

JAMAICA COALITION FOR A HEALTHY SOCIETY

Education. Advocacy. Ministry.

E-newsletter: March 2015

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❖ What's been happening: Jamaica

The JCHS has concerns about the significance and sequencing of the below recent events that bear directly on our national public policy approach to addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Jamaica.

The events appear to contradict the decision taken by the CARICOM Heads of Government in July 2014 to defer consideration of the recommendations of the PANCAP 'Justice for All' Declaration until national consultations were held. Among the recommendations was a call to repeal the buggery law and to eliminate faith-driven stigma and discrimination in the context of HIV/AIDS. Whether 'stigma and discrimination' refers to the person or the behaviour was not defined by PANCAP. We are not aware of any national consultations having taken place on these issues.

1. A high level **human rights and HIV forum**, *Health for All: Towards A Rights-based Approach to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support* was held at the Jamaica Pegasus hotel on March 4, 2015. This was organised by the National HIV/STI Programme, National Family Planning Board (NFPB), J-FLAG, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVCC), Jamaica Network of Seropositives (JN+).

The event was described as a forum "to address the importance and efficacy of rights-based approaches to health and development, particularly for people living with HIV (PLHV) and key populations that are most affected by HIV- including and especially, gay and

bisexual and other men who have sex with men in Jamaica who are disproportionately affected."

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/health-for-all-towards-a-rights-based-approach-to-hiv-prevention-treatment-care-and-support-tickets-15848961671>

Special guest speaker at the event was Ambassador Deborah L Birx, the US Global AIDS Coordinator and U.S Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy.

A JCHS representative attended the event and noted that the prominent themes in the various presentations were:

- Addressing cultural and social attitudes that drive stigma and discrimination. This would involve engaging Faith Based groups.
- Dealing with discriminatory laws.

In her presentation, Ambassador Birx indicated that in her view, the Minister of Health, Fenton Ferguson and Permanent Secretary in that Ministry, Kevin Harvey 'got it' regarding the 'rights-based' approach to addressing stigma and discrimination. She also lauded Jamaica for being a leader in the region.

The JCHS has been informed that the US Government agencies are now working directly with several individual CARICOM Ministries of Health to provide targeted funding. The Ministries are then to establish more direct links with non-Governmental organisations that provide services directly to the "vulnerable population" groups." These groups include Men who have Sex with Men and prostitutes.

2. HIV funding to churches: On March 10, the Gleaner reported that “the Church and other faith-based organisations have been targeted by the Ministry of Health (MoH) as part of a campaign to improve attitudes and behaviours among vulnerable high-risk groups such as homosexuals and prostitutes, and to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS.”

The programme is called ‘the Surveillance, Prevention and Control of Diseases’ and \$22 million in the 2015/2016 fiscal year is to be paid out to faith-based organisations ‘to develop and implement discrimination-reduction strategies.’ <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20150312/health-ministry-reach-gays-prostitutes-through-church>

The JCHS is of the view that should these strategies entail compromising on the Scriptures, this monetary carrot stick may engender a split in the church with the liberal congregations already supportive of LGBT lifestyles, presenting themselves as the ‘true’ compassionate church of Jesus Christ.

This funding is a portion of a USAID grant of approximately \$298 million to the Government of Jamaica to be spent between 2015/2016 on HIV/AIDS programmes.

3. On March 16, a local radio station Nationwide News reported that at a **regional conference put on by UNAIDS in New Kingston** Jamaica’s Minister of Health, Dr. Fenton Ferguson suggested that Jamaica “may have to take the bold step and change the buggery law, if it’s to further reduce HIV infection rates” so as to ensure equitable access to at risk groups.

<http://nationwideradiojm.com/health-minister-to-reduce-hiv-infections-buggery-laws-may-have-to-be-changed/>

The JCHS contends that the Minister’s statement is fallacious and does not accord with scientific data nor with his own public statements in May 2014. The Minister was then reported as saying that, “HIV-infected men who have sex with men (MSMs) now experience little or no barrier in accessing services at the island’s public health facilities despite Jamaica’s stringent buggery laws which criminalises the practice.”

http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Easier-access-to-public-health-care-for-HIV-infected-gay-men_16738534

The JCHS is of the view that this statement appears to be part of efforts to facilitate the socio-political objectives of the “sexual rights” agenda and usher in a deliberate re-organization of Jamaican and Caribbean societies around “sexual rights.”

The JCHS contends that in a democratic country, socio-political issues such as those presented by the “sexual rights” agenda should be addressed, through debate, by informed citizens not by sleight of hand.

