



### May Pen Hospital's New \$642M Outpatient Building to Be Completed in 16 Months



**Health and Wellness Minister Dr Christopher Tufton (fourth right) is accompanied by Jamaica's chief medical officer Jacqueline Bisasor-McKenzie (fourth left), representatives of the Southern Regional Health Authority and other stakeholders as they break ground for the new May Pen Hospital Outpatient Department building on Friday, July 5, 2025.**

## Inside This Issue

In the News:	Facilities on the Move:	Staff Highlight:	Lets Meet:	HR & You
<b>MPH New \$642M Outpatient Building to Be Completed in 16 Months</b>	<b>Percy Junor Hospital Receives Donations From Rachel Dixon Memorial Fund</b>	<b>Dr. O'Rane Thomas Receives the 2025 Governor General Achievement Award</b>	<b>The Dedicated, Grounded and Inspiring Sandia Ferguson</b>	<b>The Value of Competencies</b>
<b>Page 2</b>	<b>Page 5</b>	<b>Page 9</b>	<b>Page 16</b>	<b>Page 19</b>

## In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### May Pen Hospital's New \$642M Outpatient Building to Be Completed in 16 Months



**Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (seated, second left) and Managing Director of Jiangsu Zhenhuai Construction Group Company Limited, Jason Ji (seated, second right) sign the contract for the new outpatient department building at the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon, during the ground-breaking ceremony on Friday (July 4).**

A \$642-million development project at the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon has been hailed by stakeholders as a forward-thinking and transformative investment in the region's healthcare infrastructure.

Last Friday, ground was officially broken and contracts signed for the construction of a new outpatient department (OPD) building, being developed by the Ministry of Health and Wellness through its Health Systems Strengthening Programme (HSSP). The project, to be executed by Jiangsu Zhenhuai Construction Group Co Ltd, is expected to be completed within 16 months following the contractor's mobilisation to the site.

Eugena Clarke-James, chief executive officer of the hospital, described the project as a testament to the facility's commitment to delivering "exceptional service" to the people of Clarendon and surrounding parishes.

The new facility will offer a wide range of services, including general consultations, specialist clinics, cardiology, laboratory services, and minor procedures. The 2,040 square metre structure has been designed to enhance patient flow, improve comfort, and support more efficient delivery of care.

Wayne Chen, chairman of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), described the expansion as a long-awaited dream.

"This hospital – a Type-C hospital – serves people in St Catherine, St Ann, Manchester, and that is a testament to the work of the staff here who have worked under very constrained circumstances for a very long time," said Chen, adding that the current infrastructural design of the hospital was not conducive to the kind of pressure to which it is exposed.

He also noted the hospital's workforce had grown significantly, from 2,000 employees in 2016 to more than 3,000 full-time staff in 2025 — a feat he posits as a clear indication of the facility's expanding role in the regional health system.

Under the HSSP, the new OPD will also support digital transformation in healthcare, featuring structured information technology and server rooms to facilitate electronic health records (EHR).



## May Pen Hospital's New \$642M Outpatient Building to Be Completed in 16 Months (Continued)

The building will include accessible features such as lifts and wheelchair-friendly restrooms, in addition to a staff lounge, changing rooms, a conference room, and other staff amenities.

Orett Clarke, HSSP's project coordinator, noted that extensive groundwork had already been done to prepare for the development — including perimeter fencing, relocation of the main entrance, and infrastructure upgrades to the hospital's sewage network.

"We also upgraded the sewage network on the compound to ensure that this new building will start on solid, modern infrastructure without causing disruption to existing systems," Clarke said.

Among the attendees was 2025 Miss Clarendon Festival Queen, Rhaveen Kildare, a third-year medical student, who expressed optimism about the project.

"It is encouraging to see such a patient-centric development. As someone deeply committed to healthcare and to my community, this gives me hope that I may be able to complete my internship and rotation activities right here in my home parish," Kildare shared.

