

# JAMAICA ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS



## HIGHLIGHTS

*From the*

## ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE



### Jamaica Association of Public Health Inspectors (JAPHI)

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Happy New Year Colleagues!! God has been good to us!*

I want to acknowledge His grace towards us and his preserving hands that have kept us safe through these unprecedented times. The Covid -19 pandemic has altered our lives creating confusion and despair. This pandemic has caused economic down turns, disrupted families and is redefining what life means to us as human beings. Most people focus on the problem of this crisis, however, there are opportunities that exist which will enable us to evolve. It is through the most critical moments in history that innovations are birthed. This moment in time reminded me of a statement by Hans Christian Andersen in his writings “It was the best of times; it was the worst of times” an oxymoron that defines our new normal. The emergence of the pandemic and the severity of its course have proven to be a powerful reminder to all of us of the value of public health. Public Health and epidemiology are now recognized and have become household discussions using terms such as social distancing, sanitizing, case rate etc. The Covid-19 pandemic has allowed us to uncover multiple limitations in our surveillance system which we can improve on. *Therefore, we must articulate a path with these new paradigms that will ensure that we emerge from the COVID-19 tunnels with a strengthened public health system, communication systems/channels and capacity to quickly identify and counter misinformation.* It is clear that public health has to be inclusive as Covid-19 challenges us to find a new vision for public health focusing on intersectoral collaboration, multiple professional stake holder involvement as well as to have visionary planning geared at reducing the burden of diseases for the future. Yes! We have to re-examine, reinvent, rethink and implement to be resilient in this changing world.

Let us move forward with optimism and passion and continue to support our organization as we seek to build capacity and improve your working conditions through advocacy on welfare and industrial related matters.

*Michael Myles*



# JAMAICA ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS

## *Highlights of the* **75<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE**

October 24-29, 2021

### NEWS LETTER

January 18, 2022

The **Jamaica Association of Public Health Inspectors** hosted their 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Conference during the week of October 24-29, 2021. The Conference was held under the theme *“Strengthening Environmental Health: Lessons Learnt In the Pandemic.”* The programme was quite different from previous years as it was held almost exclusively virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the interference of the pandemic, the conference has been dubbed a success as there was a record number of virtual attendance of members who were able to experience six fun filled days of virtual learning and interaction.

#### DAY 1- JAPHI WEEK CHURCH SERVICE

The week was launched with a church service, hosted by the Browns Town Methodist Church and members attended virtually via the zoom video conferencing platform.

#### DAY 2- OPENING & AWARD CEREMONY

The Opening and Award Ceremony was held at the Knutsford Court Hotel in Kingston. Greetings were received from various dignitaries, inclusive of a short address by the Minister of Health; Dr. Christopher

Tufton who lauded Public Health Inspectors for their hard work and reiterated the importance of their role in controlling current and future pandemics.

Dr. Melody Ennis, guest speaker, delivered a heartfelt speech encouraging Inspectors to continue executing their roles in safeguarding public health. She also emphasized the importance of learning from the COVID-19 pandemic so that the Inspectorate would be better prepared in the event the island encounters another infectious disease outbreak.

The ***Jerusalema Dance Contest*** was won by the only entrant, The Manchester Health Department as they submitted a vibrant dance video highlighting the various areas of Environmental Health.



PHIs who have done exceptional work in food safety were also awarded. Recipients were able to collect their awards in person.



#### Additional categories of awards included:

- ✚ Presidential Award: **Michael Myles**
- ✚ Top PEP Boy: **David Green** (Campion College)-PHI Charmaine Morrison-Green
- ✚ Top PEP Girl: **Yeshira Doctor** (Herbert Morrison Technical)-PHI Simone Doctor
- ✚ Life Member Award: **Hubert Cooke**
- ✚ JAPHI Special Award: **Environmental Health Unit**



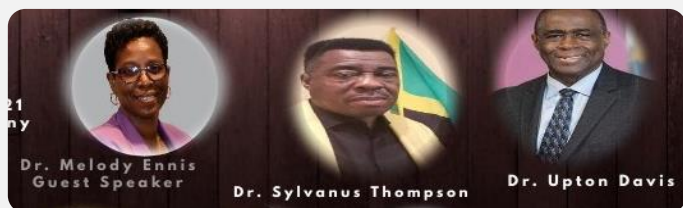


## TECHNICAL SESSIONS 1&2

The first two training sessions were held from 6-8pm.

