



PRESS RELEASE

September 20, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Health Authority Commits to Cultivating Healthier Workplace Culture for Employees

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) which administrates public healthcare in the parishes of Clarendon, St. Elizabeth and Manchester will be strengthening its facilities to foster a healthier workplace environment and culture.

The announcement was made by Regional Director for the SRHA, Michael Bent, who referred to the Ministry of Health & Wellness' Corporate Wellness Manual, which is a guide for employers to utilize in concretizing a staff wellness programme focused on physical activity, nutrition, health screening, as well as providing an enabling environment to allow staff to carry out healthy lifestyle practices.

"I just want to assure the staff of the Southern Regional Health Authority that management has bought into corporate wellness. Part of my charge to the Parish Managers and CEOs is to put in resources if you haven't yet done so, so that persons can have a place to breastfeed, although we already have it in some facilities. I have also asked them to put in place the amenities to encourage persons to take their meals to work so that they can eat from home. Management has bought into this and I want as we go forward, we ensure that budgetary preparations are made for the implementation or expansion of a healthy workplace culture."

The Regional Director was speaking at a regional breastfeeding workplace wellness forum at the Golf View Hotel in Manchester on Tuesday, September 19 in commemoration of National Breastfeeding Week, September 17 to 22. The forum targeted scores of government and non-government employers and encouraged them to provide an environment and culture which will support breastfeeding and wellness.

"I am hoping that this forum will not just be an event but a programme that we want to be implemented in all government and non-government organizations within the central parishes of Clarendon, Manchester and
(more)

Chairman: Wayne Chen; Vice Chairman: Michael Stern, **Board Members:** Lorraine Green Mason, Marcus Greenwood, Stafford Houghton, 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

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St. Elizabeth. As a region, and an agency of the Ministry of Health & Wellness, we are promoting not just exclusive breastfeeding but a culture of wellness in the workplace. My charge to you is let us make one step at a time together. When you get back to your different places of work, think and start doing. You don't have to see all the monies or resources but start the process" Mr. Bent added.

Mr. Bent pointed out that over the years, the SRHA has been fostering this culture of workplace wellness, noting that of the seven public hospitals in the country to be certified baby friendly, three of them are SRHA hospitals (Lionel Town, Black River and Mandeville Regional hospitals). He added that the SRHA was also the first government agency to grant paternal leave.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness launched its revised Corporate Wellness Manual as well as a physical activity page in 2021. They form part of the Ministry's drive to encourage Jamaicans to incorporate healthier lifestyle practices in their lives and daily routines, in a bid to reduce non-communicable diseases and improve mental wellness. The manual is available on the Ministry's www.moh.gov.jm website.

Picture 1



(more)

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Regional Director for the Southern Regional Health Authority, Michael Bent encourages employers to foster a culture of wellness in their organizations.

Picture 2



Representatives from government and non-government agencies participate in the regional breastfeeding workplace wellness forum at the Golf View Hotel in Manchester on Tuesday, September 19.

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