

logo not found or type unknown

More Than 15 'Boarder' Patients, \$8M Gap and Overdue Allotments Strain Schneider Hospital, Staff Says

SRMC medical staff says the hospital is carrying an \$8 million uncompensated-care gap, more than four months of overdue government allotments and over 15 patients awaiting placement, creating ER delays, bed shortages, supply concerns and safety risks.

Health / **Published On July 06, 2026 03:10 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **July 06, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



The Schneider Regional Medical Center. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM.

ST. THOMAS — The medical staff at Schneider Regional Medical Center, represented by Lori Thompson, SRMC Medical Staff president, is warning that the hospital's ability to provide care is being weakened by severe financial and operational strain, including an approximately \$8 million

gap between the estimated cost of uncompensated care and the hospital's approved FY2026 budget ceiling, more than four months of overdue government allotments, and a growing number of patients who remain hospitalized without reimbursement or placement options.

In a July 6 letter signed by the Concerned Medical Staff of Schneider Regional Medical Center, staff members said they were writing to express "grave concern regarding the ongoing inability to provide the level of healthcare our community deserves due to severe and worsening financial and operational limitations."

The letter says SRMC has made significant improvements in billing practices and revenue collection, with monthly collections now reaching historic levels. However, medical staff said those gains have not been enough to overcome the hospital's financial pressure without adequate government support.

"The current amount of uncompensated care provided by our institution is unsustainable, and the failure to receive more than four months of overdue government allotments has further deepened this crisis," the letter states.

At SRMC's Fiscal Year 2026 budget hearing, the estimated cost of uncompensated care was reported at \$39.8 million. However, the hospital's approved FY2026 budget ceiling was \$31,750,000, creating an approximately \$8 million funding gap.

"As expected, this deficit has caused the hospital to continue struggling financially and has resulted in mounting debt owed to vendors, suppliers, and service providers," the medical staff wrote. "The burden of uncompensated and uninsured care is simply too large to offset through hospital operations alone. The Government of the Virgin Islands must provide adequate funding to cover uninsured and uncompensated care obligations."

The letter says physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals continue to care for all patients regardless of their ability to pay. But medical staff warned that the burden of uncompensated care is placing extraordinary pressure on already limited resources.

SRMC is currently caring for more than 15 "boarder" patients who remain hospitalized for long periods without reimbursement or placement options, according to the letter. Those patients are "effectively living within the hospital system while requiring ongoing medical and social support services that receive little to no financial compensation." The problem, staff said, is compounded by a growing uninsured population.

The medical staff said the situation has created a cascading effect across the healthcare system, including extended emergency room wait times for critically ill patients, a lack of available inpatient beds for acute medical emergencies, difficulty recruiting and retaining essential medical staff and specialists, shortages of critical medical supplies and equipment, increased burnout among healthcare workers, and growing concerns about patient safety and quality of care.

"Our staff remains deeply committed to serving the people of the Virgin Islands and all who seek care at our facility," the letter states. "However, commitment alone cannot compensate for inadequate funding, delayed government payments, and the increasing demands placed upon the territory's only major healthcare system."

The medical staff said healthcare providers should not have to choose which essential care and resources can be delayed, rationed or deferred, but said that has become the hospital's reality.

“Without immediate action and sustained financial support, we fear the continued deterioration of healthcare services available to our community and a further decline in our ability to recruit the physicians, nurses, specialists, and allied healthcare professionals necessary to meet the needs of our patients,” the letter says.

The staff called on territorial and federal leaders to urgently address the funding deficiencies, release overdue government allotments, and develop long-term solutions to support uncompensated care and the growing healthcare demands facing SRMC.

“The people of the Virgin Islands deserve access to safe, timely, and high-quality healthcare,” the letter states. “Our medical staff deserves the tools, staffing, and support necessary to provide it.”

© Viconsortium 2026