



Operating Theatres Renovated at Mandeville Regional Hospital



Chief Executive Officer at Mandeville Regional Hospital Alwyn Miller in conversation with operating theatre nurse manager, Rhodell Morris-Knott on Tuesday.

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In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Operating Theatres Renovated at Mandeville Regional Hospital



Inside one of the newly upgraded operating theatres at Mandeville Regional Hospital.

Four of six operating theatres have been renovated at a cost of \$13.4 million to bolster infection control and prevention at Mandeville Regional Hospital.

Chief Executive officer Alwyn Miller said the hospital's four main theatres underwent extensive upgrading recently. The other two operating theatres are used for maternity services and ophthalmology.

He said the main theatres are used for general surgeries, urology, ear nose and throat, orthopaedics and gynaecology.

"The renovation that was done here was with the intention to do preventative maintenance to restore the walls and flooring of the theatre and we used the opportunity, as well, to do some changes in terms of storage facilities, doors, lighting, plumbing, all of that," he told the Jamaica Observer on Tuesday. "The intention was to restore the theatre so that we don't have any disruption to surgical services during the course of the year as a result of maintenance issues or any sort of infection control issue, so we came in and we did this restoration, mitigation measure if you will, and basically to make it a safer space in terms of infection control and a more comfortable space for the staff to work and

patients to receive their surgery," he added.

Operating theatre nurse manager Rhodell Morris-Knott said staff welcomed the two-month renovation work as the environment is more comfortable. "Theatre four is the smallest of the four suites that we have in the [operating room]. The works that were actually done were on the flooring and the walls just the same as in the passage way. The doors were changed. We are now moving from the board doors to the metal doors for this theatre suite," she said.

"We started the renovation process in November and we ended in the latter part of January. Overall the staff are impressed with the outcome of the work. We are seeing where the improvement has lifted our spirit..." she added.

Miller said the renovation was done during the period of general servicing of the theatres in December.

"We [usually] stop for a few weeks leading up to Christmas to do cleaning, restoration of electrical, plumbing systems, ventilation systems... We went a little further to do the restoration of the walls and flooring. At the end of the day we are in a better position in terms of the functioning of the theatre and its ability to stay up for the entire year with minimal disruptions," he said.

"Some surgeries were rescheduled during the December [to], January period and since the theatre has resumed they have been going full speed ahead. We use this opportunity to explain to our patients, because we know that they were disturbed and their surgeries rescheduled, but it is necessary for us to do this activity to ensure we have continuity of services," he said.

Source: The Jamaica Observer

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Bellefield Health Centre Dental Clinic Reopened



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (fourth left), along with (from left) Regional Dental Surgeon at the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Dr. Shanelle Dempster-Peart, Member of Parliament for Manchester Central, Hon. Rhoda Moy Crawford, Director of Grey Orthodontics, Dr. Susan Grey, Councillor for the Bellefield Division, Mario Mitchell, and Chief Dental Officer in the Ministry, Dr. Irving McKenzie, at the retrofitted and upgraded dental unit at the Bellefield Health Centre in Manchester, on April 17.

Residents of Bellefield and surrounding communities are set to benefit from improved oral healthcare services, following the official reopening of the retrofitted and upgraded dental unit at the Bellefield Health Centre in Manchester.

The project, valued at \$6.4 million, was funded by donor organisation Grey Orthodontics, and marks a significant boost to healthcare delivery in the parish.

The newly modernised dental clinic is expected to greatly enhance access to quality oral healthcare, particularly for residents who previously faced challenges accessing such services. The facility has been fully redesigned and equipped to provide a more functional and patient-friendly environment.

at the reopening ceremony on April 17, Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, underscored the importance of advocacy in advancing public health, particularly oral healthcare. He praised the commitment of stakeholders involved in the project and called for greater community participation in promoting healthy practices.

“Health requires advocacy. It is one thing to say good oral health is important, but if more people, teachers, community members, politicians, and private practitioners champion the cause, the community will be a better place,” Dr. Tufton said. The Minister noted that the reopening of the facility represents a tangible improvement in the well-being of the Bellefield community.

