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SERHA TIMES

South East Regional Health Authority

Ground breaking for Greater Portmore Health Centre



The Greater Portmore Health Centre in St. Catherine is being upgraded to a Type 5 Comprehensive facility with state-of-the-art features to enhance healthcare delivery for residents.

Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, on Wednesday December 11, 2024, signed the \$660 million contract and broke ground for the expansion works.

The project is part of a \$10 billion investment by the Government in the development of health infrastructure across the parish under the Health Systems Strengthening Programme (HSSP).

The programme is a collaborative effort supported by international partners, including the Inter-American

Development Bank (IDB) and the European Union (EU).

It will provide dedicated spaces for x-ray, oral rehydration, laboratory, isolation, asthma treatment, diabetic retinopathy, physiotherapy, among other specialty treatment areas.

It will also include an administrative department with office spaces, training areas, a conference room, staff lounge, nurses' station and lunchrooms.

The contract sum entails construction cost and equipment installation upon completion.

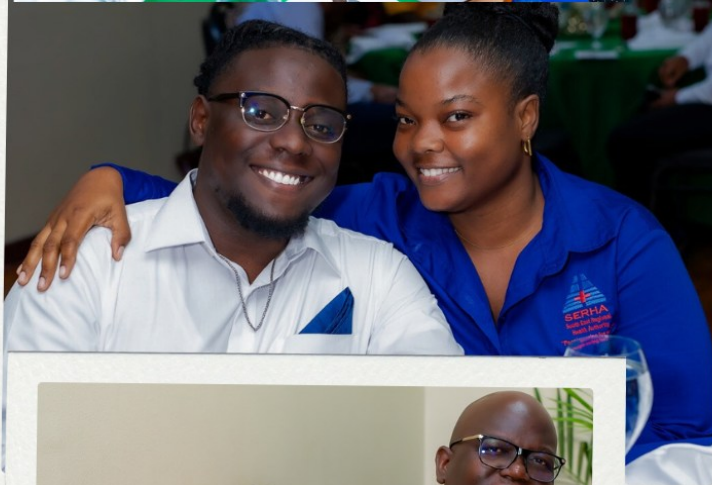
Other projects being undertaken in St.

Catherine under the HSSP include the redevelopment of the Spanish Town Hospital and upgrading of the St. Jago Park and Old Harbour Health Centres.

Highlights of RD's Luncheon



A moment of gratitude and celebration at the Regional Director's Luncheon, held on December 4, 2024, at the Liguanea Club.



Over \$4 Million Spent to Renovate Ward 5 at the Bustamante Hospital for Children



Inside of the Renovated Ward 5 at the Bustamante Hospital for Children

The Bustamante Hospital for Children (BHC) successfully completed Ward 5 Renovation Project at a cost of over JMD\$4 million, marking a significant milestone in its ongoing mission to deliver exceptional healthcare for children across Jamaica. The newly renovated Ward 5 now boasts a capacity of 30 beds, purposefully designed to provide top-quality care for medical patients. This upgrade reflects the hospital's unwavering commitment to creating a safe, comfortable, and modern environment for our children. *"We are thrilled to open the renovated Ward 5, which will significantly improve the quality of care for our young patients,"* said Mr. Anthony Wood, Chief Executive Officer, BHC. *"This project exemplifies our dedication to fostering a healthier future for Jamaica's children and ensuring that their healthcare needs are met with the highest standards."*

The success of the Ward 5 Renovation Project was made possible through the collaborative efforts of the operations and maintenance team at SERHA and the staff at BHC demonstrating the power of partnership in advancing pediatric healthcare in Jamaica. BHC remains steadfast in its mission to provide world-class healthcare. With the completion of this project, the hospital reaffirms its commitment to continuously improving its facilities and services to achieve better outcomes for the children it serves.

Advanced Technology Gives Big Boost to Jamaica's Breast Cancer Testing Capabilities

Jamaica has strengthened its diagnostic capacity with the recommissioning of a new immunohistochemistry (IHC) machine for advanced breast cancer testing on January 15, 2025. Available at the National Public Health Laboratory, the machine being commissioned, the 'Ventana', not only helps in confirming a cancer diagnosis but also supports prognosis and treatment by providing invaluable information about the origin and characteristics of the cancer, which is critical for personalising patient treatment plans.



