



PRESS RELEASE

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February 19, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Strides Being Made in Increasing Cancer Awareness in Central Jamaica

The Southern Regional Health Authority has been making progress in screening and educating the public about cancer prevention, through its commemoration of World Cancer Day.

Initially staged in 2015, the World Cancer Day commemoration focuses on sensitizing persons about the four major risk factors for cancer which includes alcohol use, tobacco use, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, with a special focus on free testing for participants.

Staged under the theme, "We Can, I Can", on Friday, February 7, hundreds of persons received free screenings and testing for cervical cancer, prostate cancer, HIV/Syphilis tests, in addition to blood pressure, blood sugar testing, breast examinations and nutrition sampling. These tests were done at the St. James Methodist Church, Summerfield Community Centre and Lionel Town Health Centre in Clarendon.

One hundred and forty women were screened for cervical cancer, 147 women had breast examinations, 31 digital rectal examinations (DRE) done, 17 Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests performed and 277 persons did blood pressure and blood sugar tests. Some 252 persons had their Body Mass Index (BMI) measured and 351 persons participated in the food sampling demonstration.

Conceptualizer of the event and Deputy Chief Nursing Officer at the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Karen Nelson explained that the event has also been used to sensitize the public on the introduction of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine for cervical cancer prevention as well as strengthen the use of the VIA (Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid) method for cervical cancer screening.

(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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Mrs. Nelson told the audience that the most common cancers in Jamaica in adults are breast, cervical, prostate, colon and lung, while leukemia and brain cancers are the most common among children.

"It's important for persons to make screening an important part of their healthy lifestyle, in addition to eating healthy and exercising. When we have early detection, we will have early interventions which result in better outcomes" Nurse Nelson said.

Participants were sensitized on breast, prostate, ovarian, cervical, colon and lung cancers and their prevention and management, which were also a part of booth displays. A well received food demonstration and sampling was also a part of the day's activities which was used to reinforce the importance that healthy diet plays in the prevention of cancer.

Picture 1



Staff members conducting free blood pressure and sugar testing.

(more)

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Participants at the commemoration of World Cancer Day participate in an exercise routine to demonstrate the impact of physical activity on cancer.

(more)

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Members of the audience pay attention to a testimonial from a participant who spoke about her diagnosis of cancer and recovery.

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For more information contact:

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