

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH FUND
FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2018 – 2019**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Ministry Paper on the Annual Report of the National Health Fund (NHF) for the financial year 2018-2019 is being tabled by the Ministry of Health and Wellness for the information of the Houses of Parliament.
- 1.2. The NHF has developed a track record of providing exceptional service to its clients. The Agency continued to take pride in that fact and have maintained its commitment to implementing the necessary systems that allow them to sustain its high standards. The 2018-19 Financial Year was no exception. As they celebrated 15 years of stellar service, their focus on improved efficiency, innovation and partnership in support of the health sector in Jamaica remained paramount. Significant investments have been made on infrastructural improvements, greater access to pharmaceuticals provided, customer service expanded with public awareness campaigns in support of the Ministry of Health and Wellness' mission for a healthier population.

2. HIGHLIGHTS OF PERFORMANCE

- 2.1. **Expanding Access to Individual Benefits**
 - 2.1.1. The NHF continued to expand its reach while positively impacting the quality of life of beneficiaries across varying socioeconomic and age demographics, through its major programmes and initiatives, as part of a thrust to expand its circle of care. Guided by this vision, the Fund was more deliberate in its actions to ensure that customers and stakeholder groups not only receive the best quality service possible but that a larger number of persons would be able to see a difference in their quality of life through the services of the Fund.
 - 2.1.2. With a 5.8% growth in the Individual Benefits Programme over the last financial year, the Fund continued to strengthen its mandate to move closer to achieving its strategic goal of increasing access to health services for the Jamaican public. This increase translated to 44,322 new individuals benefitting from the range of services provided by the Fund. This brought the total number of beneficiaries enrolled to 818,563.
 - 2.1.3. Enrolment on the NHF Card Programme experienced growth by 6.2% compared to that of the previous year. This was translated in 31,445 new beneficiaries and allowed for more to benefit from subsidies to treat 16 chronic illnesses.
 - 2.1.4. The Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme (JADEP) enrolment saw an 8.5% increase and improved access to essential drugs by Jamaicans over the age of 60.

- 2.2. The expansion of the NHF services to the vulnerable continued with the introduction of the Special Registration Number (SRN). This created an avenue that ensured that vulnerable individuals such as senior citizens, children and adults who live in state-owned or private institutions and do not have birth certificates are still able to access NHF services. At the end of the financial year, 493 beneficiaries were enrolled under this initiative.
- 2.3. There was a 10% rise in customer service interactions across locations compared to the 2017-2018 period which can be attributed to the expansion of the Same Day Card locations. During the period under review, 17,259 calls were handled by the Contact Centre as well as 78,787 visitors were served at locations.

3. Expanding Pharmaceutical access for Public Patients

- 3.1. During the 2018-2019 financial year, NHF's circle of care expanded with the complete takeover of management of all public sector pharmacies in April 2018. The Fund made significant strides in expanding access to pharmaceutical services for public patients, as well as improving the overall service experience.
- 3.2. Improvements in the Drug Serv Pharmacy Services included increased use of Alternate Service Options (ASOs), a reduction in the wait time for out-patients and the piloting of Mobile Dispensing Units (MDUs) to enhance in-patient services. The Medication Safety Programme was also implemented during the year.
- 3.3. The Pharmacy Inventory Management System (PIMS) used by the NHF for the management of pharmacy information and inventory, was implemented across all full-Service pharmacy locations by the end of the year. With the inclusion of all public sector pharmacies, a total of 2,554,961 scripts were filled during the 2018-2019 financial year. This bettered the 2017-2018 performance of 1,278,119, a 100% increase.
- 3.4. The Quick Prescript Application, which provides public health patients with a fast and effective method of submitting their prescriptions to Drug Serv pharmacies, was introduced. This application has made a huge leap in service delivery.
- 3.5. The NHF's commitment to improve service standards was further proven through a general lowering of waiting time. The targeted average wait time of 60 minutes or less was achieved by March 31, 2019, having attained an actual average of 56 minutes.
- 3.6. To ensure the availability of supplies, the NHF worked to maintain adequate stocks of Vital, Essential and Necessary (VEN) list items. To this end, the agency had an internally defined objective to ensure that a minimum of 80% of VEN list items were in stock in the warehouse each month. For the 2018-2019 financial year, an annual average stock level of 84.6% was achieved.
- 3.7. Other activities that were implemented under the pharmaceutical access programme included education sessions for customers and staff, the continuation of the Public Sector Pharmacy Partner Programme, ward checks to ensure that operating standards were adhered to, the piloting and service of the Mobile Dispensing Units at the Bustamante Hospital for Children, the Kingston Public, the May Pen and the Mandeville Regional Hospitals.

4. NHF Grants and Projects

- 4.1. During the year, approximately \$1.76B was approved for 35 Institutional Benefits projects with \$765.55M approved for 26 new projects. An additional \$997.77M was approved for 9 existing projects.
- 4.2. Some of the major projects that were undertaken in support of the improvement of the quality and access to healthcare, include: the installation of elevators at the Spanish Town and Kingston Public Hospitals; renovation and expansion, including sewage upgrade of the Stony Hill Health Centre; upgrade of the sewage system at the Princess Margaret Hospital. Additionally, extensive renovation work was undertaken at 23 Pharmacies islandwide.

