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## J\$88 Million Ophthalmology Clinic Opened; Boost for Eye Care in Southern Region

Eye care has been significantly advanced for residents of central Jamaica with the official opening of an Ophthalmology Clinic and Operating Theatre at the Mandeville Regional Hospital valued at J\$88.85 million. The clinic was opened by Minister of Health, Hon. Horace Dalley on Thursday, January 28.

Minister Dalley in his remarks explained that Jamaica has signed on to Vision 2020 which is a joint programme of the World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness with an

international membership of NGOs, professional associations, eye care institutions and corporations.

“Vision 2020 embraces strategies geared at reducing the risk of avoidable blindness including strengthening existing health systems and services and reducing the burden of disease for adults and children” the Minister added.

Minister Dalley expressed gratitude to SightSavers International, the European Union and the Caribbean Council for the

Blind for its partnership with the Southern Regional Health Authority which has resulted in the establishment of the Eye Clinic.

Approximately fifteen thousand clients access the Ophthalmology Clinic annually with more than 115 thousand clients being treated over the past ten years.

CEO of the Caribbean Council for the Blind, Mr. Arvel Grant announced that plans are advanced to establish eye clinics at the May Pen, Black River and Lionel Town Hospitals, the Chapleton Community Hospital and the Mandeville Comprehensive Clinic and the Centre of Excellence at Santa Cruz.



*Minister of Health, Hon. Horace Dalley examines a Combination Systems Unit at the Ophthalmology Clinic.*

*CEO of the Mandeville Regional Hospital, Alwyn Miller (right) explains the function of the Microscope in the Operating Theatre to Minister Horace Dalley and Mr. Arvel Grant.*



## In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Vulnerable Persons Encouraged to Take Extra Precautions Against Zika Virus

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) is encouraging persons to take extra precautions against the Zika Virus (ZikV) particularly the most vulnerable including pregnant women, newborns, the elderly and persons with chronic underlying diseases. The call comes as the region intensifies precautionary measures against an imminent outbreak of the Zika Virus disease.

Regional Technical Director at the SRHA, Dr. Michael Coombs noted that the region has been placing greater emphasis on health education as each citizen has a personal role to play in mitigating the disease.

The health education strategies include town hall meetings to facilitate information sharing and feedback regarding the ZIKV infection through the distribution of flyers and pamphlets and also the placing of these flyers at strategic public places.

The SRHA has also partnered with the Ministry of Education in training Guidance Counsellors and teachers involved in Health and Family Life Education empowering them to share information with their students. In addition, health education workers have been mobilizing the community through house to house education and community meetings.

Other precautionary measures include ongoing vector control in communities across the region and the acquisition of additional equipment to assist with vector control, the development of a plan to deal with possible patient overload and the alternative use of facilities, the employment of temporary vector workers to assist with health education and vector control and the use of a surveillance system to monitor trends in the occurrence of this disease and congenital abnormalities.

Dr. Coombs noted that each person should take a personal approach to protect themselves from

mosquito bites by using insect repellent containing DEET, putting mesh on windows and doors and destroy mosquito breeding sites by looking for anything around the home, school, churches and business places that may collect water and either cover it, keep it dry or dispose of it.



**PREVENT  
MOSQUITO  
BREEDING**

*Its Everybody's Responsibility*



**DISPOSE OF  
GARBAGE  
PROPERLY**



**COVER ALL  
CONTAINERS**



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43-47 Barbados Avenue, Kingston 5 ■ 10A Chelsea Avenue (Bever Ltd. Building), Kingston 5

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## In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

### Southern Regional Health Authority Employee Receives Award for Health Research



**Mrs. Karen Thompson-Nelson (right), NCD Surveillance Officer for The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) receives the 'Most Outstanding Student Oral Presentation' award at the Ministry of Health 6th Annual National Health Research Conference.**

Regional Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Surveillance Officer for the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Mrs. Karen Thompson-Nelson copped the 'Most Outstanding Student Oral Presentation' award at the Ministry of Health's 6th Annual National Health Research Conference in November 2015.

The conference was held under the theme 'Invest Now and Start Reaping Your Health Rewards' at the Jamaica Conference Centre.

The research was conducted in light of statistics highlighting that there is a problem of low compliance in cervical cancer screening among women of reproductive age in Manchester.

The study which was a 'cross-sectional descriptive one, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative designs aimed to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of female health care workers regarding screening for cervical cancer, to assess a level of compliance to the screening guidelines and to

identify barriers to screening.

Mrs. Nelson submitted the research on behalf of the Southern Regional Health Authority and did an oral presentation at the Research Conference.

She noted that it is a good feeling to have accomplished this for the SRHA and expressed thanks to God and all persons who participated in the research.

The study revealed information that will help Coordinators at the national and local levels to devise strategies necessary to strengthen the existing screening programme, educate risk factors of the disease as well as to empower health care workers to improve compliance to the screening guidelines.

