Southern Regional Health Authority
Compassion | Accountability | Respect | Efficiency

The Southern Pulse

Newsletter

Volume 12 Issue 8 August 2026

Percy Junor Hospital Gets Additional US$400,000 in Supplies from US-Based Diaspora Organisation



Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Efficiency, Innovation and Digital Transformation, Ambassador the Hon. Audrey Marks (fourth left), cuts the ribbon to formally unveil medical equipment and supplies valued approximately US$400,000, which were donated to Percy Junor Hospital in Clarendon by United States-based diaspora organisation Right Now For Jamaica (RNFJ), during a handover ceremony at the institution on Friday (August 21). Joining in the ribbon-cutting are (from left) Senior Medical Officer at Percy Junor Hospital, Dr. Carlos Wilson; Vice Chair of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) Board, Simone Scarlett; Councillor for the Craighead Division, Omar Miller; Acting Chief Executive Officer of Percy Junor Hospital, Faith Sterling; RNFJ Director, Rosalee Gordon; RNFJ President, Dr. Maurice Miles; RNFJ Director, Dr. Trudy Hall; RNFJ Member, Christopher Clarke; RNFJ Director, Franz Hall ; and Chief Executive Director of Loring Consulting Engineers, O'Neil Gayle.

Inside This Issue

In the News	Facilities on the Move	Staff Highlight	The Info Hub	Wellness Bytes
Percy Junor Hospital Gets Additional US$400,000 in Supplies from US-Based Diaspo-ra Organisation	A Gift That Saves Lives: May Pen Hospital Hosts Blood Drive	Dr. Melissa Flinch Shines at Miss Jamaica Festival Queen Competition 2026	Improving Special Events 2.0	Heat Tips
Page 2	Page 4	Page 7	Page 10	Page 11

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Percy Junor Hospital Gets Additional US$400,000 in Supplies from US-Based Diaspora Organisation



Some of the medical equipment and supplies, valued approximately US$400,000, which were donated to Percy Junor Hospital in Clarendon by United States (US)-based diaspora Organisation, Right Now For Jamaica (RNFJ). The presentation was made during a handover ceremony at the hospital on Friday (August 21).

The ongoing partnership between United States (US)-based non-profit organisation, Right Now For Jamaica (RNFJ), and Percy Junor Hospital in Clarendon, has resulted in the donation of more than $60 million worth of medical equipment and supplies.

The total was boosted by the official handover of supplies valued at approximately US$400,000 on Friday (August 21).

The items donated include hospital beds, resuscitation equipment, IV poles, recliners, mattresses, overbed tables, tablets, computers, and a wide range of medical equipment and patient-care supplies.

These are expected to enhance the quality of patient care and strengthen the facility's capacity to meet the needs of those it serves.

RNFJ is a diaspora-led organisation based in Maryland that supports healthcare and community development initiatives in Jamaica.

Delivering the keynote address during the handover ceremony, Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Efficiency, Innovation and Digital Transformation, Hon. Ambassador Audrey Marks, commended RNFJ for its swift response in identifying and addressing the needs of Percy Junor Hospital following Hurricane Melissa.

She praised the organisation for visiting the facility, consulting with staff, and providing support where it was most needed.

"They saw the pressure on the operating theatre, the needs of the paediatric unit and the challenges affecting out-patient services. We talked about equipment, rehabilitation, trauma readiness, digital systems and the clinical environment in which health care professionals were asked to work. We saw a team of doctors and nurses doing their best with what was available to them," Ambassador Marks said.

The Minister also commended the hospital staff for their unwavering commitment to patient care, despite the challenges and resource constraints they faced.

She noted that in the weeks following Hurricane Melissa, Percy Junor Hospital served patients from as far away as St. Elizabeth, underscoring the facility's critical role in the region's healthcare system.

