



PRESS RELEASE

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Attention: All News Editors

Health Minister Directs RHAs and UHWI to Address Medical Intern Working Conditions and Duty Roster

Kingston, Jamaica; Wednesday, June 24, 2026: In keeping with the recently signed Accountability Framework, the Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton CD, MP, has directed the management of the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) and the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI) to action immediately a series of measures aimed at addressing concerns raised by medical interns regarding working and living conditions across Jamaica's public health system. This follows a statement issued on Tuesday (June 23) by the Jamaica Medical Doctors' Association (JMDA), which highlighted challenges being experienced by medical interns.

Effective immediately, the RHAs and UHWI are to implement measures firstly around facility inspections, where a comprehensive physical audit of all intern accommodation facilities is to be completed within 72 hours. Findings are to be submitted to the Permanent Secretary's Office no later than Friday, June 26, 2026. Any facility found to have structural, sanitary, or safety deficiencies, including sewage-related issues or inadequate sleeping arrangements, must undergo immediate interim corrective action.

At the same time, Senior Medical Officers have been instructed to review duty rosters to ensure that interns, residents and senior housing officers are scheduled as appropriate. Human Resource Directors across all RHAs are required to submit, within five working days, a detailed assessment of intern staffing gaps by department and facility. The assessment will inform accelerated deployment under the 2026 Medical Internship Programme. Additionally, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) coordinators have been directed to proactively engage intern cohorts and provide access to mental health and wellness support services.

Strengthening the Internship Programme

As of July 1, 2026, a total of 232 medical interns is expected to be in position across the public health system. Ninety interns commenced service between January and March 2026, while 142 applicants have already met the requirements to begin on July 1. Additional placements are anticipated following the completion of the June 2026 qualifying examinations.



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The Ministry has been reviewing internship post allocations in consultation with the Medical Council of Jamaica and the RHAs to ensure that training sites possess the necessary supervision, clinical workload, and physical infrastructure required to support quality internship experiences.

A revised internship post-allocation framework is expected to be presented to Cabinet within the coming weeks. Additionally, the Director of Health Services Planning and Integration has been tasked with working alongside regional teams to incorporate facility readiness as a key criterion in future internship placements.

Dr. Tufton has also noted that he will be requesting a meeting with the JMDA and will invite them to participate in a Joint Monitoring Committee that will track remediation efforts and progress on a fortnightly basis.

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