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Jamalco Donates 20 Paediatric Beds Valued At \$3.8M to Mandeville Regional Hospital



Chairman of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Michael Stern (second left), examines one of the 20 paediatric beds donated to the Mandeville Regional Hospital in Manchester by bauxite and alumina company, Jamalco. The beds were formally handed over during a ceremony at the hospital on May 14. Also pictured (from left) are the hospital's Paediatric Consultant, Dr. Jacqueline Dunkley Thompson; Senior Medical Officer, Dr. Everton McIntosh; Management Committee Chairman, John O. Minott; and Paediatric Consultant, Dr. Shani Fletcher Groves.

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In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Jamalco Donates 20 Paediatric Beds Valued At \$3.8M to Mandeville Regional Hospital



Chairman of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Michael Stern (second right), is briefed on the features of one of the 20 paediatric beds donated to the Mandeville Regional Hospital in Manchester by bauxite and alumina company, Jamalco, by Senior Medical Officer at the institution, Dr. Everton McIntosh (third right). Also pictured (from left) are Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer, Century Aluminum, Rob Hoffman; General Manager – Clarendon Alumina Production; Shanice Neisbeth Castle; State Minister in the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information and Manchester Central Member of Parliament, Hon. Rhoda Moy Crawford; and Mandeville Regional Hospital Management Committee Chairman, John O. Minott.

meaningful way,” Ms. Crawford said.

The State Minister noted that the bauxite company consistently reaches out to Members of Parliament for the names of young people who can benefit from its training and certification programmes.

She also lauded the company for periodically reaching out to senior citizens with generously assembled care packages.

Meanwhile, General Manager, Clarendon Alumina Production Limited, Shanice Neisbeth Castle, recalled the

Jamalco’s most recent assistance was the refurbishment of the Accident and Emergency Department at Lionel Town Hospital in Clarendon.

Mr. Hoffman noted that the company remains committed to meeting the needs of the communities in which it operates.

“[This] donation of 20 paediatric beds should ease capacity constraints, improve patient comfort and support the doctors and nurses who work with these patients. For children, a hospital can be a scary place. So the fact that they can have a comfortable bed in which medical professionals can administer care with a little more ease, will make it a little easier on their visit here and,” Mr. Hoffman said. In her greetings, State Minister in the

Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information and Member of Parliament for Manchester Central, Hon. Rhoda Moy Crawford, described the donation as a significant gesture.

She noted that a company like Jamalco takes its corporate social responsibility seriously, demonstrating this commitment in a meaningful way through the donation of the 20 paediatric beds.

“Too often we see the negatives, and lot of what is not often told is the hard work and sacrifice of the doctors and nurses here at Mandeville Regional Hospital. I have seen them in action and I know they do the best they can. Jamalco is always doing something in the region – always giving back in a

benefits she and her family received from one of the island’s bauxite companies during her childhood.

She emphasised that an industry—whether bauxite, education, or healthcare—is measured not only by production figures or export numbers, but also by its impact on the lives of the people and communities it serves.

“This community in Manchester has been a big part of our bauxite and alumina industry, especially Jamalco. Without you, our industry cannot continue... so we must give back. The recent passage of Hurricane Melissa was a sobering reminder of preparedness and strong public institutions especially our hospitals,” Mrs. Neisbeth Castle said.

Source: Jamaica Information Service

In the News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Health Minister Urges Citizens to Return to Local Health Centres



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, in discussion with (from left) Chairman of the Southern Regional Health Authority Board, Michael Stern; Regional Director for the Southern Regional Health Authority, Michael Bent; Parish Manager, St Elizabeth Health Services, Sean Brissett; Director of Nursing Services at Black River Hospital, Maria Stampp, and Senior Medical Officer, Black River Hospital, Dr. Sherriff Imoru, during a tour of the Black River Hospital.

noting that “we are going to have to work harder... the community health aides and the primary healthcare team,” to get citizens of the parish to come back out to their health centres. “We understand the trauma that they have been through, but we don’t want them to neglect their chronic illnesses, their screening opportunities, and their access to drugs. So, I want to use the opportunity to encourage that, and that’s a challenge that I’ve set for the parish team here. We have to go out into communities and spend some

Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, is urging residents to return to their local health centres for chronic disease management, preventive screenings, and reliable access to medications. He noted that the centres, particularly those impacted by Hurricane Melissa last October in the western region, are being reopened to relieve overburdened hospitals.

