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# SERHA TIMES

South East Regional Health Authority

## Opening of \$10 Million Renovated Surgical Ward at KPH



*Dr. Jacqueline Bisasor McKenzie, Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health and Wellness, and Ms. Michelle Henry, Chief Operating Officer, D.M. Equipment Co. Ltd./Zoukie Trucking Services Limited cut the ribbon for the official opening of Ward 2 North at the Kingston Public Hospital on Tuesday, March 26, 2024. Observing from left are: Dr. Natalie Whyllie, Acting CEO, KPH & VJH; and Ms. Joshelle Campbell, Project Manager, D.M. Equipment Co. Ltd./Zoukie Trucking Services.*

The Kingston Public Hospital (KPH) has reopened its Ward 2 North Wing following a J\$10 Million investment by D.M. Equipment Co. Ltd., Zoukie Trucking Services Ltd., and Zhejiang Putian Integrated Housing Co. The Ward was officially reopened on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 following extensive renovation.

Ms. Joshelle Campbell, Project Manager, D.M. Equipment Co. Ltd/Zoukie Trucking Services Ltd, who was speaking at the official handover and reopening ceremony, said that, the work included the installation of modern air conditioning units in doctors' and nurses' stations; the repainting and retiling of the floors and stations; and the upgrading of patients' bathrooms and other areas with a total investment of more than JA\$10 million. She explained that her team worked hard for the past 7 months to ensure that the project became a reality.

South East Regional Health Authority's (SERHA) Regional Director, Mr. Errol Greene, noted that the renovation of Ward 2 North at KPH symbolizes the management's pursuit of partnership and the provision of the highest standard of care to its patients.

Jamaica's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Bisasor McKenzie, representing the Minister of Health and Wellness in keynote remarks stated that the success of this project underscores the importance of continued collaboration and investment in healthcare infrastructure. It serves as a testament to the dedication and hard work of all involved, including contractors, suppliers, and healthcare professionals at KPH." As part of the improvement of public healthcare, SERHA continues to make several improvements to the infrastructure and wards of KPH, with the latest

improvement being the renovations of the bathrooms in the medical ward.

Additionally, KPH now has three (3) new X-ray units that will enhance the diagnostic services offered at the hospital. KPH's Accident and Emergency Department was completely redesigned and upgraded to improve the overall experience of both patients and staff under the Ministry of Health and Wellness's Compassionate Care Programme.



# **CONGRATULATIONS**

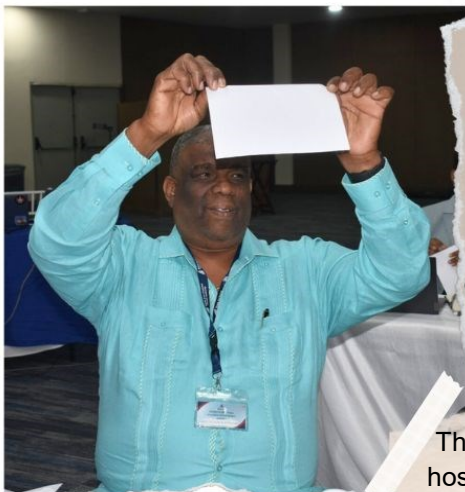
**to the St. Thomas Health Department for the highest number of health screening since the start of the Know Your Numbers Programme with**

# **831 PERSONS SCREENED**





# ***Board of Directors’ Strategic Management Retreat 2024***



The Board and Management of SERHA hosted its 3rd Board of Directors’ Strategic Management Retreat under the theme “Right care at the Right time: Expanding Access to Quality Healthcare Delivery across the Region”, which took place at Royalton Blue Waters, Trelawny on March 20-22, 2024.

Mr. Wentworth Charles, Board Chairman, SERHA said that the retreat examined the new and existing strategies employed by the Authority to maintain and expand services in the South East Region of Jamaica.





# ***Board of Directors' Strategic Management Retreat 2024***



Mr. Charles also stated that the theme for the retreat recognized a critical focus on initiatives that support and oversee efforts to expand healthcare access and quality in the Region. Additionally, the retreat sought to identify and analyze the primary barriers currently impeding access to quality healthcare services in the Region, address gaps in healthcare delivery, and build a comprehensive system that ensures patients receive the right care at the right time.





