

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attention: All News Editors

'Prioritise your mental health'

- *Health Ministry urges Jamaicans to make use of helplines for their emotional well-being as Tropical Storm Melissa approaches*

KINGSTON, Jamaica. Saturday, October 25, 2025: As Jamaica braces for the impact of Tropical Storm Melissa, the Ministry of Health & Wellness is reminding Jamaicans to take care not only of their physical safety but also their mental and emotional well-being.

"It's normal to feel anxious in situations like this, but we want to remind everyone that mental health is just as important as physical preparedness and encourage persons to make best use of our available mental health resources," said Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, CD, MP, Minister of Health & Wellness.

"Those resources include the Ministry's Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Helpline, **888-NEW-LIFE (888-639-5433)** and the **U-Matter Chatline**, operated by the National Council on Drug Abuse, a Department of the Ministry of Health and Wellness. The chatline, which caters to persons 16 to 24 years old, can be accessed by messaging the word **SUPPORT** to **876-838-4897** or **@ureportjamaica**," the Minister said.

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The Ministry is also encouraging persons to:

- Stay informed, relying only credible sources, including the Ministry of Health and Wellness, for updates; and avoid excessive exposure to distressing news.
- Check in with family, friends, and neighbours, especially the elderly, persons with disabilities, and those living alone.
- Get adequate rest, eat nourishing foods, and practice deep breathing or relaxation exercises.
- If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, reach out for help."

"The Ministry's mental health professionals remain on standby to support individuals and communities during and after the storm," Dr. Tufton said.

For further information, please contact the Health Emergency Operations Centre at 888-ONE-LOVE (888-663-5683).

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