

**MESSAGE FROM DR. OSBIL WATSON, CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER,
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES ON
THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF WORLD VETERINARY DAY 2016,
SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2016**

Once again, veterinarians around the globe join in celebrating World Veterinary Day on April 30, 2016. This year's theme, "Continuing Education with a One Health Focus" highlights an area critical to the control of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases of public health significance. Increased interaction between domestic animals, wildlife, and humans is an important factor in the dynamics of these emerging diseases and the transmission of pathogens.

In light of the fact that approximately 75% of new infectious diseases in humans are of animal origin, veterinary professionals and paraprofessionals are faced with the challenge of safeguarding human health at the level of the human-animal interface. Globalization has not only positively impacted international trade, economics, and cultural interactions, but has increased the risk of spread of devastating trans-boundary animal diseases as a result of the rapid movement of people, animals and products of animal origin. Such diseases can have profound socio-economic impact on society. Additionally, the ability of numerous microorganisms to develop resistance to available antimicrobial preparations is of great concern to both human and animal health professionals.

As is clearly seen, human health and animal health are inextricably linked, making the One Health concept of great relevance to both human and veterinary medical professionals. Both veterinarians and medical practitioners must therefore collaborate in safeguarding humans from

infectious diseases by combating zoonotic pathogens at the animal source. For this to be successful, training of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals must encompass not only animal health, but also human and environmental health making them highly qualified to function at the leadership level of One Health.

I salute all veterinarians of the Jamaica Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA), the Veterinary Services Division and our animal health technicians and implore you to make use of every available opportunity to collaborate, in an effort to promote and improve public health through the One Health Initiative.