



PRESS RELEASE

October 22, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Data Driving Dengue Management in St. Elizabeth

The vector control workers from the St. Elizabeth Health Services have been using a data approach to manage mosquito breeding and mosquito-borne diseases in the parish of St. Elizabeth.

Chief Public Health Inspector for the parish, Everod Lewis explained that years ago the team gathered information from every community in St. Elizabeth, and developed a database related to environmental health activities.

"What is happening now in the parish regarding vector management is as a result of what we have done over the years. Our database includes information about the high risk areas, the aedes index which is the calculation that tells the amount of homes with positive aedes breeding and also any challenges that we may have " Mr. Lewis explained.

With 11 permanent and 100 temporary vector control workers spread across St. Elizabeth, the focus has been on identifying and destroying mosquito breeding sites and educating residents.

"St. Elizabeth is a diverse parish given that the north side is rainy and the south side is dry. Residents store water and this contributes to mosquito breeding and because of this we spend time educating persons about eliminating breeding sites" Mr. Lewis added.

He said that residents are taught creative ways to manage mosquito breeding sites including using drops of oil in drums to prevent the breeding of larvae and using sheer curtains to cover drums.

The Chief Public Health Inspector noted that the team places special emphasis on schools, tyre shops and churches. He added that all levels of staff from the St. Elizabeth Health Services have been trained in vector management.

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Mr. Lewis noted that while fogging and larvicidal activities have its place in dealing with mosquito-borne diseases, it is important for residents to take personal responsibility.

“Source reduction is key. We need to reduce the population of these mosquitoes and protect ourselves. I am encouraging residents to work with the vector control workers and eliminate mosquito-breeding sites in order to combat dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases” Mr. Lewis said.

The team is inviting persons in an around the parish to a town hall meeting on Thursday, October 24 at Roye's Plaza in Junction, St. Elizabeth at 5:00 p.m., which will focus on management of dengue and mosquito breeding sites. The meeting will be addressed by Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton.

The public is being reminded to rid their surroundings of mosquito breeding sites and to also be on the alert for the symptoms of dengue fever. The symptoms include: sudden onset of fever, headache, pain behind the eyes, muscle pains, bone or joint pain, skin rash, vomiting or the “feeling to vomit”.

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Picture 1



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tuffon (left) and Vector Control Coordinator at the St. Elizabeth Health Department, Michael Myles (right) along with team members from the St. Elizabeth Health Department inspect a drum of water at a property in St. Elizabeth earlier this year.

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Picture 2



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton (left) and Vector Control Coordinator at the St. Elizabeth Health Department, Michael Myles (right) inspect a tyre in St. Elizabeth earlier this year. Photographed also is Parish Manager for St. Elizabeth Services, Sean Brissett.

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