Dr Christopher Tufton, minister of health and wellness, described the initiative as a critical milestone in the country's ongoing healthcare transformation, particularly in the fight against non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory illnesses, which remain the leading causes of death in Jamaica.

"This project reflects the Government's unwavering commitment to strengthening primary and secondary healthcare infrastructure, with a focus on accessibility, quality, and resilience. The people of Clarendon deserve world-class facilities and services, and this new department is a key part of ensuring they receive just that," said Tufton.

He confirmed that May Pen Hospital was the eighth of 13 facilities to receive major upgrades under the HSSP.

"But, as a Government, we're not stopping here. The progress in Clarendon over the last five years is proof of this," he added.

Tufton also referenced past improvements under the Inter-American Development Bank expansion project, including \$30 million in roof repairs at the May Pen Hospital, and the hiring of additional doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals across the parish to reduce wait times and improve patient outcomes.



**Minister of Health and Wellness Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (third right), looks on as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of May Pen Hospital, Eugena Clarke-James (fourth left), unveils the sign for the new outpatient department building that will be constructed at the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon .**

**Credit: The Jamaica Gleaner**

## In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Darlow Health Centre in Clarendon Renovated



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (third right), and Member of Parliament for Clarendon North Central, Hon. Robert Morgan (third left), lead in the cutting of the ribbon for the official hand-over of the refurbished Darlow Health Centre, in Clarendon, on July 17.

Residents of Darlow and surrounding communities in Clarendon, are now accessing healthcare at the renovated Darlow Health Centre, which was completed at a cost of \$5.3 million, under the Government's Operation Refresh programme.

The initiative aims to make buildings more resilient, standardise the look and feel of health facilities, through signage and colour schemes, as well as improving areas of wait with sustainable features like solar panels for energy efficiency, air conditioning and improved sanitary conveniences for a more comfortable wait.

Speaking at the handover of the facility on July 17, Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton said the renovation of the health centre demonstrates the Government's commitment to deliver healthcare at the community level.

"We want you to use the facility and treat it as if it were yours. We want you to be proud of it, we want you to go home and talk about it, that it is upgraded, that it is a better facility, that you have air conditioning, you have clean bathrooms," Dr. Tufton said.

"Our health centres in our communities must be that place where you look for safety and comfort and cure. [It] must be that one place where you are guaranteed a healthy, safe environment where treatment provides prevention [and] makes you feel better about yourself when you leave," he added.

Minister Tufton further noted that part of the administration's vision is to ensure that all health centres have a minimum standard.

He also informed of the expansion of the Mocho Health Centre, which will facilitate the provision of more doctors, services and equipment.

Meanwhile, Member of Parliament for Clarendon North Central, Hon. Robert Morgan welcomed the renovated facility.

"Let us continue to invest in the health of our people," he stated.

Funding for the refurbishing works was provided for by the National Health Fund (NHF), and the Health Support Fund (HSF).

Over \$1 billion has been allocated for the Operation Refresh programme, and approximately 40 of 72 health centres have benefited from upgrades over the last five years.

**Credit: Jamaica Information Service**





## Facilities on the Move

### Percy Junor Hospital Receives Donations From Rachel Dixon Memorial Fund

On July 24, The Percy Junor Hospital in Manchester received generous donations from the Rachael Dixon Memorial Fund, valued at over J\$673,000.

The non-profit organization contributed a range of medical supplies, including blankets, walkers, urostomy pouches, adult and baby diapers, heel protectors, bed pads, pillowcases, a bath blanket, sheets, a sharps container, a three-piece health monitor set, gloves, a wheelchair, and other essential items.





## Facilities on the Move

### Mandeville Regional Hospital Celebrates Nostalgic Uniform Day

Staff at the Mandeville Regional Hospital in Manchester recently came together to host a spirited School Uniform Day, designed to foster camaraderie and enhance team spirit across all departments.

This engaging event brought a sense of fun and nostalgia, allowing staff members to reminisce about their school days while strengthening the bonds that make their workplace a supportive and collaborative environment.

