PRESS RELEASE

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Health & Wellness Minister Activates Ageing, AI-TECH Committees

KINGSTON, Jamaica. Wednesday, February 11, 2026: Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, CD, MP has convened the first meeting of two special Committees, he previously announced as part of his 2025 Sectoral Presentation. These committees are to explore an ageing policy and Artificial Intelligence in Health, respectively.

Speaking at a media briefing on Tuesday (February 10), the Minister noted that *"The Ageing Policy Committee has been established to support the development of a comprehensive, evidence-based framework for the care of older persons, aligned with the Ministry of Health and Wellness' life course approach. Its work will contribute to strengthening primary health care services for older persons across the health system."*

"The Ministry is also giving attention to Menopause/Andropause. The perimenopausal period is one of those issues that affects the well-being and productivity of women. More focus will be placed this year on exploring availability and access to wholistic management in the public sector. This will be addressed first through increasing knowledge and awareness among healthcare workers and equipping them to educate the public at the primary care visits," the Minister added.

The Committee is chaired by Professor Denise Eldemire Shearer and its members are Dr. Douladel Tyndale, Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre – Ageing & Sexual Health; Dr. Verna Reid, Women's Health Specialist; Ms. Sandra Latibeaudiere, UWI Dept. of Sociology, Psychology & Social Work – Social Worker; Mrs Jillian Mason-Quarrie, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, MOHW; Dr. Kemisha Shaw-Kelly, Programme Development Officer, Family Health Unit, MOHW, along with the two representatives who are to be named from the National Council for Senior Citizens and the Policy Planning and Development Division in the Ministry.

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In siting the transformation that AI has made in medicine globally, Dr. Tufton, said *"the work of the AI-TECH Council of Experts will seek to examine the trends and recommend new systems utilising AI technology to address cross border treatment support, including with radiology services; lifestyle-linked medical profile predictability; community-based Screening; homecare for the chronically ill and ageing; ongoing monitoring and assessment; and any other new trends and practices ethically acceptable for healthcare delivery."*

The membership of the Council include: Chair - Professor Rubin Pillay (University of Alabama at Birmingham); Vice Chair/ Secretariat - Dr. Stephen Johnson (University of the West Indies, Mona); Professor Lloyd Waller (University of the West Indies, Mona); Professor Gunjan Mansingh (University of the West Indies, Mona); Professor Chad R. Ritch (University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine); Dr. Azizi Seixas (University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine); Dr. Carl Bruce (University Hospital of the West Indies); Dr. Maurice McNaughton (Mona School of Business and Management-UWI Mona); Miss Kadian Birch (Ministry of Health & Wellness, Jamaica); Dr. Dianne Campbell-Stennett, Regional Technical Director, WRHA; Mr. Rohan Smith, a health-sector ICT leader and Ms. Danielle Mullings, a digital health innovator.

"Drawing on global evidence and Jamaica's health-system realities, we have identified some areas which represent practical, high-value entry points and where we can have immediate impact. These include Community-Based NCD Screening and Prevention; Supporting an Ageing Population; Cancer Screening and Early Detection; Health Workforce Augmentation; and Public Health Surveillance and Planning. The goal for the Ministry of Health & Wellness is to make the best use of Artificial Intelligence in healthcare, including in screening, self-monitoring and remote access to treatment. The future requires us to carefully consider and prepare for what we do with AI in medicine, guided by science," the Minister said.

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