

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Juan Luis Officials In Baltimore Fighting To Keep Accreditation

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October 9 is quickly approaching, the day when the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will officially pull its support from the Juan F. Luis Hospital on St. Croix, leaving the facility without half of its funding source, and unable to supply medicare and medicaid services to patients. It's a daunting reality St. Croix residents never thought they'd have to face, and today, hospital officials will try to keep hope alive.

The Juan Luis team will meet in Baltimore with CMS heads, hoping to prevent deaccreditation by presenting a plan that would see the hospital coming into compliance with the agency's standards, and working toward rectifying the deficiencies [identified in the recently published CMS report](#).

According to Governor John de Jongh, Jr., the person who crafted the plan that will be presented at today's meeting "is someone extremely knowledgeable with CMS, with the assistance of a committed hospital leadership and staff, and vetted by the new district board--individuals committed to the delivery of healthcare." The person was not identified in a news release issued by Government House.

The Governor also revealed that his administration was not made privy to the "corrective action plan" that has been put forth by Juan Luis officials nor was the Territorial Hospital Board; however, de Jongh said his administration remains "optimistic that they will be successful in the attempts to head off the hospital's decertification."

De Jongh added that the territory's leaders must come together and do what is necessary to see the Luis Hospital continue to provide healthcare services.

"The fact is that the Luis Hospital is St. Croix's only hospital facility and we have to come together to do all that can be done to ensure it can provide services to all in need -- whether through increased funding or improved oversight and management of hospital operations," the outgoing governor said. "On the basis of a plan developed and approved by the hospital, we are requesting that CMS focus on the improvements, the plan forward and keep the certification in place so that the hospital's solvency is not in question."

De Jongh concluded by stating that he will continue to work with Juan Luis leadership, the Territorial Board and the 30th Legislature to support a sustainable action plan. He pointed toward his proposal submitted to the Legislature on Sept. 12 that makes available some funding [from the \\$19 million windfall](#) the government received from an audit of medicaid conducted by the federal government.