

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Griffith Releases New Statement: Hiring Of Unlicensed Doctor An "Oversight," Contract Worth \$30K

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A day after Juan F. Luis Hospital CEO Dr. Kendall Griffith [spoke with the VI Consortium](#) explaining that Nedra Dodds' "clinical experience...had nothing to do with [her] administrative skills; and so, we engaged this person administratively to help us to improve our processes," he issued another statement Wednesday calling it an "oversight" to have contracted the services of Dodds--a former model and unlicensed physician whose botched cosmetic surgery procedures in 2013 at her now-defunct Opulence Aesthetic Medicine clinic in Kennesaw, Ga., left two young women dead.

In a previous interview, Griffith informed the *VI Consortium* that Dodds began working as an emergency room consultant at JFL on Sept. 17, the same day CMS gave the hospital

notice it would no longer provide medicare and medicaid reimbursements to the hospital due to the findings of an August 2014 audit. The CMS report outlined 112 pages of malpractice, deficiencies and other problems at the hospital, including the hiring of physicians through special privileges, outside of proper vetting procedures.

"We could have done better due diligence in bringing her on here," Griffith told the VI Consortium on Tuesday. "This was strictly an administrative position where someone who had built a successful practice could bring to the emergency room what we were looking for, which was improved customer service."

In his latest prepared statement, Griffith also addressed the disgraced doctor's short-lived contract with JFL, saying it was worth \$30,000; however, he did not specify the original duration of the contract or if it was paid in full at the time Dodds was terminated on Oct. 4.

Dr. Griffith's statement issued today (one was previously issued on Monday night--see link above) addressing Dodds' affiliation with JFL is found below:

In response to the interest expressed in Dr. Nedra Dobbs (sic) following JFL's press conference, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify her relationship and status with JFL and to correct some of the misinformation that has been cast upon the St. Croix and Virgin Islands community."

"Dr. Nedra Dodds was hired by JFL on September 17, 2014 to perform professional services as a consultant. Her contract was very specific and involved no clinical services or interactions with any JFL patients at any time. The amount of her contract was \$30,000. Her primary responsibilities included providing support to improve back office customer service, billing and physician documentation efforts."

"As part of JFL's due diligence process and in accordance with CMS' Statement of Deficiencies, the professional services contract for Dr. Nedra Dodds was reviewed as part of a comprehensive analysis of JFL contracts and vendors. JFL found inadequacies and insufficiencies in Dodds' qualifications and duly terminated its relationship with her as of October 4, 2014. Dodds was employed at JFL for 2 1/2 weeks."

The two deaths linked to Dodds' Georgia-based practice do not include anyone from St. Croix or the Virgin Islands community, nor did she treat or come into contact with any patients at any time while employed at JFL during her 2 1/2 weeks on the job."

The Gov. Juan F. Luis Hospital continues to diligently and comprehensively review all hospital matters as part of our ongoing agreement with CMS. As we aggressively address these issues, we are taking steps to help ensure that a candidate with Dr. Dodd's background and experience will not be hired by JFL in the future."

In closing, I wish to assure the residents of St. Croix and the Virgin Islands community that we have done our due diligence in addressing and bringing closure to this matter. As such, we will not allow this oversight to overshadow our recent accomplishments or the good work and diligent efforts of our committed workforce who take pride in meeting the challenges we face at this hospital each and every day to provide needed and important healthcare services to the fine people of this community."