5. Raising Awareness and Health Promotion

- 5.1. Out of its concern about its patients' overall health, not just by providing access to medications, the NHF developed a Patient Education and Medication Compliance programme. This programme raises awareness of the importance of taking medication and implementing a medication therapy management programme to address non-adherence to medication among patient beneficiaries.
- 5.2. A launch was held for this programme in March, 2019 at the Greater Portmore Drug Serv Pharmacy. The focus has been on public education, training, skills building, expansion of pharmacy therapeutic management and the use of technology. The NHF has partnered with the University Hospital of the West Indies/Microbiology Laboratory to address issues surrounding antibiotic resistance in Jamaica.
- 5.3. Some of the other health promotion activities which were started or continued during the year included screening tests, the Work-It-Out Challenge, a School Wellness culture in primary and high schools and also in the corporate world and the NHF Workplace Wellness programme.

6. Service Through Technology

- 6.1. Internal changes were made to strengthen the NHF/ICT infrastructure including reviewing and updating the 5 Year Strategic Plan and Backup and Recovery Plan and also reducing the turn-around time for orders submitted by the pharmacy. There has also been an increase in the information provided to stakeholders.
- 6.2. Preparation has been made to facilitate the introduction of "One Card" in the financial Year 2019/2020 with that one particular card allowing access to all benefits offered through the NHF (NHF Card and JADEP).
- 6.3. Persons from the vulnerable population are now able to register for NHF benefits with the issuance of a Special Registration Number (SRN). Same day card production is now available at 17 locations with every parish now having access to the service.
- 6.4. Quick Prescript was expanded and is now available at 45 Kiosks across the island with over 10,000 persons downloading the application on their mobile devices. This accounted for the filling of over 20,000 prescriptions monthly using the App.

- 6.5. The Help Desk ticketing system was fully adopted over the period across the organisation by the increased trend in tickets submitted. 99% of tickets submitted were closed within a four day period.

7. Team NHF

- 7.1. As at March 31, 2019, the NHF had 547 fulltime members of staff. Additionally there were 326 persons employed as Independent Contractors.
- 7.2. In seeking to serve both internal and external customers, the NHF focused much of its training in Customer Service. The pharmacy staff who interface with the public on a daily basis, was exposed to an intensive period of training in Health Care With Feelings. This fuelled and energised the staff who are making an even greater effort to relate to the public and their peers with empathy and care.
- 7.3. Other training for staff included Employee Engagement, Management Development, Public Sector Procurement Certification, Enterprise Risk Management and Occupational Health and Safety.
- 7.4. Overall 91% of the Agency's Training Plan for continuing education and capacity building for staff was achieved.

8. Stakeholder Engagement

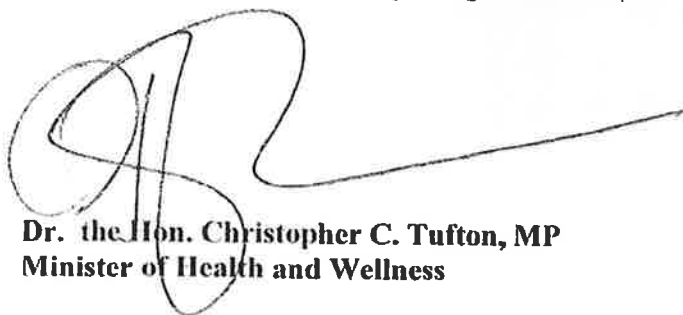
- 8.1. In an effort to engage stakeholders as a fundamental part of the NHF's commitment to good governance, the Fund sought opportunities to reach stakeholders to share information on its activities, seeking insights into what improvements could be made to service offering.
- 8.2. To this end, during the period, 605 providers were contacted.
- 8.3. Provider consultations were held island-wide to sensitise providers and obtain feedback on the "One Card" initiative and the proposed pharmacy stock ownership model to replace the existing JADEP model.
- 8.4. The NHF participated and made presentations at 9 medical conferences, thereby allowing itself to reach its stakeholders in the medical profession.
- 8.5. The NHF regularly conducted surveys with clients, using feedback tools to obtain views on operations. These have helped the Agency to continuously improve its services.
- 8.6. Exit surveys were conducted at NHF Community Health days island-wide in order to get Client feedback on the Agency's services. During the 2018-2019 period, 808 persons across all parishes completed the survey. Among the areas for feedback were, wait time for service and the professionalism of the staff.

9. Declaration of Compensation

- 9.1. The compensation package paid to members of the Management Board and Senior Executives of the NHF for the period under review is included in the Annual report.

10. Financial Statement and Auditors' Report

- 10.2. The total net revenue to the NHF amounted to \$11,694.25M which included National Insurance Scheme Tax of \$4,447.60M, Tobacco Tax of \$1,165.23M, Special Consumption Tax of \$3,118.29M, revenues from the Pharmaceutical and Drug Serv Divisions of (\$56.70M) as well as other sources of income amounted to \$3,019.83M. Expenditure amounted to \$8,839.55M, resulting in a surplus of \$2,854.70M.
- 10.3. The Auditors, KPMG, Chartered Accountants, concluded that the financial statement gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the National Health Fund as at March 31, 2019 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).



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Minister of Health and Wellness

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