“Bellefield as a community today is better off

In his address with the opening of this oral health facility than it was last week. That is what public health is about, making communities better,” he stated. Member of Parliament for Manchester Central, Hon. Rhoda Moy Crawford, also welcomed the reopening, describing the upgraded dental unit as a major step forward in expanding accessible healthcare services across the constituency.

“Dental care is serious business, and it can be very expensive. When we can offer these services to our constituents, it is a very big deal. This facility will benefit not just Bellefield, but the wider constituency,” she added.

For her part, Director of Grey Orthodontics, Dr. Susan Grey, explained that her decision to invest in the clinic stemmed from a desire to make a meaningful impact in Jamaica’s public health sector.

“This wasn’t just about fixing teeth; it was about changing lives. When I first visited the clinic, I saw the challenges, but I also saw the potential. We made the decision to completely rebuild the space, it was redesigned, re-wired, and replumbed to create a modern facility that can truly serve the community,” Dr. Grey said.

The reopening of the Bellefield Health Centre Dental Clinic stands as a testament to the power of public-private partnership and community-driven development, with stakeholders expressing hope that the initiative will inspire similar investments in healthcare facilities across Jamaica.

Source: The Jamaica Information Service

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Tufton Tours Black River Hospital and Black River Health Centre

Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, toured the Black River Hospital and Black River Health Centre on Thursday, April 30, 2026, where he received updates on the continued restoration of health services in St. Elizabeth.

The visit highlighted substantial progress on the hospital's wards, operating theatres and health centre operations, as teams work to strengthen service delivery and support residents following Hurricane Melissa.

Residents are encouraged to return to their health centres for routine care, chronic illness management, screenings and access to medication.

SRHA remains committed to advancing safe, reliable and patient-centred healthcare for the people of St. Elizabeth.



In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Social Media Posts About Only One Working Operating Theatre at Mandeville Hospital are False

The Southern Regional Health Authority is advising the public that all six operating theatres at the Mandeville Regional Hospital in Manchester, are fully operational.

Recent posts on social media suggesting that only one of the six operating theatres is functional, are false.

The health authority recently publicized that J\$13.4 million was spent to extensively upgrade four of the six operating theatres at the hospital in recent months, a proactive move to maintain and improve the operating theatres.

The scope of works included: resurfacing of the walls and flooring; a change to the storage facilities, doors, lighting and plumbing, among other works.

The renovations have improved safety, infection control, and conditions for staff and patients.

The SRHA is encouraging persons to desist from sharing false information and confirm with credible sources before posting on social media platforms.



Inside one of the newly upgraded operating theatres at Mandeville Regional Hospital.

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Rotary and Rotaract Clubs Donate \$2-million Worth of Equipment to Mandeville



From Right: Senior medical officer at Mandeville Regional Hospital Dr Everton McIntosh (right); Chief Executive Officer Alwyn Miller; president of the Rotary Club of Mandeville Ava Dunn ; department nurse manager at the hospital Jacqueline Leakey; head of obstetrics and gynaecology Dr Orville Blair ; and foundation chair of the Rotaract Club of Mandeville Junior Bailey pose for a photo with the donated equipment.

The obstetrics and gynaecology department at Mandeville Regional Hospital has been gifted well-needed equipment including a colposcopy machine for screening of cervical cancer, courtesy of the Rotary and Rotaract clubs in Mandeville.

Senior medical officer at the Mandeville Regional Hospital Dr Everton McIntosh said the equipment is vital to the hospital's care for its patients. April is observed as Cervical Cancer Awareness Month in Jamaica.

"This is a big deal for us at Mandeville Hospital. Cervical cancer is very common in Jamaica and worldwide; it is the second most common form of cancer in females after breast cancer and accounts for a significant morbidity and mortality...because of delays in getting screening," McIntosh said during a handing over ceremony on Monday.

He stressed the importance of patients being screened and encouraged women to do their regular Pap smears. "There is this fear

where people are afraid to get screened, because they may find out that they have cancer, but that is the whole point. Prevention is better than cure. That principle still applies. You want to catch it in the early stage before it gets to the cancerous region, or even if it is cancer you can catch it early enough, you can be treated by surgery," he said.