Speaking at a press briefing following a tour of the Black River Hospital and Health Centre in St. Elizabeth on April 30, he said that in addition to decongesting the hospitals and extending essential services to underserved communities, the initiative will place primary care at the forefront of the nation’s health strategy.

The Minister urged communities to brace the reopened health centres, stressing that accessible primary care is foundational to

long-term public health, economic resilience, and the well-being of Jamaica’s most vulnerable populations.

“I am encouraged by the work that is taking place in the parish. There are 23 health centres in the parish of St. Elizabeth; 10 were badly damaged. My information from the team is that all, except this one here at Black River, have been reoccupied. This Black River Health Centre is now under construction, and within a month we expect it to be back in operation. They are using a temporary facility with containers now on the compound, and that seems to be going well. So, we do expect by the end of May, early June, for all 23 health centres to be back up,” Dr. Tufton said. The Minister said that he has been reliably informed that just about 80 per cent, or a little above that, of patients are back in at the primary facilities,

time encouraging the mothers, the children, the daughters and the grandparents to come back to their health centres,” the Minister added.

Dr. Tufton said the outreach aims to reconnect patients with ongoing care, ensuring continuity of treatment and habit-forming routines that prevent avoidable hospitalisations. The Minister also stressed the importance of a data-driven approach, with metrics to monitor patient re-engagement, screening completion, and adherence to treatment plans.

The Black River Hospital and the health centre were devastated by the hurricane. When restored, the hospital is projected to offer nearly 150 beds, a figure that underscores the region’s demand for expanded capacity. **Source: Jamaica Information Service**

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Persons Urged to Adopt Proper Oral Hygiene Practices



Dental Surgeon at the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Dr. Shanelle Dempster-Peart, addresses the recent official opening of the retrofitted and upgraded dental unit at the Bellefield Health Centre, in Manchester.

Dental Surgeon at the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), Dr. Shanelle Dempster-Peart, has urged persons to adopt proper oral hygiene practices to reduce tooth decay and gum disease. She made the call during the recent official opening of the retrofitted and upgraded dental unit at the Bellefield Health Centre in Manchester. Dr. Dempster-Peart explained that dental decay remains the most common oral disease affecting people across all age groups. She noted that once an individual has teeth, they are at risk of developing cavities, stressing that children, adolescents, adults and the elderly are all vulnerable to the condition.

She pointed out that frequent consumption of sugary foods and beverages significantly increases the risk of tooth decay. According to Dr. Dempster-Peart, naturally occurring bacteria in the mouth feed on sugar and produce acids capable of breaking down tooth enamel, despite enamel being one of the hardest substances in the human body.

She emphasised that the disease often begins in small, manageable stages and can be prevented or treated early if individuals seek timely care. Dr. Dempster-Peart highlighted that the upgraded dental unit at the Bellefield Health Centre will

now provide services such as fillings and sealants free of cost.

She explained that early intervention allows dentists to save affected teeth and prevent cavities from spreading to healthy teeth. However, she warned that delayed treatment can lead to severe pain, infections and, in some cases, tooth loss.

She further noted that poor oral health can have serious social and economic consequences, adding that untreated dental pain can affect productivity, disrupt sleep and cause individuals to miss work or school while awaiting treatment. In some instances, she added, the loss of front teeth can negatively affect a person’s confidence and willingness to pursue employment opportunities.

Dr. Dempster-Peart also underscored the connection between oral health and non-communicable diseases, describing dental decay as a major public health concern throughout the life course. She stressed the importance of reducing sugar consumption through education, taxation measures and improved oral hygiene practices. “Sugars and oral health really go together, but not in a good way,” she said, while encouraging persons to take preventive measures seriously.

Providing practical guidance to residents, Dr. Dempster-Peart encouraged regular brushing with fluoride toothpaste and informed attendees that fluoridated salt products available locally can also help strengthen teeth. She advised persons who may occasionally be unable to access toothpaste to still practise the mechanical action of brushing their teeth, even if only with salt water as a temporary measure.

While cautioning against the prolonged use of home remedies, such as baking soda, the dental surgeon reminded residents that proper brushing techniques remain essential to maintaining oral health.

She recommended brushing for at least two minutes twice daily and encouraged community members to seek assistance from health centres whenever oral care products or professional dental services are needed.

Source: Jamaica Information Service

In The News: Southern Regional Health Authority

Mental Health Boost for Communities in Southern Jamaica



Some of the participants during the problem management plus training.

Some 35 persons participated in an intensive five-day Problem Management Plus training, which will boost access to timely, practical and evidence-based mental health support in communities.