Please see below highlights.





## Facilities on the Move

### Community Spirit Shines at the St. Elizabeth Health Department Summer Camp

From July 7 to 10, high school students gathered at St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Santa Cruz for the Jamaica Moves Healthy Lifestyle Summer Camp. Organized by the St. Elizabeth Health Department, the four-day program aimed to inspire, educate, and empower students from health-promoting schools.

Participants took part in sessions covering leadership and self-esteem, nutrition and physical activity, non-communicable diseases in adolescence, conflict resolution, and fire safety both at home and school.

With guidance from the Medical Officers of Health and the Parish Manager, these students are now ready to champion the Jamaica Moves in School Programme in their own schools.

Please see below highlights.





## Facilities on the Move

### Exploring Innovation through the Biomedical Engineering Internship

On Tuesday, July 29, SRHA concluded its one-month Biomedical Engineering Internship Programme, led by Chief Biomedical Engineer Ms. Toni-Ann Rodney.

The interns brought fresh perspectives while gaining hands-on experience, contributing to the Computerised Maintenance Management System (CMMS) and strengthening maintenance plans for critical equipment.

Their efforts boosted team capacity and improved planning. SRHA looks forward to expanding this initiative across other Regional Health Authorities to drive innovation and excellence in healthcare technology.

See below highlights.





## Staff Highlight

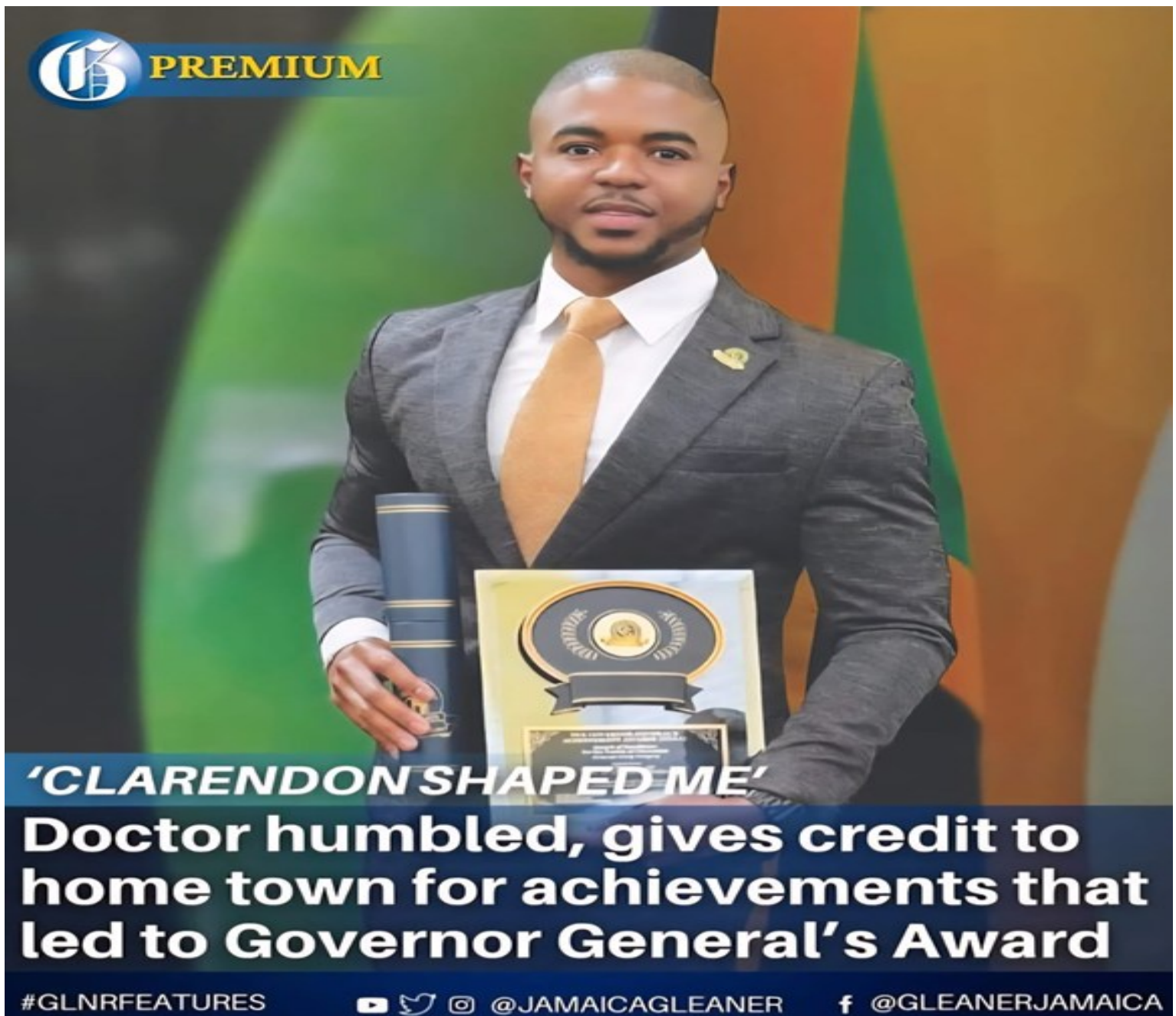
### Dr. O’Rane Thomas Receives the 2025 Governor General Achievement Award