"Unfortunately, most females with cervical cancer present at a late stage. We are talking about stage three, stage four advanced cancers where sometimes surgery is not even an option... and that is not a very nice situation for the patient. It is totally preventable, so do your Pap smears if you are of childbearing age," added McIntosh.

Additionally, the hospital was given 10 Doppler machines by the Rotary and Rotaract clubs in Mandeville.

"We are exceedingly grateful for these gifts and I can assure you that they will be put to great use and will make a tremendous difference in terms of the quality of care that we offer here at Mandeville Regional Hospital for our women," he said. President of the Rotary Club of Mandeville Ava Dunn said the organisation will continue to support the Mandeville Regional Hospital.

"This project has been sometime in the making. This is a gift to the hospital and the people of central Jamaica. As Rotarians we believe this equipment will be best served to the women in the region who use Mandeville Regional Hospital. Talking about cervical cancer is not easy, it is surrounded by silence, stigma and misinformation, but Rotary is built on breaking barriers together," she said.

She lauded the Rotaract Club of Mandeville for also contributing towards the donation of equipment to the medical facility.

"We pledge our continued support to the Mandeville Regional Hospital," she said. **Source: The Jamaica Observer**

Facilities on the Move

Manchester Health Department Care Unit Hosts Diabetic Foot Care Event

On Thursday, April 16, the Manchester Health Department through its Foot Care Unit hosted a Diabetic Foot Care event, highlighting the importance of prevention, early detection, and proper foot care for persons living with diabetes.

It was held at the Mandeville Comprehensive Health Centre and provided useful information on how patients are referred to the foot care programme, whether through a curative clinician or through Community Health Aides during field activities, including home visits.

Patients were also encouraged to inspect their feet daily for corns, calluses, and long or thickened nails. Using a mirror or asking a family member to assist with daily checks can help with early identification of problems.

The team emphasised that diabetic patients should be screened at every visit, with more detailed inspections done every seven months. High-risk patients can also be identified and prioritised early through ongoing inspection, especially when blood sugar levels are poorly controlled.

Good blood sugar control, regular screening, and daily foot checks all play an important role in reducing complications.



Facilities on the Move

May Pen Hospital Celebrates Medical Laboratory Professionals Week

On Thursday, April 22, 2026, the May Pen Hospital's medical laboratory professionals hosted a health fair, providing a wide range of health tests and screenings in support of community wellness and early detection.

The week of activities also included a school tour and a church service, bringing outreach beyond the hospital. The celebrations continue this Sunday, April 26, 2026 at 6:00 A.M , at the May Pen Hospital, with an exciting 5K Run/Walk, encouraging healthy lifestyles.



Facilities on the Move

More Than 51 Units Collected at Percy Junor Hospital Blood Drive

The Percy Junor Hospital (PJH) in partnership with STEM Uprising Corporation and National Blood Transfusion Service, hosted their annual blood drive on the hospital grounds in Manchester on Friday, April 24, 2026.

The successful blood drive yielded more than 51 units of blood which will save the lives of scores of Jamaicans.

Remember, one unit of blood can save up to three lives: DONATE TODAY. A very big thank you to all who contributed blood, making a huge impact in our community!



Facilities on the Move

Students Get Active for National School Moves Day at Maggotty High

On Friday, April 24, 2026, the Maggotty High School in St. Elizabeth observed National School Moves Day with students, teachers and staff participating in organized physical activities.

The event also included nearby primary and basic schools, focusing on movement, teamwork and promoting healthy habits.

Here are some highlights from the day.



Facilities on the Move

Bethabara Primary School Gets Active for National School Moves Day

Students, teachers and staff got moving for National School Moves Day at Bethabara Primary School in Manchester.

From jumping jacks and skipping rope to hula hoop, football, netball and basketball, the day encouraged students to have fun while building coordination, social skills and healthier habits.

The initiative promotes at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily for children, along with healthy choices such as drinking more water and eating fruits and vegetables. These habits can help reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases later in life.

