
Bustamante Hospital to get one of a kind Life Cardiac Centre

When the Gift of Life Cardiac Centre opens in 2011 at the Bustamante Hospital for Children (BHC), it will be the only one of its kind in the Caribbean.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the hospital, Beverley Needham, said a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was recently signed with multiple stakeholders, including Chain of Hope in the United Kingdom, Caribbean Heart Menders, the Congenital Heart Institute of Florida and Rotary District 7020, for establishment of the Centre. She told patrons at a fundraising gala for both the Bustamante Hospital and the Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, Canada, recently, that the key components of the MoU is to construct a 10-bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and capacity building. "When this state-of-the-art centre opens, we will be performing at least four open-heart surgeries each week, quadrupling the number of elected patients currently receiving this life-saving surgery. We will be able to facilitate four surgical missions each year, up from two," she said. Mrs. Needham noted that, over the years, the hospital has facilitated 11 surgical mission teams, performing over 200 surgeries on children at the hospital. She also stated that each mission provides exposure to Jamaican doctors and nurses to the intricacies of complex open-heart surgery, as well as providing mentoring, training and support to the cardiac team. The hope is that, over time, dependence on visiting medical missions will be significantly reduced, and the capacity of the local team strengthened to perform the majority of required cardiac cases each week. She said that the future of the cardiac surgery programme at the Bustamante Hospital looks bright, as with the continued support from partners, the hospital will achieve its ultimate goal of becoming a centre of excellence in pediatric cardiac care.