lack of physical activity leads to swelling, discomfort, or a “heavy” feeling in the legs which may increase risk of blood clots that can even make their way to the brain causing a stroke.

Occupation sitting over extended periods may also lead to a decrease in calorie expenditure, which in turn slows down the body’s metabolism. When the muscles remain inactive the body burns fewer calories and reduces its efficiency in regulating blood sugar and fat break down. This metabolic slowdown increases the risk of weight gain and contributes to chronic health problems such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

Reducing risks

Having explored above risks associated with occupation sitting, what are some ways that we can address these risks. Firstly, there is a need to have a nationwide education campaign that outlines the risks involved in sedentary jobs. The administration of these workplaces must also develop policies in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Wellness that support physical well-being of employees. Lastly the employees should incorporate short stretch breaks of at least 3 – 5 minutes every hour throughout the day, have walking meetings, stay hydrated, elevate your legs, use compression socks where necessary and wear supportive footwear. Implementing these simple strategies during the work day will mitigate risk and drive productivity within the workplace

Credit: Mr. Michael Huggan, Physical Activity Specialist, SRHA

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

We welcome your input.

Please submit your articles and feedback for the December edition to:

The Corporate Communications & Public Relations Branch

Email: latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

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If you have me, you
want to share me.
If you share me,
you haven't got me.

What am I?

The Lighter Side

