



2026 *"Together We Are Stronger"*

CCFPJ Secretariat: 876-946-0954, 876-517-6636

JVMA: c/o Phoenix Vetcare: 876-926-5060

onehealthdayconferencejamaica@gmail.com

ohdconference@jvma.org

Strengthening Bonds Across Disciplines:

The 8th Annual JVMA–CCFPJ One Health Conference Jamaica

The 8th Annual JVMA–CCFPJ One Health Conference, held virtually on January 17–18, 2026, reaffirmed Jamaica's leadership in the Caribbean in advancing the One Health agenda. Since its launch in 2018, this collaboration between the Caribbean College of Family Physicians Jamaica Chapter (CCFPJ) and the Jamaica Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA) has become a cornerstone of interdisciplinary dialogue in the region.

Now firmly established as a January tradition during One Health Awareness Month, the conference continues to draw diverse audiences—this year welcoming over 300 participants each day to explore pressing One Health/Planetary Health challenges.

A Platform for Cross-Cutting Issues

The conference's hallmark is its ability to bridge disciplines, encouraging professionals to step beyond their niches. This year's program addressed:

- Nutrition and non-communicable diseases
- Environmental impacts of human activity
- Animal trafficking and invasive species
- Vector control and vector-borne diseases
- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)
- Comparative and translational medicine
- Climate change impacts and action

Day One: Diet, Ecosystems, AMR and "Arthropod Alley 1"

Day One opened with greetings from Dr. Seni Ononuju, CCFPJ President, setting the tone for a day of thought-provoking presentations. Then Professor Errol Morrison, renowned Jamaican physician and nutritionist, compared the Caribbean diet with the Mediterranean diet, highlighting links to non-communicable diseases.

Dr. Susan Koenig, wildlife ecologist from the Windsor Research Centre in Jamaica's famed Cockpit Country, shared research on bauxite mining's impact on Bromeliad-dependent species, potential sentinels for human health. Damion Whyte, terrestrial biologist from the University of the West Indies (UWI) Jamaica, examined animal trafficking and invasive species.

Dr. Satish Jankie, pharmacist and secretary of the Caribbean Sepsis and AMR Alliance (UWI, Trinidad & Tobago) addressed AMR's human health impacts, while Drs. Anil Persad and Kristen Jaggernath (UWI School of Veterinary Medicine, Trinidad) focused on AMR in food-producing animals.

In the "Arthropod Alley" feature, Dr. Sheena Francis, molecular biologist/entomologist (UWI, Jamaica) concluded with an engaging look at mosquito control using the Sterile Insect Technique.

Day Two: Climate, Comparative Medicine, and Arthropod Alley II

Day Two began with greetings from Dr. Kathy-Ann Leon, JVMA President, followed by a joint session on Climate Change and Health led by conference co-chairs Dr. Paul Cadogan (JVMA) and Dr. Aldyth Buckland (CCFPJ). Dr. Cadogan analyzed the genesis of Hurricane Melissa and its impact on Jamaica's animal sector. Dr. Buckland, The CCFP's representative on the Caribbean Hub of the Planetary Health Alliance, emphasized climate change's effects on human health and the importance of climate-conscious medical reporting.

The Comparative & Translational Medicine theme featured veterinary oncologist Dr. Cheryl London (Tufts University, USA) on canine lymphoma research with translational potential for human medicine. Dr. Adedamola Soyibo, nephrologist and head of the transplant unit at the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI) in Jamaica, spoke on xenotransplants of kidneys from pigs to humans.

The second journey down "Arthropod Alley" included Dr. Jennifer Peterson, medical entomologist (University of Delaware, USA) speaking on Chagas Disease, including recent research findings on the disease in Trinidad. Then molecular entomologist/pharmacologist Dr. Simone Sandiford of UWI FMS in Jamaica covered the "Yaad Tick Project" a new research initiative on the species of ticks occurring in Jamaica and the diseases they may be carrying and transmitting to both humans and animals.

Moderation was provided by Dr. Arna Brown-Morgan (CCFPJ) on Day One and Dr. Kathy-Ann Leon (JVMA) on Day Two.

Support and Impact

The conference was supported by sponsors including the Veterinary Services Division (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Mining), National Health Fund, HiPro Farm Supplies, Caribbean Broilers Group, Baruch Distributors, Data Defense Consulting, and Juici Patties.

Attendance was free, with continuing medical education credits available for a small fee. Part proceeds will aid Hurricane Melissa recovery efforts, underscoring the event's humanitarian spirit.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants praising the diversity of topics and the depth of expertise.

Conclusion

The JVMA–CCFPJ One Health Conference has become a beacon of multidisciplinary collaboration, strengthening ties between human and veterinary medicine, environmental sciences, and public health. As the organizers look ahead, they anticipate continued growth in local, regional and international partnerships, advancing the One Health and Planetary Health banners across Jamaica, the wider Caribbean, and beyond.

From: The OHCJ Planning Committee