

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Juan F. Luis Hospital Loses Accreditation, CMS Pulls Out

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The Juan F. Luis Hospital (JFL) has lost its accredited status, a press release made available today by the hospital has revealed.

The main reason behind the loss of the hospital's accreditation is the pulling out of the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which informed the hospital it will no longer continue reimbursement payments to JFL, as of Oct. 9.

Juan F. Luis Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kendall Griffith said in a statement that he had already informed Governor de Jongh, Senate President Shawn-Michael Malone and Delegate to Congress Donna Christensen of what had taken place.

The hospital's loss of its accredited status can be attributed to multiple scenarios; most pointedly, however, is the facility's budget being halved from about \$33 million in 2008 to about \$17 million in 2014. The budget cuts have forced JFL to cut back in key departments, producing a chain reaction leading to the lack of staff to perform critical tasks, nursing deficiencies and other problems.

The pull out of medicare and medicaid would leave many without medical insurance and makes the hospital's financial woes even more complicated, as CMS has been one of JFL's biggest partners. As a result, many fear jobs will be lost, people will leave the island and the St. Croix economy, already in a weak position, will become even more compromised.

A press conference will be held on Friday morning at the hospital. The *VI Consortium* will bring you more as the story develops.

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