
New cardiac unit for children's hospital

A new cardiac unit is to be constructed and equipped at the Bustamante Hospital for Children in Kingston.

A memorandum of understanding was signed on Friday by the hospital with various stakeholders, including the Gift of Life Rotary District 7020. The five-year agreement will also involve the training of healthcare professionals in cardiac care. Minister of Health Ruddy Spencer said the unit will increase the number of cardiac surgeries done annually at the hospital from approximately 40 to 208. "At present, patients save over \$540 million, which is the cost of doing the surgeries. With the new centre, savings to patients will increase to \$2.8 billion annually, at \$13.5 million per surgery," the minister said. The stakeholders will also help maintain the cardiac equipment. Spencer said the Chain of Hope and Caribbean Heart Menders Association missions, which usually visit the hospital annually, will continue to make their visits and will conduct an additional 40 surgeries each year.