# Sir John Golding Rehabilitation Centre (SJGRC) Prayer Breakfast & 70TH Anniversary Soft Launch

In 2024, a year-long celebration for the Sir John Golding Rehabilitation Centre's (SJGRC) 70th anniversary will take place. On Wednesday, April 3, 2024, a prayer breakfast was held at the SJGRC to kick off the events. Other events will include a Labour Day project, a staff and family health fair, and a Road Safety 5K Run on August 17, 2024, endorsed by Olympian Shelly-Ann Frazer Pryce in support of the institution. The official celebration ceremony will be held on Sunday, October 27, 2024. During his remarks, at the prayer breakfast, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, said that he is pleased with the developments made by the institution over the years and explained that there are future developments for this institution. The highlights of the event are below:

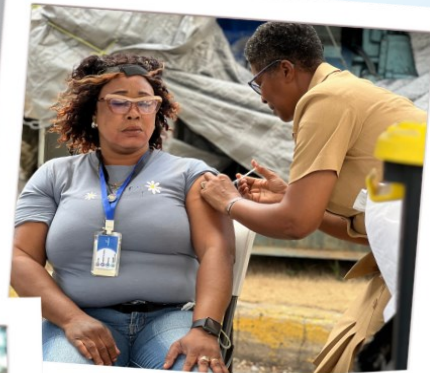
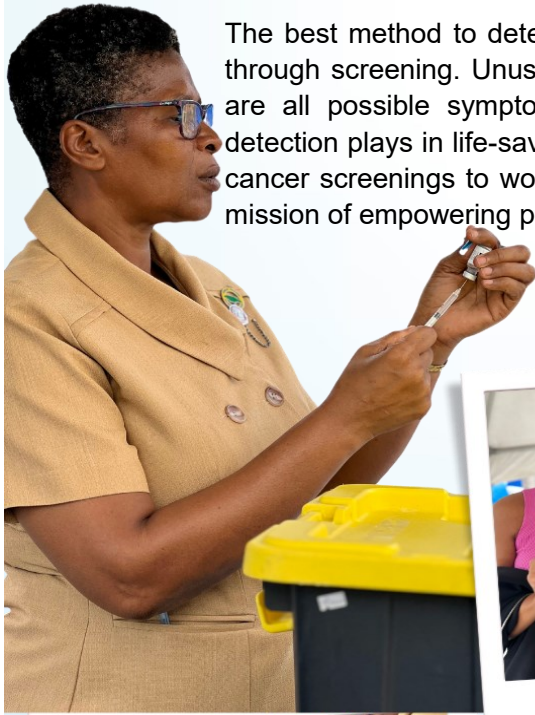




# Cervical Cancer Screening Highlights

The South East Regional Health Authority (SERHA) offered free pap smear screening in the parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew, and St. Catherine during the month of April in observance of Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. The health departments conducted educational sessions on cervical cancer, free breast cancer screenings and administered the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine to females between the ages of 9 and 26, and males between the ages of 9 and 14.

The best method to detect cancer in its earliest stages often before it manifests any symptoms is through screening. Unusual vaginal discharge, spotting between periods, and/or irregular bleeding are all possible symptoms of advanced cervical cancer. Acknowledging the critical role early detection plays in life-saving, SERHA is expanding on its yearly programme by offering free cervical cancer screenings to women and free HPV screenings to men. This programme is in line with our mission of empowering people to take control of their health and preventive healthcare.





# Launch of Vaccination Week in the Americas



*Mr. Ian Stein, PAHO/WHO Representative Jamaica, Bermuda, and the Cayman Islands, explained the importance of vaccines to Mr. Dunstan Bryan (left), Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Wellness; Major Dr. Susan Wright (centre), JP, Assistant Regional Technical Director, SERHA; Hon. Alando Terrelonge (second right), Member of Parliament for East Central St. Catherine and State Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; and Dr. Simone Spence (right), Director, Health Promotion & Protection, Ministry of Health and Wellness after the launch of the Vax Fest on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, at the HEART College of Construction Services.*

Jamaica joins countries in the Region of the Americas, through the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), in celebrating the 22nd Annual Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA), under the theme, "Engage now to protect your future #GetVax." This is being done in conjunction with the 13th observance of the World Health Organization's World Immunization Week. This vaccination week in the Americas allows the Health Ministry to reflect on the significant role that immunization plays in preserving life, supporting public health, and building a resilient future for all.

