



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attention: All News Editors/Reporters

Ministry to Pilot Geriatric Clinics for Older Jamaicans

KINGSTON, Jamaica. Tuesday, May 12, 2026: Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, CD, MP, has announced that the Ministry of Health & Wellness will this year launch pilot Geriatric Clinics in St. Ann and St. Catherine as part of a broader strategy to strengthen healthcare services for Jamaica's growing older population.

The announcement was made during the Minister's Sectoral Presentation in Parliament, where he highlighted the increasing demographic shift toward an ageing population and the implications for the country's healthcare system.

According to the Minister, Jamaica's fastest-growing age group is persons aged 60 years and older, now totalling approximately 375,000 individuals, or 14 per cent of the population. This figure is projected to increase to approximately 400,000 by 2030.

The Minister also referenced findings from the 2011 study conducted by the Mona Ageing & Wellness Centre, which reported that 72 per cent of older persons surveyed were living with at least one chronic disease. The study also identified loneliness and other social issues as major factors negatively affecting the health and well-being of older persons.

-MORE-



"This demographic shift is creating additional demand for healthcare services, including long-term care, and it requires a coordinated and compassionate response from the health system, families, and communities," Minister Tufton stated.

Against this background, the Ministry has commenced the development of a healthcare programme for older persons within primary care. The initiative will align with Jamaica's ongoing Primary Healthcare Reform programme, the Healthy Ageing Agenda, and the global emphasis on integrated healthcare approaches for older persons across the life course.

The pilot Geriatric Clinics, to be established at community or district health centres in St. Ann and St. Catherine, will provide comprehensive geriatric assessments, including evaluations related to function and the "geriatric giants" - falls, incontinence, immobility, mental function, and social factors. Appropriate interventions and referrals will also be recommended based on assessments.

Community-based healthcare personnel will play a critical role in the initiative through home assessments and continued support for older persons within their communities.

The Ministry will implement the programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour & Social Security, the National Council for Senior Citizens, local government authorities, and community organizations. Referrals will also be accepted for issues related to loneliness and social isolation.

Minister Tufton emphasised that the pilot programme will help inform the development and rollout of an islandwide model of care for older persons, ensuring that Jamaica's health system is better equipped to meet the evolving needs of its ageing population.

-END-