Read the full version of the JCHS response - <http://www.jchs.org.jm/documents.html>

4. On March 17, 2015, the Prime Minister of Jamaica announced the pending **visit of the President of the United States to Jamaica** on April 9, 2015. CARICOM Heads of Government will also be present as all will be en route to the Summit of Americas meeting to be held in Panama, April 10-11, 2015. The CARICOM leaders and President Obama will “exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.”

<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20150317/why-obama-coming-jamaica>

The JCHS recalls that the US State Department recently named its first-ever special envoy to advocate globally for the 'human rights' of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people on February 23, 2015.

The new envoy, Randy Berry, has been "charged with advancing government initiatives to reduce violence and discrimination against LGBT people around the world, including in the more than 75 countries where consensual same-sex relationships are criminalized." He will utilize the State Department's Global Equality Fund (2011) to effect these initiatives

Jamaica and other CARICOM nations have been named among those 75 countries as reflected in these documents:

www.state.gov/globalequality/situation/index.htm

www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/droi/dv/4_04ilgareport/4_04ilgareport_en.pdf

"The appointment is part of an Obama administration push to promote LGBT rights internationally and make them a foreign policy priority."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/23/us-usa-diplomacy-lgbt-idUSKBN0LR23D20150223>

The JCHS is not privy to the actual agenda for the CARICOM and USA Heads of Government meeting, the sequencing of the above recent local and international events are noteworthy and cause for prayerful reflection and further monitoring. This is critical in view of the pathological nature of same-sex relations and the known and documented harmful consequences for public health and the common good.

❖ **Rebuttal by Jamaican Prime Minister**

Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller has been very vocal in dismissing claims by gay activists that LGBT persons were being attacked and killed in Jamaica. On March 26, at the launch of the 6th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference in New York, USA, Mrs. Simpson-Miller...

rebuked gay-rights protestors who crashed her keynote address and warned them that she would not be intimidated by their lies.

<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20150327/jamaican-prime-minister-rebuked-gay-rights-protestors-new-york>

❖ **Murders and sexual abuse of children**

Over the last two months, the Jamaican media has reported on the shocking incidents of the sexual abuse and murders of over 15 children including the murders of two pregnant 14 year old girls by their adult male abusers.

<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20150318/12-year-old-pregnant-girl-state-custody-man-believed-have-abused-her>

These reports shine the spotlight on the abhorrent rampant sexual abuse of minors and parental neglect and negligence. To our shame, this is facilitated by the de-sensitisation and fear of adults within the affected communities, delinquent law enforcement and a largely unmoved society.

The Jamaica CAUSE has expressed its outrage and condemnation of the wanton disregard for the lives and dignity of the nation's most vulnerable citizens. Read more from the press release <http://www.jchs.org.jm/press-releases.html>. The JCHS endorses these comments and urges all well-thinking persons to defend the lives of our precious children.

❖ **What's happening : CARICOM**

Trinidad & Tobago: Minister of Health Dr Fuad Khan calls for new legislation to end 'discrimination and stigma against the HIV-vulnerable group of sex workers, men who have sex with men and drug users'.

<http://www.newsday.co.tt/news/0,206528.html>

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The below letter was submitted to the local newspapers to address comments frequently made that the church is not responsive to the social ills of society.

March 26, 2015

Dear Editor,

Sir, I write regarding the continued sexual abuse of Jamaican children, which has recently been associated with murder of some of these victims. When such events become public, along with the expected and justifiable outrage comes the inevitable accusation most often phrased in the form of the question "What is the church doing?" Let me bring reassurance that all is not lost.

A number of Christian lobby groups including the Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society (JCHS), the Love March Movement (LMM), Lawyers Christian Fellowship (LCF), Jamaica CAUSE and Hear the Children Cry have been very outspoken in exposing and condemning the abuse of children for a number of years.

In the last 2 years in particular, there has been even more stress on protecting children, strengthening families, providing reasons and re-educating the public about the foundation and principles which make children and the family special and worth safe guarding. I mention a few of the events organized by these groups below.

In 2014, Jamaica CAUSE organized a rally that took place in June in Half Way Tree. The nation was called back to following Judeo-Christian principles in the manner in which we live and care for our children.

It is only as we recognize the worth of each human being and their inherent value as bearers of the Imago Dei (Image of God) that we will refrain from treating each other, and our children as commodities to be used.

As we acknowledge ourselves to be persons of infinite worth, rather than animals, we learn the value of self-control, freeing us from slavish conformity to our every desire.

The theme of the Love March Movement's march in September 2014 was "Strong Family! Strong Nation!" These young persons appealed to the nation, in particular youth, to return to principles that inspire us to be in control of our sexual desires and to strengthen family life.

This was followed in December 2014 with a joint JCHS, LCF, Jamaica CAUSE annual Human Rights conference and rally. The theme for 2014 was "International Law, Development and the Family: The Family as a Strategy for Development". The 2014 rally's theme was "Protecting true Children's Rights: the Right to be a Child." The theme of the 2013 conference was "International Law and the Welfare of the Family: The Impact of the Secular Worldview on Children.