In his main address at the launch of the Vaccination Week in the Americas, Mr. Dunstan Bryan, Permanent Secretary, MOHW, emphasized the importance of people taking up the vaccines. He said that the ministry should look at all of the immunizations and antigens along the life course and offer them to not just our children but to all ages, including the elderly. These antigens will help the people of Jamaica to live longer.

During his remarks, the Hon. Alando Terrelonge, Member of Parliament for East Central St. Catherine and State Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, said that he is proud of the strides being made in the public health care system. He added that his role at the launch is not just as one who legislates but as one who actively advocates to ensure that members of the community understand the importance of vaccination, similar to what was done during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW), in collaboration with the South East Regional Health Authority and the St. Catherine Health Department, hosted a 'Vax Fest' launch to offer different types of vaccinations to the community members in and around Waterford in Portmore, St. Catherine, on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, at the HEART College of Construction Services. With 'Vax Fest', Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to shore up the availability of vaccination services to communities and to close any gaps that remain across all age groups. The public benefited from free Pap smear tests and vaccines, including pentavalent vaccines, polio vaccines, MMR vaccines, DPT vaccines, and DT vaccines, among others.

# Belize, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and Syphilis



*Captured in photo from left are: Assistant Director of PAHO, Dr. Rhonda Sealy Thomas; Minister of Health and Wellness, Jamaica, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton; Director of PAHO, Dr. Jarbas Barbosa; Minister of Health, Belize, Hon. Kevin Bernard; MOH Focal Point St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Arlitha John Douglas.*

Belize, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines are the latest countries in the Americas to receive certification from the World Health Organization (WHO) for eliminating the mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis (EMTCT). The milestone was marked on May 7, 2024, at a commemorative event organized by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Kingston, Jamaica, with support from UNICEF and UNAIDS and with the participation of health ministers from the three countries.

In 2010, countries of the Americas committed to the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis endorsed the regional strategy, which was updated in 2016 under the PAHO Plan of Action for the Prevention and Control of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections. To meet elimination targets, countries focused on strengthening prevention and treatment services within primary health care and in maternal and child health. This will continue to be done by updating guidelines, ensuring the effective screening of pregnant women, monitoring cases and following-up with HIV and syphilis exposed infants.

In a video message, WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, praised Belize for integrating primary disease prevention and treatment into maternal and child health services. He also commended Jamaica for its civil society organizations' commitment to human rights and lauded St. Vincent and the Grenadines for investing in robust national laboratory structures.

Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness of Jamaica, stated that the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis is a win that underscores protecting the health of all. It is also exemplary of the extraordinary progress being made in our maternal health care. He also said that it is vitally important that we consolidate the gains made from this achievement, especially through continued community engagement and partnership in the public health interest of all.



# International Nurses Day

May 12, 2024



*Each year, the world takes time out to recognize nurses, who are the backbone of the healthcare systems and as a region, we are elated to pay tribute to you, our indispensable nurses.*

*International Nurses Day has been celebrated for over 40 years, and we are still unable to truly put into words the impact our nurses have on our daily lives. Nurses have the ability to be as tough as nails but compassionate, empathetic, and nurturing, all in the same breath. They are called upon each day to be creative and adaptable to their environments, ensuring the best possible care for patients.*

*As the profession continues to expand, providing opportunities for nurses to grow and diversify in their areas of specialization, so have the demands on these professionals. Many facilities remain understaffed, they are underpaid, and the working conditions are not always ideal, but they have displayed perseverance and commitment as they put the needs of others ahead of themselves. This is because they are nurses. Their alertness and ability to make split-second decisions can make the difference between a patient's life and death.*

*The selflessness of nurses is comforting to confused, sometimes angry, and terminally ill patients, as they provide emotional support to both the patients and their families. The importance of our nurses cannot be understated, as they are our patients' advocates and provide vital support to the physicians. Within the SERHA, we continue to receive commendations from patients who appreciate the outstanding care provided while in our institutions. Our nurses are our heroes. Our nation is grateful for your yeoman service.*