The training workshop which is an initiative of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA), the Ministry of Health & Wellness and the Pan American Health Organization, equipped frontline workers and community-based providers with skills to identify psychological distress early, provide structured emotional support, and appropriately link individuals to additional care when needed.

“This is particularly important in communities recovering from disasters and other stressful life events, where many persons may experience anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, or difficulty coping but may not readily access specialized mental health services,” SRHA Regional Psychiatrist, Dr. Janique Baldwin-Miller explained.

She added that the workshop forms part of the health authority’s ongoing commitment to strengthening mental health and psychosocial support services across the southern region.

“The workshop was an intensive forty-hour, face-to-face training, which equipped the participants with practical, evidence-based skills to support individuals experiencing psychological distress and other mental health challenges” Dr. Baldwin-Miller said.

The psychologist added that the Problem Management Plus training is a psychological intervention developed by the World Health Organization to support adults experiencing adversity, stress, and emotional difficulties. The intervention focuses on practical strategies that empower individuals to better manage problems, strengthen coping skills, and improve overall well-being.

“This initiative comes at a critical time as the region continues to strengthen mental health services in the aftermath of disasters and in response to the growing demand for accessible, community-based mental health care.

The training, which was held in Manchester from May 11- 15, 2026, will also help to build local capacity by creating a larger network of trained personnel and reduce stigma surrounding mental health by increasing awareness.

Source: Southern Regional Health Authority

Facilities on the Move

Clarendon Health Department Mental Health Unit Hosts Mental Health Seminar

On Friday, May 29, 2026, the Clarendon Health Department’s Mental Health Unit, in association with the May Pen Hospital, hosted a Mental Health Seminar on the hospital’s grounds, featuring presentations from psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers.

Discussions focused on important topics including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), developmental disorders in children, and mental health support strategies, highlighting the importance of awareness, education and early intervention.



Facilities on the Move

Mandeville Comprehensive Clinic Launches Child Month School Invasion

The Mandeville Comprehensive Health Centre Mental Health Unit was in action during its Child Month School Invasion with visits to schools including: Pike Primary, Craighead Primary, Belair Early Childhood, Christiana Leased Primary and Infant School, Cross Keys High, McIntosh Memorial Primary and Preparatory, Campbell’s Castle Infant and Primary and Villa Road Primary.

The team engaged students in meaningful conversations about mental health through great listening, thoughtful questions, and interactive discussions aimed at encouraging healthy minds and emotional wellbeing among our children.



Facilities on the Move

Mandeville Regional Hospital Renal Unit Hosts Patient Dietician Seminar

Healthy choices play an important role in managing kidney health.

On Wednesday, May 20, 2026, the Mandeville Regional Hospital Renal Unit hosted a Patients Dietitian Seminar aimed at empowering patients with practical knowledge to support healthier living.

Patients received guidance on: proper nutrition and balanced meal choices, foods to avoid for better renal health, smart shopping tips for healthier eating habits, the importance of taking medication correctly, safe and appropriate exercise practices. The seminar also featured food displays and informative presentations designed to help patients make better day-to-day health decisions while managing their condition.

The Southern Regional Health Authority remains committed to promoting patient education and improving health outcomes through compassionate care and community engagement.



Facilities on the Move

Friends of Mandeville Hospital Donates Six Bassinets to Paediatric Ward

Thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Mandeville Hospital Foundation, the Mandeville Regional Hospital in Manchester has received a donation of six infant cots/bassinets for use in the Paediatric Ward, valued at approximately J \$496,800. The donation represents a significant contribution toward improving the quality of care and comfort provided to newborn babies and their families at the facility.

The bassinets were received by the hospital on Monday, May 11, 2026, and are expected to greatly enhance new-born care services within the Paediatric Ward, as well provide a safer, more comfortable, and hygienic environment for infants during the critical early stages of life.



Facilities on the Move

SRHA Observes Read Across Jamaica Day

Tuesday, May 5, 2026, is commemorated as Read Across Jamaica Day and as we observe Child Month in May, the Southern Regional Health Authority encourages parents to take a few minutes to read a story with their children.

Read Across Jamaica Day is an annual event held on the first Tuesday of Education Week, usually in early May. It aims to encourage a love of reading among children.

Reading helps to build literacy, strengthen young minds, support mental health, and deepen the bond between parent and child. Stories give children a safe space to feel, imagine, learn, and be understood.

As we prioritise our children’s mental health, let us read and help open their world.



