

Kiwanis Club launches campaign to buy haemodialysis machines

The Kiwanis Club of New Kingston has launched a campaign to purchase two haemodialysis machines for the Diabetes Association of Jamaica (DAJ) to help treat patients with kidney disease.

Lola Chin Sang, president of the Kiwanis Club of New Kingston, said the initiative would substantially boost the capacity of the DAJ, which currently has eight machines. The campaign is being launched in collaboration with the Jamaica National Building Society (JNBS), which will assist in promotions and facilitate collections. "Jamaica cannot afford to turn a blind eye to this illness," Chin Sang said. "I became sensitive to persons needing dialysis when I met a youngster suffering from kidney failure. "It broke my heart to see his frail, underdeveloped body looking like a six-year-old's, yet he was in his early teens," she said. "His mother recounted to me her experience with long waiting lists to get treatment and the unaffordable costs." Treating the illness Speaking at the launch of the campaign at the Wyndham Kingston hotel on Wednesday, the Kiwanis president said it was after her experience with the teen that she committed herself to securing resources to treat the illness. As a result she recommended to her board of directors and membership that the campaign be directed as the 2012-2013 major project of the Kiwanis Club of New Kingston. Chin Sang remarked, "My membership and I are totally delighted at JN's shared vision and support of this project!" Mary Smith, executive, JN group risk, announced that contributions to purchase the haemodialysis machines could be made to account RSV-11171101 at any Jamaica National Building Society Branch across the island. She added that the company would be promoting the initiative in its branches islandwide as well as its overseas offices in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, and the Cayman Islands. "As an organisation which has been a part of the financial and social fabric of Jamaica for 139 years, we not only work with our members to realise their personal dreams of home ownership and financial independence, but have also provided extensive financial and technical support to encourage individual, community, rural and national development," Smith stated. Professor Errol Morrison, president of the Diabetes Association of Jamaica, pointed out that more than 300,000 persons in Jamaica over the age of 15 have diabetes, and more than half of those with the illness are not aware of their condition. "Diabetes is one of the leading causes of kidney disease; the second leading cause of death," Professor Morrison said. "It is the leading cause of amputation, secondary blindness, heart disease, and stroke." He noted that diabetes becomes a costly disease to manage, particularly when complications occur.