



# Ministry of Health

**NEWS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 1, 2011**

## Regional Technical Team Established to Improve Cancer Care

The Ministry of Health has established a Regional Technical team to develop a Concept Paper on the treatment of cancers and the infrastructure and human resource capacity that are required to provide an efficient cancer treatment service in the public health sector.

Minister of Health, Hon. Rudyard Spencer says this is part of a comprehensive approach being taken to improve cancer care in the island's public health sector. "This has become important given the increasing number of persons who present at the public health facilities with cancer," he said during the official opening of the Cari-Med Ward and Oncology Pharmacy at the Hope Institute on Tuesday.

In 2009, there were 4,315 discharges from Government hospitals for cancer including the University Hospital of the West Indies. Of the total cancer visits made during 2009, some 603

were made to the Kingston Public Hospital and 387 to the Cornwall Regional Hospital. The total numbers seen at both KPH and CRH increased by 59.1 percent and 33.4 percent respectively when comparisons were made between the years 2005 and 2008. The total Radiotherapy treatments done at the KPH in 2009 were 22,685 while at the CRH it was 4,974.

As part of this drive the Ministry will also be investing over \$42.7 million in the purchase of two Cobalt Sources for the Kingston Public and Cornwall Regional Hospitals.

These hospitals are the only two apart from the UHWI, which offer Radiotherapy services in the public health sector.

Minister Spencer said “the installation of the new Cobalt Sources will reduce waiting time for patients in need of radiotherapy treatment, improve the quality of the radiation therapy and enhance the level of radiation services in the public health sector by providing greater access to radiation therapy.”

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