**Summary of Presentation by Hon. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health, Jamaica**

Minister Tufton said that Jamaica has been affected like the rest of the region by noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). The latest survey indicates that one out of every two Jamaicans are overweight or obese, and as a consequence suffer the health implications of NCDs. Seven out of every ten deaths are linked to NCDs.

Two years ago, the Ministry of Health took the decision to refocus efforts on changing behavior. Part of the change was to encourage Jamaicans to engage more in physical activity. Had to determine best approach to get people moving.

Concept of Jamaica Moves: using Jamaican culture, music, entertainers, colors, festivities to encourage people to get active.

The three critical components are Physical Activity, Balancing Diet, and Knowing their Health Status (annual physical medical checkups).

The major activities were:

1. **Get Moving Challenge -** Identification of 12 popular personalities/key influencers and setting targets for steps to be completed each day. The competition received coverage through social and mainstream media and a winner was declared at the end of the period. During the challenge promoted the importance of physical activity and encouraged others to follow suit. This would have motivated others.
2. **Corporate Challenge –** Companies signed up employees to events already on the national calendar e.g. 5K walks/runs. 15 companies and 1000 employees in the first year grew to more than 20 companies and 2000 employees in the second year. Again, the opportunity was taken to educate participants on helping to control NCDs by being physically active. A winner was declared at the end of the event.
3. **Road Tour** – Travelling around the country staging festive, colorful events with music and instructors providing guidance in workout sessions. Participants had the opportunity to do medical checks e.g. blood pressure, cholesterol. Healthy eating (eating fruits and vegetables and drinking water) was also promoted. Over 5000 Jamaicans participated in the final event.
4. **Partnerships with Existing Physical Activity Events** – Community events and 5Ks were cobranded with the Jamaica Moves Brand. Fun, family involvement and use of lots of color and music attracted participation.
5. **Development of Public Spaces** – Walking trails, jogging trails, also cobranded with Jamaica Moves. Tips on healthy eating, importance of physical activity were placed in these zones. They also worked with community-based groups to organize workout sessions and develop routines, encouraging them to make physical activity a habit.

Over the last two years, a national conversation developed about the challenges of NCDs, the importance of personal responsibility, the enjoyment of PA, intertwined with the culture and by this means got Jamaicans to buy in.

There is now a focus on the school environment. Obesity in young persons has doubled over the past seven years. Working with the Ministry of Education to include more physical activity in the curriculum throughout the school year and also through extracurricular activities.

The two-year period has seen the Jamaica Moves brand becoming very dominant. The impact is still being assessed and impact will be measured over three to five years. However, from a perspective of reach, the Jamaica Moves brand has become well known and more Jamaicans are aware of NCDs and how to address this scourge.

After colleague Health Ministers were exposed to the concept, it was introduced at the level of CARICOM and later at the UN High Level meeting on NCDs, where it was endorsed. A toolkit modelled on Jamaica Moves was developed for the CARICOM region. To date, Barbados Moves and Trinidad Moves have been launched and other countries are expected to follow.

Funding support is being sought to create a secretariat to track the NCD epidemic in the Caribbean, track physical activity programs, and to create a unified brand and provide support to each country to promote physical activity as a lifestyle.