



\$136 Million Female Ward Opened at St. Ann's Bay Regional Hospital

By [Marlon Tingling](#) June 29, 2014

Story Highlights

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crowding at the accident and emergency department.

The Health Minister pointed out that since 2012, the Government has invested nearly \$1.5 billion in the country's secondary health care infrastructure. "Near \$600 million of that amount is being spent in the North East region. Importantly, about \$352 million was spent or is being spent on the St. Ann's Bay Regional Hospital to repaint buildings, improve storage facilities, construct security fencing, purchase equipment, install air conditioning units in the accident and emergency (department), and to procure a new ambulance," he outlined.

Other works include: improvement to the operating theatre; upgrading of the sewage system; and improvements to the x-ray units. Minister Ferguson noted that the hospital is strategically located for use by persons across the North Eastern section of the island, which makes the new female medical ward critical.

He informed that admissions at the facility had moved from 21,250 in 2008, to 26,092 in 2010. Bed occupancy increased from 75 per cent in 2008 to 86 per cent in 2010, while in 2012 the hospital daily census showed a range of 225 to 285 occupancy level, with a demand of at least 300 beds.

"It is not by accident that we are making this investment at the St. Ann's Bay Regional Hospital. The facility is an important institution in the North East region providing a range of services to a population of some 365,000 persons. This is the regional referral hospital for St. Ann, St. Mary, and Portland and in some cases from sections of St. Catherine and Trelawny," he stated.

The Health Minister said the hospital is also expected to play a major role in the Government's promotion of health tourism, as it is in close proximity to the island's major tourism belts. The project was funded by the National Health Fund (NHF).

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In declaring the facility open, Health Minister, Hon. Dr. Fenton Ferguson, said the ward is a demonstration of the Government's commitment to strengthening the secondary care infrastructure, as part of an overall drive to develop the public health sector.

He noted that the 47 rooms had increased the hospital's bed capacity by 20 per cent. It also includes improved accommodations for patients, and will result in a reduction in