Southern Regional Health Authority continues to support activities that help our children build healthier bodies, sharper minds and stronger communities.

Let's keep moving, drinking water and making healthier choices every day.



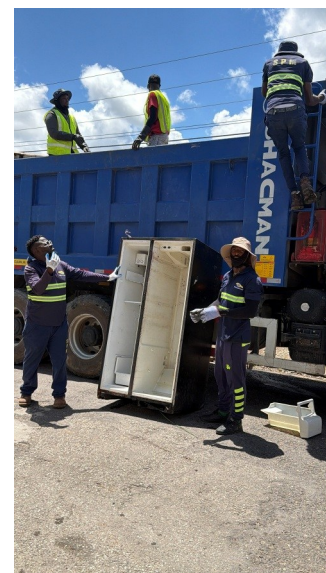
Facilities on the Move

Kellits Community Benefits from SRHA Integrated Waste Removal Programme

The Southern Regional Health Authority, in collaboration with Southern Parks and Markets (SPM) Waste Management Limited, carried out its integrated bulky waste clean-up programme in Kellits, Rhoden Hall Community, North Clarendon, on Wednesday, April 29, 2026.

The initiative focused on removing bulky waste items, including old zincs, stoves, unused appliances and debris left behind by Hurricane Melissa, which can collect water and create breeding sites for mosquitoes, rats and other pests.

Residents are encouraged to keep their surroundings clean and contact their local authorities, SPM Waste Management Limited or the National Solid Waste Management Authority for support with the removal of bulky waste items. Together, we are protecting health, improving sanitation and building safer communities.



Facilities on the Move

Manchester Health Department Hosts World Tuberculosis Day Symposium

On Wednesday, April 1, 2026, the Manchester Health Department hosted a World Tuberculosis (TB) Day Symposium at the Cecil Charlton Hall, bringing together nurses and healthcare workers from vulnerable communities. Participants took part in interactive sessions and heard from key speakers on TB risks, prevention, testing, and control. The event was held under the theme “Yes! We Can End TB.”



Staff Highlight

Saluting our Administrative Professionals



To all Administrative Professionals, thank you for your dedication, professionalism, and the invaluable support you provide each day. Your hard work behind the scenes keeps organizations running smoothly and efficiently. Your commitment, organization, and positive attitude do not go unnoticed. We celebrate and appreciate all that you do. Thank you for being the backbone of the workplace and for making a difference every

Special Spotlight: Equisha Cunningham-Cole



Equisha Cunningham-Cole is an administrative professional turned nurse who previously served as Senior Secretary to the Director of Nursing Services at Black River Hospital. She began her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing at Sigma College of Nursing and Applied Sciences and later transferred to University of Technology, Jamaica, where she successfully completed her studies.

She passed the Regional Examination for Nurse Registration (RENr) on her first attempt and now proudly serves as a nurse at Black River Hospital.

Staff Highlight

From an Uncertain Start to a Career Defined by Purpose: Kelli-Ann Turner's Journey in Public Health



Kelli-Ann Turner

For many, a career in public health begins with a clear sense of purpose. For one public health inspector, however, the journey started with uncertainty, and a single offhand comment that changed everything.

Fresh out of high school, Kelli-Ann Turner found herself without a clear path. While her peers moved on to sixth form, she entered the work-

force, taking a job as a cashier. It didn't take long for her to realize it wasn't where she belonged. It wasn't until she accepted a position as an accounting clerk at the St. Thomas Health Department that things began to shift. There, surrounded by public health inspectors, she got her first glimpse into a field she had never seriously considered.

"One day, while joking around, one of the officers said, 'Why don't you try this? It is fun,'" she recalls.

That simple suggestion sparked a curiosity that soon became a calling.

Encouraged by her supervisor, who saw potential in her, she made the bold decision to pursue public health professionally. The road ahead was anything but easy. She secured two years of paid leave and an additional two years unpaid to study, piecing together financial support through National Youth Service contributions, The Jamaica Values and Attitudes (JAMVAT) programme, and work-and-travel opportunities.

"It was very hard, but I remained determined. I give God all the praise because without Him, this couldn't be possible."

