



## PRESS RELEASE

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*Attention: All News Editors/Reporters*

# Health Ministry rolls out expanded Healthcare Workforce Strategy

**KINGSTON, Jamaica. Tuesday, May 12, 2026:** An expanded Human Resources for Health (HRH) strategy is set to be rolled out by the Ministry of Health and Wellness as it addresses critical shortages in specialist healthcare personnel.

The announcement was made by Minister of Health and Wellness Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, CD, MP during his 2026/27 Sectoral Presentation in Parliament, where he outlined a comprehensive programme of recruitment, specialist training, and international partnerships designed to stabilise and expand the country's healthcare workforce.

Speaking under the theme "Better Families...Better Communities...Better Health," Minister Tufton noted that while Jamaica continues to make historic investments in hospital and primary care infrastructure, human resources remain one of the most pressing challenges facing the health sector.

"Efficient health services require more than buildings and equipment. We continue to face shortages in specialist nurses, specialist doctors and allied health professionals, particularly in critical care, oncology, psychiatry, accident and emergency care and nephrology," the Minister stated.

To help bridge these gaps, the Ministry will deploy approximately 100 specialist nurses who are expected to complete training this year. The expanded nursing cadre will support the island's capacity to deliver modern, patient-centred healthcare services.

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Additionally, under the Barry Wint Memorial Scholarship Programme, 48 nurses and 33 doctors will complete advanced studies and be assigned to public health facilities across the island.

The Ministry is also advancing international recruitment efforts through bilateral agreements with countries including India, Nigeria and Ghana, while strengthening engagement with the Jamaican diaspora. More than 70 specialist nurses from overseas have already been interviewed for possible deployment in Jamaica's public health system.

As part of the broader stabilisation strategy, Cabinet has approved the establishment of a dedicated International Recruitment Unit (IRU) within the Ministry's Corporate Services Division. The Unit will coordinate overseas recruitment, diaspora engagement, and international training partnerships.

According to Minister Tufton, the IRU will play a critical role in addressing workforce shortages in specialised areas such as intensive care, midwifery, psychiatry, operating theatre nursing and neonatal care.

The Ministry is also moving to strengthen local training capacity through upgrades to the Kingston School of Nursing and its accommodation facilities. The improvements are expected to expand training opportunities, increase course offerings and improve clinical rotation capacity within Jamaica's expanding hospital network.

The HRH expansion comes amid unprecedented investment in Jamaica's healthcare infrastructure, including the completion of the Cornwall Regional Hospital modernization programme, the opening of the Western Child and Adolescent Hospital, and major upgrades to hospitals and health centres across the island.

Minister Tufton emphasized that the expanded strategy is intended to ensure that Jamaica's growing healthcare infrastructure is supported by a skilled, sustainable and resilient workforce capable of meeting the evolving health needs of the population.

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"This Government is not only building facilities; we are building the workforce that will sustain quality healthcare delivery for generations to come," he said.

The Ministry says the HRH strategy forms a central pillar of Jamaica's long-term health system reform agenda and Vision for Health 2030.

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