The keynote speaker for the jointly hosted conference in December 2014 was Dr. Judith Reisman, who has spent most of her life fighting against pornography and sexual abuse of children. Dr. Reisman exposed the life and practice of Dr. Alfred Kinsey, the father of the sexual revolution. He performed what can loosely be called "research" to document the frequency and number of supposed orgasms in infants less than 1 year of age, whose genitalia were manipulated by "researchers".

In his book "Sexual Behaviour in the Adult Male" (1948), Dr. Kinsey published tables showing information collected by known pedophiles. The underlying assumptions of this research were that there is no such thing as unnatural sex acts, and children could enjoy sexual stimulation from the earliest stages of infancy. (cont'd)

(Letter cont'd)

Wardell Pomeroy, Kinsey co-author, has been quoted as saying that “Incest between adults and younger children ... can prove to be a satisfying and enriching experience”(1977). Significantly the “data” of these sexual anarchists have been used to influence and alter laws and policies in several countries. It is appalling that Kinsey’s “research” continues to frame the training of psychologists and the content of sex education curricula.

We see Kinsey’s influence in the HFLE curriculum and the controversial experimental curriculum used by JFJ/CVCC and FAMPLAN in 6 children’s homes in October 2014. Groups like IPPF and the architects of the Yogyakarta Principles also base their mission on Kinsey’s conclusions. In particular on the belief that children have ‘rights’ to have sex as they choose and that the State must remove obstacles to the expression of these ‘rights’, the obstacles being parents and the Church.

In 2014 a number of church groups, JCHS and LMM participated in the discussions of the Joint Select Committee on a number of issues concerning the care and protection of children, the welfare of other vulnerable persons in society and on sexual offences.

We challenged the committee not to change laws based on personal feelings and/or preferences but to ground changes in evidence of benefit for the common good. The committee was advised to proactively devote resources to fortify and strengthen families. Strong families provide a bulwark for children , the elderly and other vulnerable members of society.

In order to fix our current epidemic of child sexual abuse, murder and trafficking Jamaicans need to acknowledge the root causes of our problems. This includes our weak and fatherless family structures, acceptance of deviant ideas and behaviours, secularization of our culture, and abandonment of traditional values that are now regarded as “archaic”.

We have sown the wind and have reaped the whirlwind. Nevertheless, the Church including Christian lobby groups, are responding as our national anthem urges:

*“Teach us true respect for all,
Stir response to duty’s call,
Strengthen us the weak to cherish,
Give us vision lest we perish”.*

We will continue to work, to teach and support in this time of crisis.

*Dr. Kay Bailey
Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society*

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❖ Trinidad and Tobago (cont'd from page3)

Senators also debated granting same-sex couples and disabled person the right to adopt children.

<http://www.trinidadexpress.com/news/Adoption-law-must-deal-with-same-sex-disabled-issues-293948611.html>

St Vincent and the Grenadines: An opposition spokesperson on gender issues has called for public discussion on same sex relationships. She anticipates that the international community will soon force a decision on the matter due to financing links with recognition of non-heterosexual relationships.

<http://www.iwnsvg.com/2015/03/25/senator-wants-conversation-on-same-sex-relationships>

❖ ABOUT JCHS

Who we are

The JCHS is a family advocacy group promoting Judeo-Christian principles as the most coherent framework for defining family, ordering society and building a flourishing society.

What we do

- Public education
- Public rallies
- Media intervention
- Lobbying Government and civil society stakeholders
- Legal and policy papers

What can you do:

Prayer points:

- Redemption of family life in Jamaica
- Protection and nurturing of Jamaican children by all members of society
- Salvation for leaders in public and private sector. Conviction of their hearts and minds by the truth of God's Word.

Also...

- ❖ Get enumerated. Get informed. Spread the word.
- ❖ Affirm the inherent dignity of all persons. Denounce violence against all persons. Stand up for God's justice, truth and righteousness in Jamaica.
- ❖ View the JCHS documentary: '**Sex Lies and Rights: a seduction of law, medicine and politics**':
<https://www.youtube.com/jchsadvocate>

Download the accompanying contextual statement:
http://www.jchs.org.jm/uploads/1/3/4/4/13441454/jchs_contextual_statement_for_dvd_general.pdf

Please tell others about the video!

❖ Your financial support:

We welcome contributions in any amount, whether as a one-off donation or a regular contribution towards our continuing public education activities.

One, one cocoa fill basket!

The Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society

Bank of Nova Scotia 82-84 Half Way Tree Road,
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**Our humble thanks for your kind donations so far.
May the Lord richly bless you !**



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