That determination paid off. Over the past decade, she has built a dynamic and impactful career in environmental health. Starting with an internship in the Porus District and completing a community project in Bellefield, she officially entered the workforce in 2013.

Since then, she has steadily risen through the ranks, serving in roles such as Veterinary Public Health Inspector, Food Safety Coordinator, and Institutional Health Specialist. Today, she supervises the Newport Health District in Manchester and acts as the Parish Programme Specialist of Institutional Health in Manchester. For her, public health is anything but routine.

"I must say, it is rewarding in that public health is very dynamic, it's not a one-stop shop. Yes, there are standards and regulations and we go by the book, but then there's always something new happening as it relates to public health. I've learned and I keep on learning."

Eager to deepen her impact, she pursued a master's degree in Safety, Security and Emergency Management at the Eastern Kentucky University. The programme offered a natural extension of her work, connecting public health to emergency preparedness and occupational safety.

That connection became strikingly real when Hurricane Melissa struck Jamaica shortly after she completed her degree. Responding to the devastation in St. Elizabeth was a defining moment. Entire communities were upended, homes demolished and many basic necessities destroyed.

"It put us in a trance. Reality hit us, but we still had to be public health inspectors. We couldn't let emotions get the best of us."

Her training proved invaluable. Before the storm, she and her team inspected shelters to ensure they met sanitation and safety standards. Afterward, they returned to assess conditions, educate residents, and help prevent further public health crises.

"We are the vanguard of public health. It's a cycle, and we have to ensure we're protecting the public as best as possible."

In an unexpected twist, her commitment to service meant missing her own graduation ceremony. While others celebrated in person, she was on the ground responding to the hurricane. Still, she has no regrets.

"I was so happy to serve. I watched online and saw my name. It was very rewarding. I felt self-actualised. To be honest, I am overwhelmed, to see where I started out from and where I am at now, I am very proud of myself."

Balancing graduate studies, full-time work, and single motherhood made her achievement even more remarkable. With two young daughters at home, her days stretched late into the night, helping with homework, preparing meals, and then studying into the early hours before starting again at dawn.

"I did very well, for the entire course, I would have gotten two B's, every other course was full A's. It was very challenging, but very, very rewarding."

Looking ahead, her focus remains firmly on prevention, education, and mentorship. She hopes to guide the next generation, sharing both her knowledge and her story.

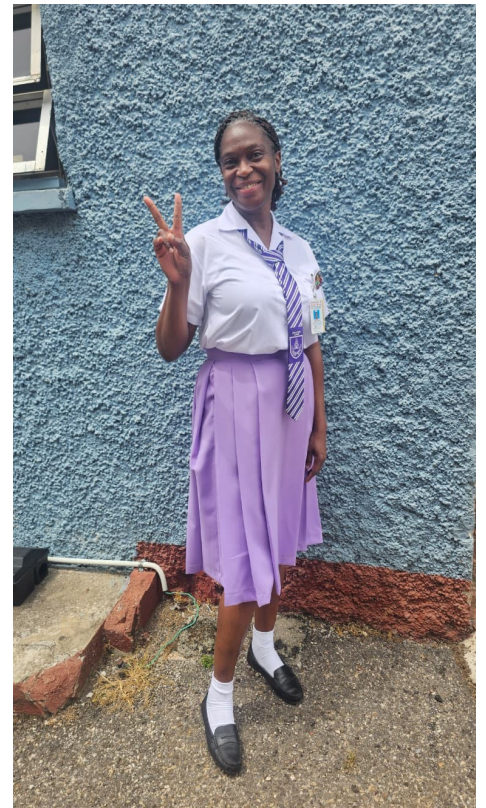
"Make a plan. It might not happen in your timeline, but have faith and believe in yourself. No matter how educated you are, you can learn from anyone."

From an uncertain start to a career defined by purpose and resilience, her journey is a powerful reminder that sometimes, the right path finds you, often when you least expect it.