Dr. Sylvanus Thompson was the first presenter and he delivered an insightful presentation entitled ***'The Black Community Vaccine Initiative: Ensuring Barrier-Free Vaccine Access.'*** Participants were receptive and commendations were given from various members.

The second presentation was delivered by Dr. Upton Davis. He spoke on ***'The COVID-19 Pandemic: The Ongoing Challenge of Vaccine Hesitancy.'*** A topic that was quite relevant as Jamaica currently faces several challenges regarding the reluctance of Jamaican citizens in accepting the various vaccines that are currently being offered by the government to reduce hospitalization from coronavirus infections.



### DAY 3- CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

Members were able to accrue more continuing education hours as day three saw four presenters, with training sessions held from 2-4pm and 6-8pm. All presentations were well received and presenters were commended for the clarity, significance, brevity and practicality of their presentations.

## TECHNICAL SESSIONS 3, 4, 5 & 6

Dahlia Plunkett delivered a relevant presentation on ***'Food Safety: A Growing Concern.'***

Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector from the Manchester Health Department, Joel Myers, gave insight on the vector control programme in his parish during his presentation entitled ***'Vector Control in the Parish of Manchester: A pre, present and post pandemic overview.'***

Dr. Henroy Scarlett sought to enlighten the members regarding ***'The Pandemic and the Environmental Health Officer—An International Perspective'***. This presentation gave insight on the role that EH Officers play in other countries regarding control of the pandemic as opposed to Jamaica's strategies.

With the increased usage of chemicals to combat the ongoing pandemic, Mrs. Sherika Whitelocke-Ballingsingh delivered an insightful presentation on ***'COVID-19, Refocusing Chemical Policies for Public Health'***.



## DAY 4- CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

Day 4 also had a plethora of presentations with timing similar to that of day 3. Presentations were found to be both informational and inspiring.

### TECHNICAL SESSIONS 7, 8, 9 & 10

Mrs. Kerron Crossman; *'The Development of Guidelines and Procedures-COVID-19 and other Public Health Matters.'*

Dr. Gary Brown; *'National Environmental Health Association Updates/Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning & COVID-19.'*

Dr. Stephanie Fletcher Lartey; *'Jack of All Trades, Master of Many: Lessons Learned from the Life of an Environmental Health Officer.'*

Public Health Inspector (intern), O'Brian Bernard, shared the details of his internship project in a presentation entitled: *'A Reflection of the Green Pond Community Integrated Mosquito Control Project (2021)'*



## DAY 5- ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The **JAPHI Executive Member Body 2021-2023** was announced.

- ✚ Michael Myles-President
- ✚ Oniel Brown-Vice President
- ✚ Paul Ximines-Vice President
- ✚ Karen Brown-Immediate Past President
- ✚ Antonette Morgan-Duncan-Secretary
- ✚ Steve Morris-Assistant Secretary
- ✚ Michelle Rhone-Treasurer
- ✚ Rowan Stephens-Assistant Treasurer
- ✚ Orvelee Jones-Public Relations Officer



The online voting platform was also utilized to select three additional Executive Members. They are as follows:

- ✚ Natoya Davidson-St. Catherine Health Department
- ✚ Murie Edwards-Kingston & St. Andrew Health Department
- ✚ Damion Forbes-Trelawny Health Department



*MEET YOUR 2021-2023 EXECUTIVE MEMBERS*



**Damion Forbes**



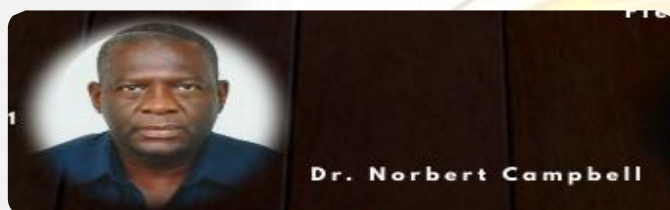
**Orvelee Jones**



## DAY 6- CULMINATING PRESENTATION

### TECHNICAL SESSION 11

Dr. Norbert Campbell delivered the closing presentation titled *'The Jamaica Association of Public Health Inspectors: The Last Forty Years'*. Dr. Campbell was able to educate his viewers on the development of the profession over the past 40 years. His presentation was witty and insightful.



### PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19



**We must  
keep on protecting  
each other.**



## OTHER COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES

### JIS THINK TANK

The JAPHI Executive also participated in a Jamaica Information Service (JIS) *'Think Tank'* session where the profession was highlighted.



**Pictured: Michael Myles (bottom left) Steve Morris (top left) Oniel Brown (top right) Karen Brown (bottom right)**

### TABLET DONATIONS

Eight students at the *St Anns Bay Primary School* received tablets to aid in their education. Students and teachers at the school expressed their gratitude for the initiative from the Association.





**The JAPHI Executive Body has conducted numerous activities since its inauguration. These activities include:**

- ❖ November 21, 2021- Government rejected JAPHI proposed 5% increase and \$40,000 across the Inspectorate.
- ❖ November 22, 2021-Proposed 4% and \$40,000 for salaries 1.5M and below was signed to facilitate payment in December 2021.
- ❖ November 11, 2021- A letter was written to Permanent Secretary MOH&W with regards to Intern employment to the regions.
- ❖ November 2021- An interview was done on Smile Jamaica, TVJ by the President Michael Myles and IPP Karen Brown on Public Health issues surrounding the increase in Cottage Industries and Street-side vending.
- ❖ November 15, 2021- JAPHI received Industrial Relations matters from all 4 regions, data compiled and sorted. They were sorted as Administrative, Regional and EHU/MOH&W. We will have meetings at the various levels to address matters within first quarter of 2022.
- ❖ Dec 2, 2021- JAPHI wrote to the Ministry of Finance & Planning to address the incorrect title on sessional rate document.
- ❖ December 02, 2021- Press releases were sent out to the different media houses on Solid waste management. Interviews were also done on various media platform.
- ❖ December 7, 2021- A meeting was held with School of Public Health and Health Technology, University of Technology team with regards to Internship programme and the way forward.
- ❖ December 13, 2021- JAPHI wrote the Ministry of Health & Wellness with regards to a status update in relation to the listing of Public Health Inspectors as a profession on the Ministry of Health & Wellness Insurance Scheme rather than referring us to the category titled “others”.
- ❖ December 14, 2021- JAPHI wrote to the Ministry of Health & Wellness requesting Status update on the approval of the new Promotional Bar.
- ❖ December 24, 2021- President’s Christmas message and video was sent to members, International partners and as a press release to media houses.



## **RECENT EVENTS**

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January 20, 2022- Meeting with Permanent Secretary, Mr. Dustan Bryan and Team to address concerns of Public Health Inspectors, namely:

- ✓ The recent challenges in the Internship programme for students pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Health at University of Technology (Need for a Memorandum of Agreement).
- ✓ The non-employment of a number of recently trained and graduated Public Health Inspectors.
- ✓ The non-implementation of the organizational structure review.
- ✓ The request to have Public Health Inspectors listed on the Ministry of Health & Wellness Insurance scheme instead of being represented in "others."
- ✓ The long expressed concerns about frisking of Public Health Inspectors assigned to port health and quarantine at the ports of entry (and the associated health risks).
- ✓ Update on the National Environmental Health Information System

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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- ✚ One Health Lecture Series January 24-27, 2022.
- ✚ Proposed JAPHI representative meeting on January 31, 2022.
- ✚ Wage and Fringe Benefits Negotiation claim proposal to have a consultation with members in February 2022.

**The Jamaica Association of Public Health  
Inspectors Executive Body (2021-2023) would like  
to thank everyone that attended and participated in  
the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Conference.  
We look forward to a successful 76<sup>th</sup> year!**