The commissioning of the 'Ventana' is the result of a three-year project investment by Roche Caribbean valuing USD\$362,875.00. The figure represents the cost for installation, maintenance and contributions in test reagents, with additional resources provided by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

Roche, a leader in biotechnology, offers differentiated medicines in cancer treatments, distinguishing itself in histological diagnosis of cancer and innovations in breast cancer treatment. Renewing its partnership with Jamaica, which dates back to 2015.

Noting the company's vested interests in improving cancer care, Alvaro Soto, General Manager of Roche for the Caribbean, Central America, and Venezuela highlighted its commitment to health innovations for early, comprehensive disease management.



Roche's partnership will allow for optimised breast cancer testing and diagnosis in Jamaica and improvement in the quality of tumor tissue samples collected.

Breast Cancer remains the leading cause of cancer-related death among Jamaican women. In 2022, an estimated 1,327 new cases of breast cancer were recorded in Jamaica, according to the Global Cancer Observatory, along with an estimated 684 breast cancer deaths. It is projected that 1 in 21 Jamaican women will be diagnosed with breast cancer.

Already in place are plans for training and education of staff in use of the IHC machine and preventive and corrective maintenance to ensure its optimal functioning. This forms part of the latest provisions embedded in the Ministry's new Medical Equipment Management Policy that addresses equipment maintenance issues affecting health service delivery.

14 Children Receives Heart Surgeries at BHC

Fourteen children battling congenital heart disease have been given a second chance at life, thanks to a remarkable medical mission led by Professor Jeffrey Jacobs, Professor of Surgery and Paediatrics in the UF Health Congenital Heart Centre and UF Health Shands Children's Hospital and former Cardiac Surgeon, of Johns Hopkins University. Prof Jacobs is also founder and chairman of the Cardiac Kids Foundation of Florida which led the team of over 50 volunteers. The surgeries were performed on January 17-21, 2025, at the Bustamante Hospital for Children.



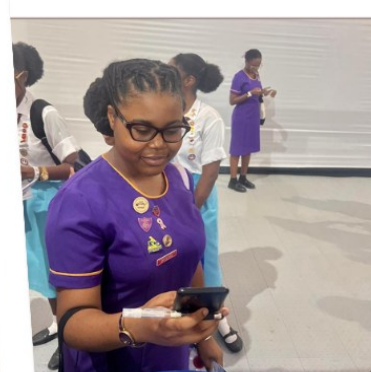
This extraordinary mission was supported by the donation of critical medical equipment, including Heater-Cooler machines, Heart-Lung machines, and Cell Saver machines. These contributions, alongside the team's expertise and hands-on training, have strengthened the hospital's capacity to continue delivering high-quality cardiac care to heart patients.

The success of this mission was made possible through the combined efforts of BHC, The Blood Bank, Cardiac Kids Foundation of Florida, and their supporting partners. Chain of Hope Jamaica played a vital role in coordinating the mission's activities, ensuring a seamless and impactful effort to save these young lives.

Professor Jacobs and his team's compassion and commitment have not only transformed the lives of 14 children and their families but have also left a lasting impact on the healthcare system through knowledge-sharing and resource enhancement. This initiative underscores the power of collaboration and the shared mission of mending little hearts and transforming lives.

Career Expo & Employment Fair 2025 Highlights

More than 600 jobs were advertised at the Health & Wellness Career Expo & Employment Fair, organized by the Ministry of Health & Wellness in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information. The expo and job fair was hosted at The University of the West Indies, Mona on January 22 and 23, 2025, under the theme, 'A Career in Health: Roadmap to Success'. Here are highlights from SERHA's booth display to educate the public about the organization and the available job opportunities.



VM Foundation Donates Medical Equipment to St. Jago Park Health Centre



The VM Foundation generously donated a range of medical equipment to the St. Jago Park Health Centre on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. The items, valued at \$2 million, were officially handed over at the ceremony under the Adopt-A-Clinic Programme. This programme, launched six years ago with VM Foundation as its first partner; has secured \$207 million in commitments for 55 clinic adoptions, funded by private entities and the diaspora through the National Healthcare Enhancement Foundation.