Facilities on the Move

SRHA Marks Move for Health Day with Senior Citizens' Outreach in Clarendon

In commemoration of Move for Health Day, observed on May 10 each year, the Southern Regional Health Authority hosted a special outreach session for its senior citizens on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at St. James Methodist Church in Clarendon. The day featured a 2K walk, health education sessions and an interactive panel discussion on the importance of movement in supporting healthier, more active lives. At every age, movement matters.



Facilities on the Move

SRHA Dental Auxiliaries Bring Care and Compassion to Santa Cruz Infirmary

The Dental Auxiliaries team from the Southern Regional Health Authority visited the Santa Cruz Infirmary in St. Elizabeth on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, bringing sheer joy with their visit.

They presented donations and spent time connecting with patients and staff, demonstrating care beyond the healthcare setting.

Dental Auxiliaries Week 2026 was celebrated under the theme “Open Wide... Bite into Technology.”



Facilities on the Move

SRHA Mental Health Team Promotes Childhood Wellness at Belair Early Childhood and Lil Noble Kinder Care for Child's Month

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) Mental Health team visited the Belair Preparatory School in Manchester and the Lil Noble Kinder Care School in St. Elizabeth to promote childhood mental health and well-being.

Students took part in fun activities, including colouring, reading and creative exercises, that encouraged them to express themselves and talk about their feelings.

The sessions taught the children the importance of caring for their mental health in a positive and supportive environment.



Facilities on the Move

SRHA Staff Welfare Committee Treats Mothers to Relaxing Spa Day

In celebration of Mother's Day, the SRHA Staff Welfare Committee hosted a special Spa Day on Friday, May 8, 2026 for mothers at the Regional Office, giving them an opportunity to relax and feel appreciated.

The mothers enjoyed a range of pampering services, including facials, massages, manicures and pedicures. The event was a thoughtful gesture to recognize the hard work and dedication of mothers while promoting self-care and wellness.



Facilities on the Move

Staff Welfare Hosts Makeover Competition and Staff Lyme

On Friday May 29, 2026, the SRHA Staff Welfare Committee from the Regional Office brought staff together for a fun-filled Makeover Competition and Staff Lyme. Each department selected a team member to receive a makeover, with departments competing for the title of best transformation.

After impressive presentations from the participants, the Human Resources Department emerged as the winner. The Staff Lyme also featured games, music, and food, giving staff an opportunity to relax and socialize.



Facilities on the Move

St. Elizabeth Health Department Partners with Pancakes and Prayers

The St. Elizabeth Health Department partnered with the Pancakes and Prayers event at Black River High School on Saturday, May 30, 2026 to provide valuable health services and support to attendees.

A representative from the Mental Health Unit was on hand to offer guidance and assistance to persons seeking mental health support, while the Know Your Numbers team encouraged participants to monitor and understand key health indicators that can help prevent and manage chronic illnesses. Together, we continue to promote healthier communities through education, awareness and access to care.



Staff Highlight

SRHA Celebrates International Nurses Day

The Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) joined the global observance of International Nurses Day, recognising the hard work, care, and dedication of nurses.

This critical group was lauded for their important role in delivering quality healthcare and supporting patients across the region. SRHA expresses gratitude to all nurses for their continued commitment to service and care.



The poster is for International Nurses' Day 2026, dated May 12, 2026. It features the logos of the Ministry of Health & Wellness and the Southern Regional Health Authority. The central text reads 'INTERNATIONAL NURSES' DAY May 12, 2026'. Below this, a message from Michael Bent, Regional Director, expresses gratitude to nurses. The poster also includes the theme 'Our Nurses, Our Future: Empowered Nurses Save Lives' and a list of medical supplies. At the bottom, a man and a woman in blue scrubs are shown, with the man holding a tablet. The text 'Thank You' is written in a large, stylized font, followed by Michael Bent's name and title.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

Southern Regional Health Authority
compassion • commitment • respect • efficacy

INTERNATIONAL NURSES' DAY

May 12, 2026

As we observe International Nurses Day 2026, I take this opportunity to recognize and celebrate the remarkable contributions of our nurses whose dedication and compassion continue to make a profound impact on the lives of those we serve.

This year's theme "Our Nurses, Our Future: Empowered Nurses Save Lives," perfectly reflects the important role that nurses play not only in patient care, but also in shaping the future of healthcare through leadership, commitment and excellence.

