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Seaview to Close Residential Units in Two Weeks; D.H.S. Working With Facility to Relocate Patients

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ST. THOMAS — The Consortium on Thursday learned that the Seaview Nursing Home, facing a myriad of issues from an aging facility to financial constraints, is set to close next week. The publication was informed of the impending closure by a person with knowledge of the matter, prompting the Consortium to reach out to Dept. of Human Services Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez Thursday afternoon for comment.

On Friday, the commissioner announced that D.H.S. is working closely with the Sea View Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility as they close their residential services to severely disabled adults and senior citizens on January 30.

Although Sea View's formal relationship with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) ended on or about January 30, 2016 and Sea View was decertified as a Skilled Nursing Facility, Dr. Alfred Heath, owner of Sea View, continued to provide much needed nursing home services to longtime residents of the Home and others who became residents after CMS decertification.

According to D.H.S., currently there are 6 residents at the Sea View Nursing facility — a combination of senior citizens and adults with severe disabilities. D.H.S said that as the recognized State Unit on Aging by the U.S. Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living, in conjunction with family members where applicable, the department has initiated plans to safely and humanely transition these six residents to other care facilities to include but not limited to the Queen Louise and the Herbert Grigg Homes for the Aged.

"Our immediate and critical charge facing the closure of Sea View was to carefully plan the transition of the one resident our department has legal guardianship over. However, though only one resident is in our guardianship, we have made it our priority to also work with Sea View to plan the transition of the other residents to other facilities, which are able to meet their physical, mental and emotional care needs," Ms. Causey-Gomez said.

The Sea View Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility began operations on June 19, 1993, D.H.S. said. Since that time D.H.S. said it has worked in close partnership with Sea View's staff and management. Ms. Causey-Gomez noted Dr. Heath's vision and commitment and said, "DHS is grateful for Dr. Heath and his vision and commitment, that has allowed thousands of residents from St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John to receive quality medical, continuous nursing, health and social services for decades within our community, at Sea View. The Department of Human Services is in the midst of a thorough assessment and plan to address the continued and growing need for CMS certified Skilled Nursing Facility and a wide range of services for our seniors in the U.S. Virgin Islands. We are grateful for Governor Albert Bryan's leadership and support our growth efforts in this regard."

Additional residential and day treatment services provided by St. Thomas Health Care Management, Inc., often referred to as Sea View, will continue at the current site, without interruption, D.H.S. said.