SRHA congratulates Dr. O’rane Thomas, recipient of the 2025 Governor General’s Achievement Award for Clarendon (age 25–35).

A proud son of Clarendon and former Glenmuir High head boy, Dr. Thomas has distinguished himself through pioneering laparoscopic surgeries at May Pen Hospital, cancer awareness campaigns, and mentorship of youth.

His commitment to modernizing healthcare and giving back to his community continues to inspire us all.

**Credit: Jamaica Gleaner**



## Staff Highlight

### Happy Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month From the Regional Director



**Southern Regional  
Health Authority**  
compassion | accountability | respect | efficiency



## **HAPPY HEALTHCARE WORKERS APPRECIATION MONTH**

I can vividly recall in 2022, when July was declared as Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month, to honour healthcare workers for their commitment, service, and sacrifice, especially in light of the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now three years later, we are still honouring the commitment, service and sacrifice of our healthcare heroes, whose passion, expertise and dedication save the lives of thousands of people daily.

I am pleased that we are able to host another series of celebratory events, which are just a microscopic symbol of what your sterling services warrant.

I urge you to use this calendar event as one of celebration, reflection and renewal as we go forward, delivering care through our core values of: **Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Efficiency.**

The long hours you have dedicated and the personal time sacrificed have not gone unnoticed, and we express our heartfelt gratitude for your invaluable service.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the management teams, please accept our heartfelt appreciation for your continued service.

Wishing you a joyful and memorable Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month. May God's blessings be upon you and your families always.

**Michael Bent**  
Regional Director





## Staff Highlight

### Cricket Tournament Marks New Addition to Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month

As part of this year's Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month celebrations, the Southern Regional Health Authority hosted its first-ever T-10 Cricket Tournament on Friday, July 11.

The event received strong support from participants and spectators alike, creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with energy and enthusiasm. The tournament showcased an impressive display of talent, blending competitive spirit with camaraderie, and proved to be a memorable highlight of the month's activities.

Please see highlights below:





## Staff Highlight

### Team Members Welcome Church Services of Thanksgiving & Praise

Church services across the Southern Region brought together healthcare professionals for worship, gratitude, and reflection under the theme “Honouring Commitment, Service and Sacrifice.”

- **Manchester:** Sunday, July 13, 2025 – Goodness & Mercy Church, New Green
- **Clarendon:** Sunday, July 20, 2025 – New Testament Church, May Pen
- **St. Elizabeth:** Sunday, July 27, 2025 – Black River Holiness Christian Church

This annual occasion is a heartfelt celebration of those who serve our communities with dedication and compassion every day. It also offered healthcare workers a time to give thanks and praise to God for the strength to continue serving the people of Jamaica.