To read the full story visit: The Jamaica Information Service, www.jis.gov.jm

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Expansion of May Pen Hospital Progresses on Schedule



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (second left), addresses the media, following a high-level tour of the expansion project at May Pen Hospital in Clarendon, on August 5. With the Minister (from left) are Senior Medical Officer at May Pen Hospital, Dr. Curtis A. Pryce; Chairman of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Michael Stern, and Regional Director, Michael Bent.

Expansion of the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon is progressing on schedule and is expected to significantly enhance healthcare delivery in the parish and neighbouring ones when completed next year.

Providing an update following a high-level tour of the facility on August 5, Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said the approximately 10,000-square-foot expansion project is advancing smoothly and will provide additional clinical space, specialty services and increased bed capacity to better serve residents.

“Based on what I’ve seen, this facility is on track and the work is going very smoothly,” Dr. Tufton said.

He explained that the new facility will feature additional consultation rooms, expanded laboratory services, digital X-ray and mammography services, as well as a minor operating theatre capable of performing day surgeries.

He noted that relocating some services to the new building will free up space in the main hospital, allowing the institution’s bed capacity to increase from approximately 155 to about 200 beds.

The Minister added that the expansion will also require more than 180 additional personnel, including doctors, nurses, specialists, administrators and support staff, further strengthening healthcare delivery across the parish.

Describing the project as part of the Government’s wider transformation of Jamaica’s health infrastructure, Dr. Tufton said major hospital and health centre developments are under way across the island.

He pointed to ongoing projects at Spanish Town Hospital, the University Hospital of the West Indies, Cornwall Regional Hospital and the Western Child and Adolescent Hospital, while noting that additional health centres are also planned for May Pen East and May Pen West.

The Minister stressed that modern infrastructure must be matched by compassionate service delivery. He said the Ministry is strengthening its accountability framework to ensure healthcare workers continue to provide patient-centred care while also improving staff welfare.

To read the full story visit: The Jamaica Information Service

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

A Gift That Saves Lives: May Pen Hospital Hosts Blood Drive

On Wednesday, August 19, 2026, the May Pen Hospital hosted a blood drive, providing an opportunity for staff, patients and members of the community to donate blood and help save lives. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who came out to donate. Every donation counts, and the blood you give today could be the lifeline you or someone need tomorrow.

Don't wait until it's an emergency, donate blood today and help save a life.













Facilities on the Move

Second Cohort of Biomedical Engineering Internship Programme Successfully Completed

We are proud to celebrate the completion of the second cohort of our Biomedical Engineering Internship Programme.

These final-year students from The University of the West Indies were given the opportunity to learn alongside experienced biomedical engineering professionals across the Southern Regional Health Authority. Through mentorship and hands-on exposure, they were able to bridge the gap between classroom theory and real-world healthcare practice.

From hospitals to health centres, the interns gained valuable insight into how medical technology supports the delivery of safe, efficient and quality patient care daily.

We congratulate our interns on this important milestone and wish them every success as they continue their journey in biomedical engineering and healthcare innovation.











Facilities on the Move

SRHA Receives US$5,500 in Maternity Kits to Strengthen Maternal Care

On Friday, August 14, 2026, the Southern Regional Health Authority received maternity kits valued at US$5,500, donated through Direct Relief, the Caribbean Regional Midwives Association and the Jamaica Midwives Association.

Each kit can support up to 50 births and will be distributed to the Mandeville Regional and Black River hospitals, helping to strengthen maternity services and support midwives caring for mothers and newborns.

Photographed below are: (left to right: Mrs. Marcia Francis Thomas, Senior Director, Corporate Services, Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA); Dr. Yasine Hanna, Regional Non-Communicable Disease and Family Health Coordinator; Mr. Michael Bent, Regional Director, SRHA Ms. Deveree Stewart, President, Caribbean Regional Midwives Association, and Mrs. Petal Haffenden-McNally, Second Vice-President, Jamaica Midwives Association.







