



PRESS RELEASE

October 17, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Partnership for Mental Health and Homelessness in Manchester

Recognizing that mental health and homelessness are major challenges affecting the parish of Manchester, the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) and the Manchester Municipal Corporation (MMC) have partnered to improve the care and protection of those affected in the parish.

Scores of individuals from government and non-government agencies, in addition to charity groups and other individuals gathered at the Cecil Charlton Hall in Manchester on October 10, which is observed as World Mental Health Day and World Homelessness Day, to focus on the two issues affecting the parish.

The event focused on 'Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention', the theme for World Mental Health Day, in an effort to raise awareness about mental health illnesses and ways in which people are affected. The commemoration also encouraged persons to start a national conversation on mental health in Jamaica and suicide, and promote behaviour change to end the stigma against persons living with mental health illnesses.

The Manchester Parish Committee for the Homeless was also launched at the event, in order to improve the care and protection for homeless persons in the parish.

Regional Technical Director for the SRHA, Dr. Vitillius Holder said the SRHA is cognizant that health is not only the absence of disease, but that physical and mental well-being is critical to a person's holistic development. She added that when persons are healthy they are better able to manage the stresses of life.

"The SRHA recognizes that partnership is critical because we cannot do it
(more)

Chairman: Wayne Chen; Vice Chairman: Michael Stern, **Board Members:** Dr. St. Aubyn Bartlett, Lorraine Green Mason, Marcus Greenwood, Stafford Haughton, Winston Maragh, Lennox Powell, Dr. Lloyd Reynolds, Albert Williams, **Permanent Secretary's Nominee:** Dr. Naydene Williams, **Regional Director and Secretary:** Michael Bent; **Regional Technical Director:** Dr. Vitillius Holder; **CEO, Mandeville Regional Hospital:** Alwyn Miller; **SMO, Mandeville Regional Hospital:** Dr. Everton McIntosh

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alone and so I salute the Manchester Municipal Corporation for partnering with us to help those in need" Dr. Holder added.

Meanwhile, Director of Operations and Maintenance for the SRHA, Hershel Ismail noted that the SRHA is committed to empowering persons to recognize the symptoms of suicide and mental health challenges, in an effort to end stigma and help persons with these challenges.

She noted that though the suicide rate in Jamaica is not as high as in other parts of the world, suicide prevention is everybody's business. She encouraged persons to join the conversation about mental health and show love to persons who are experiencing these challenges.

Picture 1



Regional Technical Director for the SRHA, Dr. Vitillius Holder (2nd left) and (more)

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Chairman of the Manchester Parish Committee for the Homeless, Councillor Faith Sampson (3rd right) cut the ribbon to unveil the retractable banner representing the Committee for the Homeless. Sharing in the moment are: Member of Parliament for Central Manchester, Peter Bunting (2nd right), Mayor of Mandeville, Cllr. Donovan Mitchell (left) and Acting Corporate Secretary for the Board of Supervision, Treka Lewis.

Picture 2



A section of the audience at the launch of the Manchester Parish Homeless Committee and the observance of World Mental Health Day, which focused on suicide prevention.

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