Empowering nurses is imperative in building stronger healthcare systems and improving patient outcomes. When nurses are supported, respected, and given opportunities to grow professionally, the quality of care delivered is strengthened, lives are saved, and communities thrive.

On behalf of the Southern Regional Health Authority, I extend sincere gratitude and appreciation to each member of our nursing staff for your selfless service, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication.

Thank you for your commitment to excellence and for being a source of strength, and compassion to all those in your care.

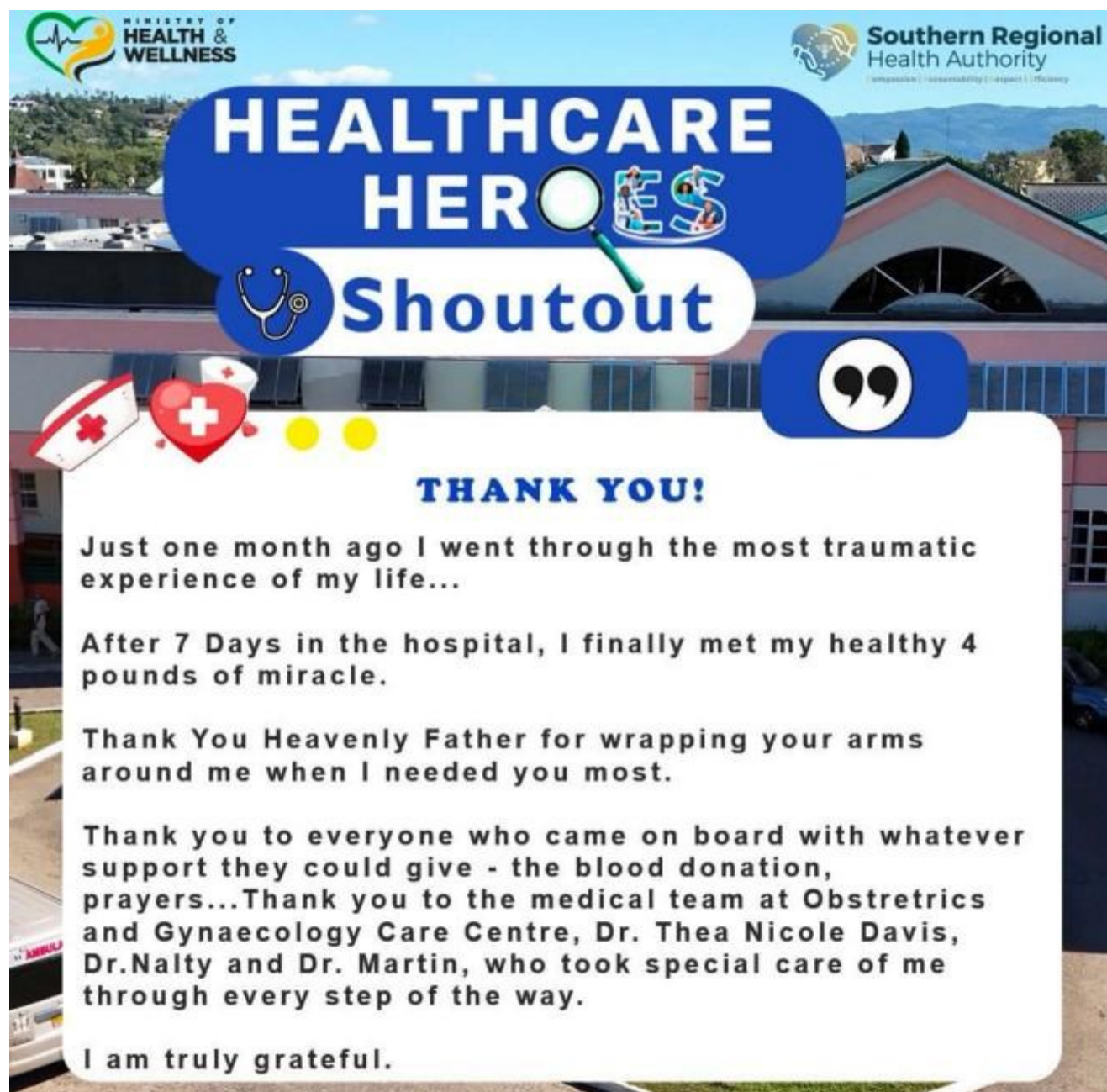
Thank You
Michael Bent
Regional Director
Southern Regional Health Authority

Staff Highlight

Health Care Heroes Shoutout

From trauma to triumph.