Staff Highlight

Dr. Melissa Flinch Shines at Miss Jamaica Festival Queen Competition 2026

The Southern Regional Health Authority proudly congratulates Dr. Melissa Flinch for placing second in the Miss Jamaica Festival Queen Competition 2026.

Adding to the achievement, Dr. Flinch also captured the sectional prizes for Most Congenial and Best Talent. Congratulations, Dr. Flinch!

Your SRHA family is proud of you!



Staff Highlight

Celebrating Excellence in Nutrition and Dietetics!

Celebrating Excellence in Nutrition and Dietetics! We are proud to congratulate our nutrition and dietetics team on receiving several awards and recognition at the Ministry of Health and Wellness' Annual Review for Nutrition and Dietetics Services 2025/2026.

These achievements reflect the dedication, professionalism and commitment of our teams across the southern region to delivering quality nutrition and dietetic services.



Staff Highlight

Celebrating Nursing Excellence!

The Southern Regional Health Authority proudly congratulates Ms. Jervine Richards, Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife at Percy Junor Hospital, on being named the 2026 LASCO Chin Foundation and Nurses Association of Jamaica National Nurse of the Year!

We also celebrate Mrs. Michelle Hales Thompson, Departmental Nurse Manager at Percy Junor Hospital, who was recognised as a second runner-up in this year's competition.

Jervine's passion for nursing extends beyond the workplace. She hopes to inspire young people to make healthier choices and take greater ownership of their health.

Michelle is equally committed to service and looks forward to supporting the projects of the Nurse of the Year and contributing to initiatives that strengthen and celebrate the nursing profession.

We are proud to see our nurses representing the Southern Regional Health Authority with excellence, passion and purpose. Your achievements inspire us and reflect the dedication of healthcare professionals across our region.

Congratulations, Jervine and Michelle! We celebrate you and the difference you continue to make.









HR And You:

"Interim Corner"



Infohub

Ministry of Health & Wellness
Southern Regional Health Authority

PR NAVIGATOR

Improving Special Events 2.0

Pointers for Ministerial Engagement

There are several things to take into consideration when you are desirous of having one of the two health ministers involved in your event.

1. Cabinet ministers usually have two days for possible engagement, as Monday is Cabinet meeting , Tuesday is the sitting of the Houses of Parliament and another selected day is their constituency day.

2. Minister Christopher Tufton is available on *Thursdays* and *Fridays* for engagement and Minister Krystal Lee is available on *Wednesdays* and *Thursdays*.

3. If you receive a date for an event, it will be communicated as a tentative date because of the portfolios of the ministers' and dynamics of their duties.

www.srha.gov.jm

Ministry of Health & Wellness
Southern Regional Health Authority

PR NAVIGATOR

Improving Special Events 2.0

Pointers for Ministerial Engagement

4. The two health ministers do not need to be invited to one function, unless it is a national function.

5. Minister Krystal Lee has responsibility for portfolios including: maternal health, immunisation, HIV/STI, nutrition, the National Public Health Laboratory and the National Blood Transfusion Services, so she can be invited to events which fall in those categories, or if Minister Tufton is unavailable.

6. A brief/fact sheet, with detailed information related to the event, should be provided to the public relations team days in advance, to aid with writing the minister's speech.