*Thank you for all you do each day to improve the lives of those for whom you care and help in their recovery. We appreciate and celebrate you and may God continue to bless you all.*

**Errol C. Greene OD, J.P.**

**Regional Director**

**South East Regional Health Authority (SERHA)**



## **SERHA Opens Outpatient Waiting Area at the Spanish Town Hospital**



*Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, cuts the ribbon with Ms. Denise Daley, Member of Parliament for St. Catherine Eastern to officially open the Outpatient Waiting Area at the Spanish Town Hospital on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Sharing in the occasion from left are: Ms. Novellette Robinson, Director of Nursing Services, STH; Mr. Abdon Campbell, Parish Manager, St. Catherine Health Services; Councillor Keisha Lewis, Lauriston Division; Dr. Jacqueline Wright- James, Senior Medical Officer, STH; Ms. Jacqueline Ellis, CEO, STH.*

The South East Regional Health Authority (SERHA) recently opened the Outpatient Waiting Area at the Spanish Town Hospital (STH), which has the capacity to accommodate 300 patients, who may require care but do not need to be admitted. The covered waiting area is equipped with comfortable chairs to improve patient experience. Funding in the amount of J\$32 million was provided by SERHA.

Speaking at the opening ceremony on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, the Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said that the upgrade of the facility forms part of the transformation process in the healthcare sector. Addressing the audience, he urged them to protect the new building that was given to them by the Government of Jamaica. He stated that they must use the tools available to them to make things better and to take care of the new space.

He further explained that the implementation of the new patients' electronic health records system used at STH will reduce the waiting time of its patients and increase the capacity of the medical staff to see more patients. He added that he is also pleased with the current upgrades being made to STH including the relocated laboratory and pharmacy. The lab is now equipped with more space, to ensure more tests, with the most modern equipment and highlighted over 100,000 lab tests are done each month. The new National Health Fund Pharmacy is equipped with more space, more drugs dispensing windows and comfortable waiting area and over 12,000 prescriptions are done each month.

In his remarks, Mr. Errol Greene, Regional Director, SERHA, said that the regional team and the key stakeholders have done a tremendous job in the completion of the infrastructural developments of the hospital, including the relocated laboratory and pharmacy, the construction of the main car park, the conversion of the store building into a maintenance staff building, and a daycare centre. The major developments were made to facilitate the redevelopment of the hospital.



## Three New Digital X-Ray Machines Installed at KPH



*During the commissioning of the digital X-ray machines at KPH on Wednesday, May 21, 2024, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, speaking to Mr. Earl Spence (third from right), Director of Medical Sales and Services at Arel Limited about the timely servicing of the machines to prevent down time of the machines. Observing from left are: Ms. Carole-Ann Douse, Manager, Radiology Services, Kingston Public Hospital; Dr. Gordon Palmer, Head of Radiology Department, Consultant Radiologist, KPH and, Mr. Errol Greene, Regional Director, SERHA.*

Three (3) new state-of-the-art digital x-ray machines are now installed at the Kingston Public Hospital (KPH) to expand its diagnostic services. These new devices will increase staff productivity, reduce patient wait times, and eliminate the outsourcing of diagnostics and assessment. This will also allow real-time uploading and transmission of imaging for better service with over 3000 images per month. The Bustamante Hospital for Children, the National Chest Hospital, and the Spanish Town Hospital are also to receive digital X-ray machines for patients who enter these hospitals with conditions that require scans.

The investment made by SERHA for the six machines is approximately J\$500 million. Delivering the main address at the official commissioning ceremony for the machines on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, the Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said that the management of the hospital must ensure that all equipment is serviced on time to prevent a breakdown in patient delivery. Transformation will mean that the equipment should be serviced routinely.

Minister Tufton also stated that if the management of the Hospitals are not prepared to train for in-house routine maintenance and servicing of the equipment, including parts and supplies, then patient delivery will not be improved. The Ministry of Health and Wellness is giving JA\$500 million a year in scholarships for training.

Minister Tufton further explained that he met with the major tertiary institutions, to encourage them to provide training for health professionals outside of doctors and nurses and to include biotech engineers and technologists to fix these machines. "We want to create a functioning institution that gives doctors, nurses, and other staff members a good place to work so that they can deliver quality care to their patients," Minister Tufton said.