A former patient of the Mandeville Regional Hospital is expressing heartfelt gratitude after safely welcoming her healthy miracle baby, following 7 days in hospital care. She thanks the Heavenly Father, dedicated doctors and nurses, and everyone who supported her journey with prayers, blood donations and encouragement during her time of need.



MINISTRY OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

Southern Regional Health Authority
 Impassioned | Accountable | Respectful | Efficient

HEALTHCARE HEROES

Shoutout

THANK YOU!

Just one month ago I went through the most traumatic experience of my life...

After 7 Days in the hospital, I finally met my healthy 4 pounds of miracle.

Thank You Heavenly Father for wrapping your arms around me when I needed you most.

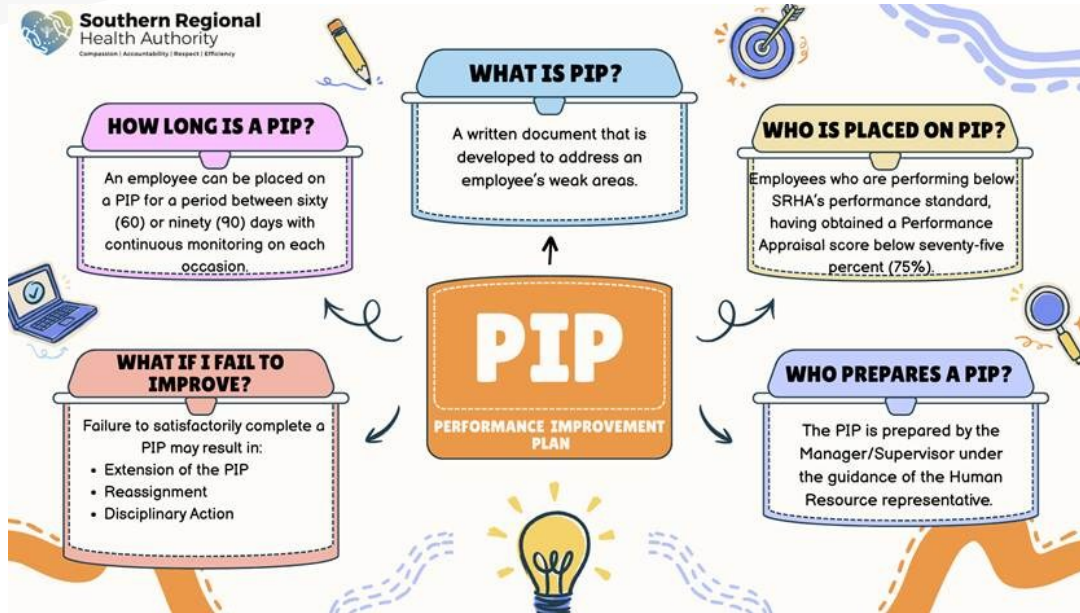
Thank you to everyone who came on board with whatever support they could give - the blood donation, prayers...Thank you to the medical team at Obstetrics and Gynaecology Care Centre, Dr. Thea Nicole Davis, Dr.Nalty and Dr. Martin, who took special care of me through every step of the way.

I am truly grateful.



HR And You:

“Performance Improvement Plan”



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

Internal Communication Support

Digital & Social Media Communications

Research & Monitoring

Content Creation & Publications

Crisis & Emergency Communication

Event Planning, Management and Representation

Education & Awareness Campaigns

Protocol Guidance

Analytics & Reporting

Infohub

Wellness Bytes

“Mental Wellness”



Tips: MENTAL WELLNESS

- 1 **Keep a journal.**
It's always a good idea to have an outlet for self-expression.
- 2 **Find a confidence booster.**
Identify and engage in an activity that makes you feel good about yourself.
- 3 **Exercise.**
Go ahead, work up a sweat and increase endorphins, the body's 'feel-good' chemicals.
- 4 **Take a break from 'Social'.**
Research has revealed that the obsessive use of social media can cause anxiety.
- 5 **Forgive.**
People who practise forgiveness, it has been said, report being more satisfied with their lives.
- 6 **Smile.**
Oh the magic of a smile. Lowers blood pressure. Improves mood. Reduces stress.

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

We welcome your input.

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

The Corporate Communications & Public Relations Branch

Email: latoya.laylor@srha.gov.jm

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Youtube: [Southern Regional Health Authority](https://www.youtube.com/SouthernRegionalHealthAuthority)

TikTok: [southernregionalhealth](https://www.tiktok.com/southernregionalhealth)

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