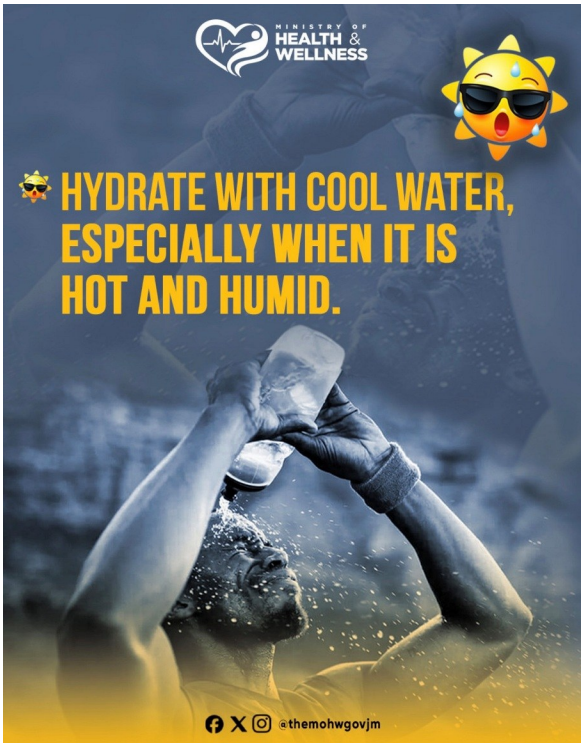
Kindly engage the public relations team for assistance or additional information.

www.srha.gov.jm

Wellness Bytes

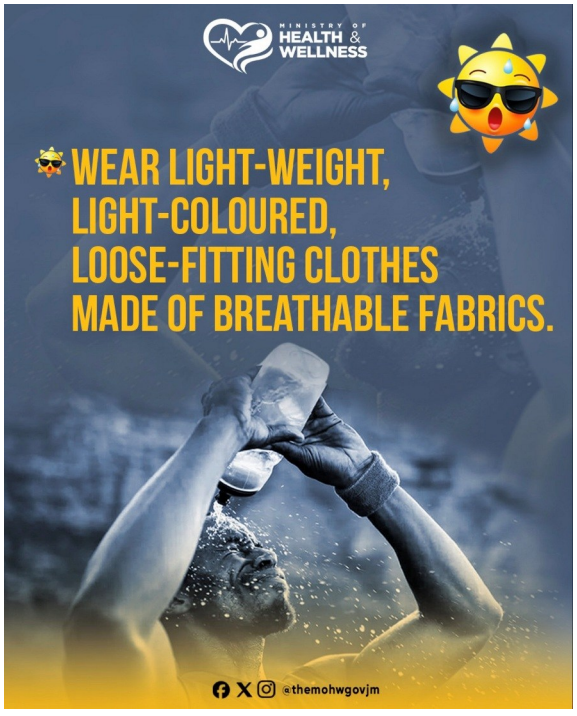
“Heat Tips”

Health & Wellness









The Culinary Corner

One-Pot Peanut Soup with Chicken + Veggies

Ingredients

- Ingredients
- Scale1x2x3x
- 1 tablespoon olive or avocado oil
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, minced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 lb boneless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 6 ounces tomato paste
- 18 ounce jar diced tomatoes
- 30 ounces of bone broth or chicken stock (about 4 cups)
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced into small pieces
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 15 ounce can chickpeas
- 5 cups tuscan kale, chopped
- Roasted peanuts
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste



Method

- In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat and add the onion, ginger and garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes
- Add in the chicken breasts, black pepper and cumin and cook over medium heat until chicken is fully cooked (no pink should be showing!)
- Add in the tomato paste and warm over medium heat for 1-2 minutes and let the paste brown a bit
- Add in the diced tomatoes, broth and sweet potato and bring to a boil
- Add in the peanut butter and chickpeas and mix well and cook over medium/low heat for about 15 minutes
- Add in the kale and cook for another 2-3 minutes then serve while warm
- Add crushed peanuts on top and sea salt and pepper to taste. I also added some cilantro for extra flavor.

Source: Rachlmsnsfield.com

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

We welcome your input.

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

The Corporate Communications & Public Relations Branch

Email: latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

Like and follow us:
Facebook: www.facebook.com/southernregionalhealthauthority
Instagram: https://instagram.com/southernregionalhealthJA
Twitter: https://twitter.com/SRHAJamaica
Youtube: Southern Regional Health Authority
TikTok: southernregionalhealth



The Lighter Side