## Health Ministry's Corner

### Health Minister Reminds Private Doctors of Obligation to Report Suspected Zika Virus Cases

Minister of Health, Hon. Horace Dalley is reminding all physicians of their obligation under the Public Health Act and Regulations to report any notifiable suspected case of an illness to the Ministry of Health in the manner prescribed by the Act. Minister Dalley indicated that in the case of the zika virus these notifications are to be made within 24 hours.

“Let me remind private practitioners and laboratories that under the Public Health Act zika virus infection is a class one notifiable disease which means it must be reported within 24 hours on suspicion,” said Minister Dalley.

In light of this Minister Dalley is requesting that Dr. Sandra Williams Phillips provide the Ministry of

Health with the information she claims she has regarding zika virus cases in the format prescribed by the Public Health Act.

He says she should include the names of those patients whom she may have seen in her private practice who she believed showed symptoms similar to those of the zika virus.

“I am extending an invitation to Dr. Williams Phillips to meet with me and provide any information she may have on this matter either tomorrow (Thursday, February 4, 2016 at 1:00pm or Friday, February 5, 2016 at 11:00am,” Minister Dalley said.

**Contact: Communications Unit, Ministry of Health**

## Wellness Bytes

### “Physical Fitness And You”



Did you know there are five components to physical fitness? They are:

- **CARDIORESPIRATORY:** Also called aerobic fitness or cardiovascular fitness. Cardio-respiratory exercise increases the capacity of the heart,

lung and blood carrying vessels to deliver oxygen.

- **MUSCLE ENDURANCE:** Refers to a muscle's ability to perform repeated contractions or hold static contractions.

- **MUSCLE STRENGTH:** Refers to the amount of force a muscle can exert in a single all-out effort.
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Refers to a joint's range of mobility (ROM).

Flexibility is specific to the joint type.

- **BODY COMPOSITION:** The ratio of lean body mass compared to fat mass.

**Pay attention to all these areas.**

## HR And You:

### “Public Employees and the Media”

- Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments must ensure that mechanisms and procedures are in place to facilitate transparency and access to information consistent with government policy.
- Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments must appoint designated spokesperson(s) within the Ministry/Department to respond to public enquiries and requests for information.
- Any material, statement, documentation or other forms of communication for publication in any media must be approved by the Permanent Secretary/Head of Department or other authorized personnel.
- Where an officer is called upon to respond to the media or participate in interviews on public policy, care must be exercised to provide only factual information for explanation and clarification.



**Please submit your articles and feedback to:**

**[latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm](mailto:latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm)**

**Deadline: February 29, 2016**



Subject to the provision of the Access to Information Act, employees must obtain written approval and clearance from the appropriate authority to make public or communicate with the media or to any private individual, organization or entity any documents, papers or information, not in the public domain which may come into the employee's possession in an official or unofficial capacity.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

- All employees shall adhere to the provisions of the relevant legislation pertaining to the utilization and dissemination of public information.
- Employees who are required to produce into evidence, in any court of law, any official document of a confidential nature, shall inform the Minister, and Permanent Secretary/Head of Department of the nature of the document.
- Other Ministries, Departments /Agencies that may be involved and/or affected shall be consulted.
- The advice of the Attorney General should be obtained prior to any such disclosure.



## Staff Highlight

### Southern Regional Health Authority's 2015 Awards Dinner

*Please see below  
photographic  
highlights from  
the Southern Re-  
gional Health Au-  
thority's 2015  
Awards Dinner:*





## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF:

**Shemroy  
McCarthy**

**Pharmacist,  
Chapelton  
Hospital**

5. Are you guided or driven by any philosophy or mantra?

**Yes. Persevere and Excel.**

6. What do you consider to be your biggest achievement to date, personally or professionally?

**Achieving a Bachelor degree in Pharmacy.**

7. Who or what inspires you to do your best?

**My family.**

8. What is the most important life lesson you have learnt?

**“Money isn't everything...while reaching for your dreams, never forget the present.”**

9. Describe yourself in three words using letters that begin only with S and M.

**Meticulous, Sweet, Smart.**

10. If you were to get an unexpected visit from a colleague on a day off or on the weekend, what is the most likely thing you would be doing?

**(Laughs) I would probably be working.**

11. Who is your favourite actor and singer?

**A band called “3 Doors Down”.**

12. Do you have any professional advice for fellow colleagues?

**“There is more than one way to achieve your goals or to achieve excellence. Find your talent and pursue that. Don't follow the crowd.”**

1. How long have you been working with the Ministry of Health/southern region?

**I begun in 2009 and went off on study leave in 2010 and resumed in September 2015.**

2. What has your experience been like?

**The experience has been good. I like that the organization is forward thinking and looking at growth which makes it an exciting time for young professionals.**

3. What inspired you to choose your profession?

**My mother was a Pharmacist and I would always tell her that one day I will supervise her and that joke became a reality in terms of becoming a Pharmacist.**

4. If you did not choose your present profession, what would you have chosen?

**At one point I considered being a Writer.**