



**PRESS RELEASE
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Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn engage Minister of Health Dr. Christopher Tufton, Executive Director National Council on Drug Abuse (NCDA) Mr. Michael Tucker (left), Resident Representative OAS Jeanelle Van Glaanenweygel and Chief Technical Director at the Ministry of Justice Kayla Sewell Mills (right) in a light-hearted conversation at the Early Warning Systems on Drug Workshop at Courtyard by Marriot Hotel in Kingston today.

Implement Early Warning Systems to tackle illicit drug use
– Min. Cuthbert-Flynn

Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, says early warning systems are to be put in place to address the abuse of ‘Molly’ and other illicit drug usage in the country.

The Minister was speaking at the Opening Session of the three-day National Workshop on Early Warning Systems on Drugs at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Kingston earlier today.

In making her point, she noted the **“significant impact”** illicit drugs have on the Jamaican economy, as well as the national security and health apparatuses of the country while calling for the establishment of strong preventative measures.

“Early warning systems, as an inter-agency approach present a realistic opportunity for countries like Jamaica to identify emerging drugs that may pose a potential threat to public health and safety,” the Minister said.

“Furthermore, these systems will allow us to detect emerging signals, identify vulnerable communities, and assess the effectiveness of existing prevention and intervention measures,” she reasoned.



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The State Minister mentioned that the common use of marijuana for recreational and medicinal purposes across Jamaica makes access to other related and illicit drugs possible, stating that the demand for Marijuana **“creates ideal circumstances for the sale and distribution of other forms of narcotics and synthetic substances”** to drug users.

Minister Cuthbert-Flynn said that implementing additional preventative measures will add further protection for vulnerable groups including the country’s young population.

“Molly has become popular in recent times with several mentions in dancehall music; this is a significant threat to the health and well-being of our citizens, as music typically reflects the reality of many,” the Minister stated.

In addition, the State Minister emphasized the collaborative efforts of the country’s strategic partners in the ongoing work to disrupt the illegal importation of illicit drugs through the country’s ports, as a signal of the government’s determination to stamp out the use and abuse of illegal drugs.

“The Ministry of National Security continues to collaborate with key players in our border protection system to interdict and disrupt the trafficking of all forms of dangerous drugs to and through Jamaica,” emphasized Minister Cuthbert-Flynn.

The Organization of American States/Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS/CICAD) in collaboration with the National Council on Drug Abuse is hosting the three-day workshop on early warning systems in response to opioids and new psychoactive substances from October 18-20.

The workshop is hosting participants from the National Council on Drug Abuse, Jamaica Constabulary Force, Ministries of Health, National Security and Justice, and specialized drug treatment facilities.