Staff Highlight

Mandeville Regional Hospital Uniform Day

See highlights of the Mandeville Regional Hospital's Uniform Day on Friday, March 27, 2026. Embodying unity and professionalism! Let's embrace #TeamSpirit, uplift morale, and stand stronger together!





HR And You:

“Interim Corner”



INTERIM CORNER

EXAMPLE OF HOW THE INTERIM EVALUATION SHOULD BE COMPLETED

Once an employee is “off track”, a reason is required and the agreed way forward. Below is an example:

SECTION A – QUANTIFIABLE OUTPUTS

Related Major Tasks	On Track	Not on Track	Barriers/Constraints	Action agreed or other comment
Complete PMAS related assessments for supervisees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Prepare and submit reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reports submitted after the agreed deadline each month	Reports will be completed 2 days before the deadline and scheduled to send.
Attend meetings and other fora	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

HRM&D Unit



PR NAVIGATOR

Services Provided by the Corporate Communications and Public Relations Branch

The Corporate Communications & Public Relations Unit is responsible for enhancing and promoting the organization's core values through the use of several platforms, including traditional, digital and social media.

The department's mission is to effectively and accurately disseminate information about the SRHA's programmes, projects, services, and events to the public, in order to establish and maintain a positive public image.

The functions of the department include, but is not limited to:

- Media Relations & News Dissemination
- Digital & Social Media Communications
- Content Creation & Publications
- Event Planning, Management and Representation
- Protocol Guidance
- Internal Communication Support
- Research & Monitoring
- Crisis & Emergency Communication
- Education & Awareness Campaigns
- Analytics & Reporting

Infohub

Wellness Bytes

“Water and Physical Activity”



It is important to drink plenty of water before, during and after any form of physical activity. Water is necessary for hydration, that is, to maintain the fluid level in the body. You should drink water on a regular basis to maintain a healthy body.

Benefits of Water during Exercise

- Helps to maintain adequate fluid in the body
- Keeps the body cool
- Prevents muscle fatigue
- Aids in quicker recovery after workout

How to ensure that your body has enough water

- Drink water before you feel thirsty
- Drink cool water as it helps to lower body temperature
- Do not skip water stations if you are running a race
- Carry a bottle of water and drink it
- Weigh yourself before and immediately after exercise and replace each pound lost with 2 cups of water

How to tell if you are dehydrated

Dehydration means your body does not have as much water and fluids as it should.

Signs of dehydration are:

- Increased thirst
- Dry lips, mouth and skin
- Headaches

- Difficulty breathing, dizziness, weakness
- Increased body temperature
- Increased breathing and pulse rate
- Dark coloured urine / infrequent urination
- Mental confusion
- Constipation
- Restlessness / Lethargy
- Wheezy breathing

Do you need sports drink for exercise?

Unless you are exercising for more than one hour, water is the best choice for rehydration. For activity periods lasting over one hour, sports drink is helpful for replacing energy, fluids and some salt lost from the body during workout.

Source: Ministry of Health & Wellness

The Culinary Corner

Curried Pumpkin Soup

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

Number of Servings: 8

Ingredients

Filling:

1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

1/2 cup chopped onion

2 tablespoons margarine

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon curry powder

3 cups vegetable broth (see notes)

1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin

1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk

1 tablespoon honey

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

fresh or frozen chives (optional)

Method

In 4 quart (or larger) saucepan, sauté the mushrooms and onion in margarine until tender.

Stir in the flour and curry powder until blended.

Gradually add the broth.

Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.

Add the pumpkin, milk, honey, salt, pepper, and nutmeg; heat through.

Garnish with chives if desired.

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes:

Broth can be canned or made using bouillon.

For each cup of broth use 1 cup very hot water and 1 teaspoon or 1 cube bouillon.

Try substituting cooked winter squash or cooked pumpkin for canned pumpkin.

Mash and measure out 2 cups for soup

Honey is not recommended for children under 1 year old.



Source: foodhero.org

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

We welcome your input.

Please submit your articles and feedback for the May edition to:

The Corporate Communications & Public Relations Branch

Email: latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

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Why did the employee put a glass of apple juice on top of her laptop whenever she closed it?



Cider-security.

RD

The Lighter Side

