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VI Department of Health Launches Community Outreach for National Public Health Week

DOH enhances community well-being with National Public Health Week initiatives

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The V.I. Department of Health is engaging in a series of community outreach activities this week in observance of National Public Health Week, under the theme “Protecting, Connecting and Thriving: We Are All Public Health.”

Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion emphasized the broader scope of public health, stating, “Public health extends beyond healthcare. It’s about clean environments, safe food, and water, and fostering community connections. By uniting to support public health, individuals, families, and the public health field can achieve the shared goal of expanding access and equitable care to all for better health outcomes.”

In a bid to connect with the community and promote health and wellness, VIDOH's community health workers and chronic disease prevention staff are visiting public schools across the territory to read to young children, according to a release from the department. The initiative aims to foster early awareness about the importance of health and well-being.

A significant highlight of the week is set for Thursday when VIDOH divisions will conduct a territory-wide community engagement event. The event, open to the public from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., will offer free health screenings and information on various services provided by VIDOH. The participating divisions include Community Health, Chronic Disease Prevention, Communicable Disease, Maternal, Child Health, Behavioral Health, and Family Planning.

The events will take place at multiple locations: the entrance to the Roy Lester Schneider Hospital on St. Thomas, the former Dial-Rent-to-Own parking lot at Sunny Isles on St. Croix, and the Morris DeCastro Clinic in Cruz Bay, St. John.

Ms. Encarnacion also took the opportunity to express gratitude towards VIDOH employees for their relentless service to the community. “This National Public Health Week, I want to recognize VIDOH employees for the work they do every day to support the health and well-being of our community,” she said. “In times of crisis, they are among the first responders, mobilizing to provide critical support to those in need. Beyond the clinics and offices, they are educators, advocates, and innovators. I thank each of them for their commitment to serving the greater good.”

The Department of Health offices across the territory will be closed on Friday, April 5, for employee appreciation activities, with normal operations resuming on Monday, April 8. The community is encouraged to participate in the week’s activities and learn more about the services offered by VIDOH.