In his remarks at the commissioning ceremony, Mr. Errol Greene, Regional Director, SERHA, said that a 5-year service contract was put in place for the maintenance of these x-ray machines. The acquisition of these machines was driven by the recognition of an urgent need within our hospitals.



# Launch of Physical Activity Guide & Toolkit for the Workplace

As part of the Ministry's work to combat non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and promote a healthier lifestyle for the workplace, the Ministry of Health and Wellness launched its Physical Activity Guide and Toolkit for the Workplace on May 10, 2024. This year, Move for Health Day was observed under the theme "Let's prioritize our health and well-being, starting right here, right now, Get up, get moving, and let's make every step count." In 2002, the day was designated by the World Health Organization (WHO) to promote physical activity. Movement has immediate and long-term benefits, improving quality of life and health while reducing the risk of developing a myriad of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The highlights are below:





# KSAHD'S Staff Health Fair

The Kingston and St. Andrew Health Department (KSAHD) hosted a health fair for staff on Friday, May 17, 2024. Approximately 300 staff members benefited from free health checks, including blood pressure, body mass index, HIV, syphilis, blood sugar, and blood cholesterol, among others. The event was sponsored by Mountain Peak, the National Housing Trust, the Jamaica Civil Service Association, RADA, Jambisco, the Jamaica Public Sector Credit Union, and the Registrar General Department. The highlights are below:





# HR Matters



## What is MyHR+

Human Resource departments are increasingly being required to be a strategic business area. MyHR+ is an enabler in improving the operations and delivery of HR services in the public sector. It is an integrated HR and payroll information management system that will serve everyone working in the public sector. The system is being implemented on a phased basis by the Government of Jamaica.

MyHR+ is a very easy-to-use web-based software that allows organisations to manage and operate efficiently.

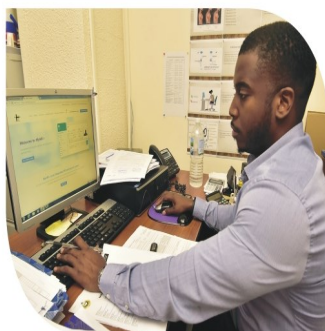


## Benefits Include:

- Strategic and enhanced efficiency in HR management and administration.
- Greater access to information through the standardisation of HR functions, policies, practices and procedures.
- Data analytics that ensure the availability of evidence-based information for critical thinking and efficient strategy.
- Cost efficiency.
- Security and disaster recovery on a secure platform

## EMPLOYEES

- Access personal data
- Schedule leave, submit claims
- Request salary advance
- View, save and print payslips
- Register for training



## STUDY LEAVE

*Excerpts from the Staff Order for Public Service*

### 7.8 1 STUDY LEAVE

Study Leave is a period of absence granted to public employees to pursue courses of study which may fall into any of the following categories:

#### Category 1 Government Mandated

Programme of study initiated or mandated by the Government and therefore deemed to be in the national interest. For example government scholarships and awards to fill critical skill shortage area directly related to current functions.

#### Category 2 Job Related

Programme of study undertaken voluntarily by individual public officers to improve their qualifications and skills in area directly related to current functions.

#### Category 3 Future Advancement

(i) Programme of study undertaken voluntarily by individual public officers to improve their qualifications and/or skills for future careers advancement and employability in areas directly related to mandate of the Ministry Department.

(ii) Programme of study undertaken voluntarily by individual public officers to improve their qualifications and/or skills for future careers advancement and employability in areas not necessarily related to mandate of the Ministry Department by may be applicable for other Ministries/Departments.

#### Category 4 Personal Interest

Programme of study undertaken voluntarily by individual public officers for personal interest or for growth and development.

### **We want to hear from you!**

**Tell us what is happening in your facility. Call Shuwana Johnson, Public Relations Manager, SERHA, at (876) 816-8058 or send an email to: [shuwana.j@serha.gov.jm](mailto:shuwana.j@serha.gov.jm). You may also call Mr. Raemone Collier, Public Relations Officer, SERHA, at (876) 540-0603 or send an email to: [raemone.c@serha.gov.jm](mailto:raemone.c@serha.gov.jm)**