## Staff Highlight

### Double Six Celebration: Healthcare Workers Domino Showdown

On Friday, July 11, the Southern Regional Health Authority hosted a lively domino tournament at the SRHA Regional Office as part of Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month.

The event combined friendly rivalry with plenty of laughter, as teams faced off in a spirited competition. The atmosphere was energetic and engaging, reflecting both the camaraderie and competitive spirit of the participants. It proved to be an enjoyable highlight of the month's celebrations.

Please see below highlights.





## Staff Highlight

### Where Fun Meets Fitness: SRHA Sports Day Highlights

Healthcare Workers Appreciation Month Staff Fusion was a resounding success, bringing together teams from Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth at Black River High School on July 31.

Under the theme “Honouring Commitment Service & Sacrifice”, the event celebrated the dedication of healthcare workers with a day packed with track and field events, spirited cheerleading, netball, football and domino competitions, as well as delightful treats and surprises.

The day concluded with uplifting performances from renowned gospel artist Kevin Downswell.

Please see below highlights.





## Staff Highlight

### Where Fun Meets Fitness: SRHA Sports Day Highlights (Continued)







# Mrs. Sandia Chambers-Ferguson

**Parish Manager  
Manchester Health Department**

**The Dedicated, Grounded and Inspiring  
Sandia Chambers Ferguson**



In the parish of Manchester, the Manchester Health Department (MHD) continues to serve as a pillar of healthcare. At the center of it all is Parish Manager, Mrs. Sandia Chambers-Ferguson, a woman whose career tells a story of commitment, faith and growth.

Mrs. Chambers-Ferguson's journey with the Ministry of Health and the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) began on January 23, 1984. Since then, she has served in multiple capacities across the region including Medical Records Clerk at Mandeville Regional Hospital (MRH), Parish Administrative Officer at St. Elizabeth Health Department (STEHD) and MHD, and currently, Parish Manager at MHD. Her extensive experience has allowed her to work across different levels of the organization, shaping a career marked by growth, leadership and resilience.

She counts her greatest achievement as moving through the ranks to become Parish Manager, while also receiving professional recognition such as The Organization of American States Scholarship (OAS) to study Health Service Management in Israel and the honour of representing Jamaica at the Moravian Unity Synod in South Africa in 2023. Reflecting on her journey, she shared, "My biggest achievement is a distinguished career of over 40 years of dedicated service to healthcare, all of it within this region."

Her guiding scripture, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13), has kept her grounded. Mrs. Chambers-Ferguson credits her faith, her family and her team members as her main sources of strength and inspiration. "I am inspired by a sense of commitment and dedication to service and faith in God. The desire to help others and to do my best no matter the circumstances keeps me going," she said.

Describing herself as dedicated, caring, organized and helpful, she believes the key to life is staying humble, keeping your integrity, being courageous, and persevering no matter the challenge. "When you have faith in God, humble yourself, and keep your integrity intact, you can manage any challenges," she affirmed.

Outside of work, she enjoys simple joys such as listening to Dennis Brown, spending quiet time near running water, and enjoying curry goat with a glass of red wine. Looking ahead, she hopes to retire from public service and dedicate more of her time to her church, community and family.

Her wish for Jamaica is that the nation returns to a place of values, respect and care for each other, living out the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." She believes that every Jamaican has a part to play in building a healthier, safer and more united country.



## DEPARTMENT *Spotlight*

The Manchester Health Department continues to play a vital role in advancing public health and wellness within the parish. At the heart of this mission is the Manchester Mental Health Team, a dedicated group of professionals committed to ensuring that every individual has access to compassionate and comprehensive mental health services.

Their work extends far beyond the clinic doors. The team conducts home visits, provides 24-hour crisis hotline services, and operates multiple mental health clinics across Manchester, ensuring that care is accessible to all. Recognizing the importance of early intervention, the team also offers Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinics three times monthly, alongside weekly counselling sessions to provide consistent emotional and psychological support.