During his remarks at the ceremony, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, said that the donation marks the final set of medical equipment being handed over to the health centre as part of the Adopt-A-Clinic Programme. He expressed gratitude for the ongoing collaboration with the VM Foundation and underscored the importance of such public-private partnerships in advancing healthcare accessibility and quality in Jamaica.

Ms. Samantha Charles, Chief Executive Officer of VM Foundation, expressed that the company is delighted to support the health centre, emphasizing that the donation would significantly benefit the patients who rely on the facility for essential care. She also highlighted the VM Foundation commitment to strengthening future partnerships in the health sector, ensuring that these collaborative efforts continue to make a meaningful impact in communities across Jamaica.

The medical equipment donation, which includes fetal dopplers, pulse oximeters, blood pressure machines, and a diagnostic set, will further strengthen the St. Jago Park Health Centre's capacity to deliver vital services to the local community, improving healthcare outcomes and fostering a healthier future for all.



Cal's Manufacturing Limited Gifted Baskets to New Mothers on Valentines Day

Cal's Manufacturing Limited gifted 25 baskets to mothers who gave birth at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital (VJH) on Valentine's Day February 14, 2025 and to the dedicated nurses and doctors who assisted in the deliveries. Additionally, Cals foods donated a variety of food items, reinforcing their longstanding commitment to supporting VJH throughout the years. Mr. Barrington Graham, Chief Executive Officer of VJH expressed thanks to the company for the warm gesture to the recipients.



Captured in the photo (from standing right) are: Ms. Candice Thompson, Deputy Director of Nursing Services, Victoria Jubilee Hospital (VJH); Mr. Barrington Graham (second right), Chief Executive Officer, VJH; Mrs. Elise Fairweather Blackwood, Director of Nursing Services, VJH; and Ms. Samantha Holness, Marketing and Promotions Officer, from Cal's Manufacturing Limited. Others seated including nurses and mothers with their new born babies.



Happy 70th Anniversary to the Princess Margaret Hospital



Sunday, February 23, 2025 marked the official anniversary date of the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH). Mr. Wentworth Charles (second right), Board Chairman of SERHA, led the symbolic cutting of a cake as part of the activities marking the 70th Anniversary celebration. The event was held under the theme "Celebrating the Past and Embracing the Future". Others sharing in the moment, from second left, are: Mr. Michael McLeod, Chairman of the Hospital Management Committee, PMH; Ms. Kemisha Thomas, Acting Chief Executive Officer, PMH; Dr. Dwight Little, Senior Medical Officer, PMH; Mrs. Nadine Anderson-Lawrence, Director of Nursing Services, PMH; and Mr. Lascelles Brown, Acting Regional Director, SERHA.

Princess Margaret Hospital to Benefit from Major Investments



Entrance of the Princess Margaret Hospital



Construction of a new morgue at the PMH

The Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) in St. Thomas will benefit from a major investment in the upcoming financial year 2025-2026. Speaking at the hospital's 70th-anniversary Thanksgiving Church Service on Sunday, February 23, 2025 Mr. Wentworth Charles, Board Chairman-SERHA, detailed the planned upgrades for PMH. The initiative includes major projects such as the construction of a new morgue, an upgrade to dietary services, expansion of existing facilities, installation of a 150,000-gallon water tank and the upgrade of housing accommodations for nurses and senior medical residents.

The recent advancements in medical technology and infrastructure, such as state-of-the-art equipment, including a digital X-ray machine, have strengthened the hospital's ability to provide quality care. Continuous upgrades include a CT scan machine, enhanced ultrasound services, laboratory services, additional hospital beds, surgical equipment, and an upgraded electrical system. Additionally, improved roadways have significantly enhanced access to the hospital.

Mr. Charles informed that multiple investments have already been made in St Thomas' health infrastructure, in anticipation of its growth. He stated that "Millions of dollars have been spent on Arcadia, Port Morant and other health centres, giving support to the wider community so that the burden can be taken off Princess Margaret Hospital."

He lauded those who contributed to PMH's continued success; the visionary leadership of medical professionals including the doctors, nurses, midwives and support staff both past and present.

