

## Child passport begins next week

By next Wednesday all new born babies will be issued with a Child Health and Development Passport, which is intended to track their growth and development up to 17 years of age.

The health passport will replace the immunisation card. The child health and development passport.

Minister of Health, Rudyard Spencer will hand over the first passport to a new born at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital on Wednesday. Spencer was optimistic that the new system will reap positive results. "In the first year of distribution, we expect that approximately 45,000 children will receive the CHDP. I am confident that as long as the document is used as it should be, the result will be healthier and more adjusted children," he said. He is confident that the new method of recording children's health data will help improve the island's child mortality rate. "We also expect that this approach will assist in improving Jamaica's infant and child mortality rates as keeping track of children's health and development status will aid us in deciding quickly whether interventions are needed to put them back on track," said Spencer. The Child Health and Development Passport was developed to meet the country's obligations under the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. These goals require a two thirds reduction in the infant mortality and child mortality rates by 2015. The passport includes information such as medical history, nutrition guidelines, growth charts and educational and developmental tips for parents.