



PRESS RELEASE

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September 16, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May Pen Hospital Gets Field Hospital for COVID-19 Patients

A 40-bed mobile field hospital, donated by the United States (US) Government through the US Embassy in Jamaica, valued at J \$132 million was officially opened at the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon.

The hospital was opened on Wednesday, September 15 and forms part of U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) ongoing assistance to nations in the Caribbean, Central America and South America, and is funded by the Command's Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP). The field hospital which is the second to be set up in Jamaica is also equipped with a generator.

Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton in speaking on behalf of the government, said the donation of the field hospital shows the strength of the relationship between the countries and symbolizes the collaboration that is necessary to confront and overcome the global Pandemic.

"I really want to put on record our appreciation for this facility. We are looking at adding capacity in excess of 300 to 350 beds...we give the standards but we do tweak it a bit and this is all in demonstration tangibly of our response to the treatment component of the COVID-19 virus. The truth is no public health system could have adequately planned for this Pandemic...so we have to make provisions in these extreme cases" Minister Tufton said.

He added that a collaborative solution has to be found in these cases, noting that: "the timing of the Pandemic and its impact on us, required us to evolve in terms of a plan and a strategy to add capacity as we went along, whether its human, equipment or infrastructure capacity. These field hospitals will serve the purpose for which they are intended and we expect that they will continue to serve additional purposes later on. In a strange way, we have used COVID which is a threat as an opportunity for (more)

Chairman: Wayne Chen; Vice Chairman: Michael Stern, **Board Members:** Lorraine Green Mason, Marcus Greenwood, Stafford Haughton, Winston Maragh, Dr. Lloyd Reynolds, Albert Williams, Omar Miller, Dave Powell, **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



us to buildout our infrastructure. If there is one good thing that comes out of COVID, it's that after COVID, our health infrastructure is going to be more resilient and it is for us to structure it in a way to tackle the non-COVID issues."

Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy, John McIntyre said the field hospital is an investment for the present and also for future, adding that it will enhance the Government's ability to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

"SOUTHCOM's support to Jamaica's COVID-19 response and mitigation efforts began in late March 2020, as the first signs of COVID-19 infections were beginning to impact the Caribbean and has continued to provide support throughout nearly the 20 months that our two countries have been fighting this pandemic. To date, the U.S. government has donated over \$12 million U.S. dollars in COVID-related assistance to Jamaica including USAID's announcement that it will provide an additional \$5.2 million U.S. dollars to advance vaccination and strengthen health systems to diagnose, manage and mitigate COVID-19 transmission." Chargé d'Affaires McIntyre said.

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Picture 1



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton (2nd right) and the Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy, John McIntyre (2nd left) cut the ribbon to officially open the 40-bed field hospital at the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon. Sharing in the moment are: Custos of Clarendon, Hon. William Shagoury (left) and Acting CEO of the May Pen Hospital, Eugena Clarke-James.

(more)

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Picture 2



Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton (centre) examines the hand wash station inside the mobile field hospital while Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy, John McIntyre (right) and Acting CEO of the May Pen Hospital, Eugena Clarke-James look on.

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