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Third Coronavirus Death Confirmed in U.S. Virgin Islands; Latest Victim is a 77-Year-Old Man From St. Croix, Dept. of Health Says

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The Juan F. Luis Hospital. The latest person to die from the coronavirus on St. Croix was on a ventilator at the hospital, Health officials say. By. ERNICE GILBERT/ VI CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — After confirming a second coronavirus-related death in the U.S. Virgin Islands this morning, with details of the case being provided during Governor Albert Bryan's press briefing during the afternoon, the Department of Health on Friday night confirmed a third death in the territory, with the latest being a 77-year-old man from St. Croix who was on a ventilator at the Juan F. Luis Hospital.

D.O.H. said in a release tonight that it received confirmation Friday afternoon that a 77-year-old male St. Croix resident with a history of hypertension and diabetes tested positive for coronavirus and died shortly after. This case is considered travel-acquired, as the deceased recently traveled from Miami, Florida. At the time of his death he was hospitalized at the Juan F. Luis where he was on a ventilator, the department said.

The deceased announced earlier today, which was the second death, was a 72-year-old woman who had been hospitalized for the past two weeks at the Schneider Regional Medical Center, Mr. Bryan said at the regular Government House COVID-19 update.

“I express my heartfelt sympathy on behalf of the staff and senior leadership of the Department to the family and friends of the two most recent deaths in the Virgin Islands resulting from the COVID-19 Disease,” Dept. of Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion said. “It is with sadness that we share the news of their passing with the community.”

Health authorities are turning greater attention to outreach and education for the territory’s senior citizens and their caregivers or family members, urging them to adhere to social distancing practices and to contact D.O.H. if they display the symptoms of high fever, shortness of breath and coughing. “We are working alongside the VI National Guard and the VI Department of Human Services who have a log of all the seniors. We are working with them, going into the neighborhoods, ensuring that we project the message to them,” Ms. Encarnacion said.

Mr. Bryan said the government has been identifying exactly where seniors live, based on GPS coordinates, so that first responders are better able to locate seniors during health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, or natural disasters.

The total number of positive cases of COVID-19 remained at 51 as of Friday afternoon. Negative test results climbed to 373. A total of 458 people have been tested, according to D.O.H. Thirty-four test results are pending. The number of tests administered increased by 27 over the last 24 hours.