



Statement of the Minister of Health & Wellness, Jamaica

Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, M.P.

76th World Health Assembly

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Re Women, Children and Adolescent Health

Chair, Jamaica thanks the Director General for this report.

Jamaica recognizes that our maternal health statistics are above the SDG target of 70 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030. We are taking steps to improve this through encouraging antenatal care and addressing specific causes of maternal death through increased training and providing access to maternal high dependency care.

One such intervention is the **'Start Right'** Initiative that provides adolescents and vulnerable mothers with an incentive for participation in antenatal care services. Mothers are encouraged to attend at least four antenatal visits to ensure their safety and the safety of the child.

We have issued **Snuggle Nests** which are creative, safe and baby-functional loungers provided to mothers who have complied with the antenatal health visits. Additionally, we are working with other agencies to improve the support to pregnant mothers.

Recognizing that anemia is a problem in our women and adolescent girls, we are introducing screening for anemia in these groups. We are also increasing blood collection services through expansion of mobile units and a drive to increase the number of voluntary blood donors.

Jamaica continues to prioritise the **health and well-being of adolescents**. The establishment of centres that combine the offer of counselling and clinical services with



daily needs such as homework help and research facilities, as well as mental health support form a part of those efforts.

We have implemented other activities to address the psycho-social needs of teens including the U-Matter Chatline, on which we have partnered with UNICEF and the *Do Your Share* anti-stigma campaign, a collaboration with PAHO, which prioritizes the creation of safe spaces for young people with mental health challenges.

Recognizing that there is still a lot of work to be done to get on track to achieving the SDG targets, Jamaica asks WHO to prioritize the support of ongoing training of health professionals, increase global discussions to keep populations engaged on these matters and encourage governments and non-governmental agencies to address the social determinants of healthy pregnancies and healthy mothers and children.

Thank You.