Bustamante Hospital for Children Receives Medical Equipment from Chain of Hope UK



On February 28, 2025, Ms. Emma Scalan (third left) Chief Executive Officer of Chain of Hope UK, gives one of 15 syringe pumps, valued at US\$30,000, to Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (third right), Minister of Health and Wellness for the Bustamante Hospital for Children at the Cardiac Unit, BHC. Others in the photo (from left) are Mr. Anthony Wood, Chief Executive Officer, BHC; Ms. Maura O Callaghan, Chain of Hope UK Director; Dr. Sherard Little, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon, BHC; and Mrs. Beverley Senior Berry, Director of Nursing Services, BHC.

The Bustamante Hospital for Children (BHC) received medical equipment valued at over US\$80,000.00 on Friday, February 28, 2025. Chain of Hope UK and its partners gifted 15 syringe pumps, medical disposables, and patient monitors to strengthen BHC cardiac unit, ensuring the delivery of high-quality cardiac care long after the medical mission is completed. During the handover ceremony at BHC, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, expressed thanks to Chain of Hope UK for their generous contribution, which will enhance the hospital's operations.

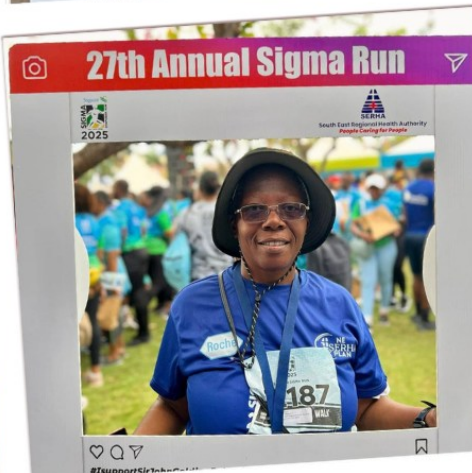
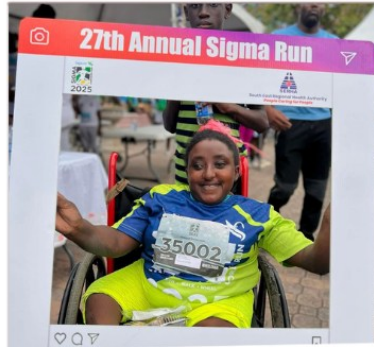
The International Children's Cardiac Charity, Chain of Hope, and its partners performed nine (9) life-saving surgeries from February 24-28, 2025, ensuring that children with heart defects received the urgent care they need completely free of charge at the hospital.



Sigma Run 2025

Highlights

The Sagcor Sigma Corporate Run 2025 raised funds to support two of our crucial health institutions: the Kingston Public Hospital (KPH) and the Sir John Golding Rehabilitation Centre. With a target of \$115 million, all proceeds went towards providing critical, life-changing support to Jamaica's most vulnerable populations. See highlights below:



HR Matters



Yellow Fever Vaccine



Location: Comprehensive Health Centre (Slippen Road)

Days Administered: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Cost: JA\$1500

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Contact to Make An Appointment: (876) 317-9747 or (876) 922-3053

STUDY LEAVE

Excerpts from the Staff Order for Public Service

7.8.5 Part-time Study Courses

(i) Officers may be granted time-off by the appropriate authority to pursue courses of study at approved institutions, on a part-time basis, during established working hours.

(ii) The application for, and grant of such leave are subject to the conditions established from time to time by the Ministry with responsibility for the Public Service.

7.9 Half Pay Leave

(i) Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments may be granted half-pay leave to permanent employees on the ground of urgent private affairs, where the full-pay leave for which the employee is entitled has been exhausted.

(ii) In order to qualify, employees should have a minimum of six (6) years continuous service from the date of first permanent appointment.

(iii) Employees with less than six (6) years continuous service may be granted half-pay leave by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry with responsibility for the Public Service.

(iv) The combined total of full pay leave and half-pay leave for permanent annually paid employees should not exceed the maximum amount of leave which may be accumulated by the employee.

(v) The amount of half-pay leave which may be granted to permanent weekly paid employees, together with any pay leave should not exceed ninety (90) days at any time.

(vi) Payment for half-day leave to any employee will only be made after the employee resume duties.

Continuation in the next publication.

We want to hear from you!

Tell us what is happening in your facility. Call Shuwana Johnson, Public Relations Manager, SERHA, at (876) 816-8058 or send an email to: shuwanaj@serha.gov.jm. You may also call Mr. Raemone Collier, Public Relations Officer, SERHA, at (876) 540-0603 or send an email to: raemonec@serha.gov.jm