Education and awareness form another cornerstone of their work. Once formally requested through the Medical Officer of Health, the team delivers Mental Health Promotional Talks in schools and government agencies, helping to combat misconceptions and build resilience in communities.

Despite these efforts, they continue to face challenges such as stigma surrounding mental illness and the growing issue of substance abuse, both of which remain barriers to care in Jamaica. However, with strong advocacy and support from government initiatives aimed at destigmatizing mental health and improving access to services, the team presses forward with determination.

Importantly, mental health care does not exist in isolation. A Parish Social Worker partners with clients to address the socioeconomic challenges that often impact wellbeing, including employment, housing, food security, clothing, school visits, and family support. Through this integrated approach, the Manchester Mental Health Team provides not only treatment but also hope, ensuring that mental health remains a priority within the broader framework of public health.

At every stage, whether through a home visit, a crisis call, or a simple counselling session, the team stands as advocates, caregiver, and guardians for those navigating mental health challenges in the parish of Manchester.

## Manchester Health Department Mental Health Team



Some of the team members from the Mental Health Team

### Meet the Team

Names	Roles
Sonia White	Mental Health Family Nurse Practitioner
Alecia Solomon-Newman	Mental Health Officer
Suechelle Brown	Mental Health Officer
Bethsara Whitter	Mental Health Officer
Kishaw Smikle	Mental Health Officer
Jerome McLean, Otis Daley, Peter Rodney, Derrick Gayle, Carolyn Hudson, Delonee Clarke, Claudette Biggs, Andrew Smith, Sandra Currie, Neisha Mills, Donna Bradford, Stephen Roberts, Lora Richardson	Psychiatric Nursing Aide (PNA)
Collette Richards	Medical Social Worker
Ryan Roberts	Community Mental Health Services Driver



# Wellness Bytes

“Physical Activity”



MINISTRY OF  
HEALTH &  
WELLNESS



## EXERCISE TIPS

- 1 **DON'T PUT IT OFF**
- 2 **KEEP IT FUN!**
- 3 **SET GOALS YOU CAN ACHIEVE**
- 4 **WARM UP BEFORE YOU EXERCISE**
- 5 **TRY TO BE ACTIVE 1 HOUR A DAY**
- 6 **YOU CAN BREAK YOUR HOUR UP INTO SMALLER CHUNKS**
- 7 **EXERCISE WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS**
- 8 **EAT HEALTHY**
- 9 **STAY HYDRATED**
- 10 **STRETCH AFTER EXERCISE**

60 MINUTES (CHILDREN) AND 30 MINUTES (ADULT) OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY EACH DAY ALONG WITH HEALTHY EATING CAN LOWER YOUR RISK OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs) SUCH AS DIABETES, HYPERTENSION AND CERTAIN CANCERS.

Visit your doctor/local health centre  
or call 876-633-8172



@Jamaica\_Moves  
@themohgovjm





# HR And You:

“The Value of Competencies”



## Knowledge Bytes

A competency is generally defined as a combination of skills, knowledge, attributes and behaviours that enables an individual to perform a task or activity successfully within a given job.

Competencies are observable behaviours that can be measured and evaluated and thus are essential in terms of defining job requirements and recruiting, retaining and developing staff.

The Competency Framework provides a set of statements can be used to show achievements and identify learning needs or gaps in staff performance.



SRHA's Competency Framework, 2024

## What are Competencies ?



**Southern Regional  
Health Authority**

Compassion | Accountability | Respect | Efficiency



# SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

We welcome your input.

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

The Corporate Communications & Public Relations Branch

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

Like and follow us:

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

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/southernregionalhealthJA>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SRHAJamaica>

Youtube: [Southern Regional Health Authority](https://www.youtube.com/SouthernRegionalHealthAuthority)

TikTok: [southernregionalhealth](https://www.tiktok.com/southernregionalhealth)

The Lighter Side



Why was six scared of seven?



Because seven ate nine.