

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Christensen: Too Many Turnovers At JFL, Hiring Of Nedra Dodds "Failure In Management"

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The hiring of Nedra Dodds by the Juan Luis Hospital was a "failure in management," Delegate to Congress Donna Christensen told *VI Consortium* in an exclusive interview, adding that in most places, the persons responsible for such a hire "would not be working."

That's what the Delegate said when this reporter asked her about the Nedra Dodds controversy, a story *VI Consortium* [broke on October 6](#), adding that "due diligence in all our practices, obviously hasn't been up to par."

"At the very least, you go to the that network where physician practices are reported," Christensen said in relation to the vetting process of Dodds. "So, that was a real failure in management."

The Delegate went on to praise Griffith for what she believes has been an outstanding job from the doctor; however, she was sure to point out the management deficiencies at the hospital, and said Griffith would need a lot of help to get JFL back on a corrective path.

"Management has been a problem and Dr. Griffith has really done a good job -- a yeoman's job, he is very dedicated, his heart is really right with the Juan Luis Hospital and the people of St. Croix, but still there were management issues and there have been management issues before," she said.

Christensen then spoke of the high amount of turnovers that JFL has seen over the years, a problem she says has stalled the hospital's progress.

"There's been turnover in CEOs, turnover in nursing. I started out with the dialysis issue with [former Juan Luis CEO] Darice Plaskett, and then when we tried to do some other things to bring money into the hospital, it was [CEO] Jeff Nelson, and now it is Kendall Griffith -- and then the board was not fully constituted, so management is indeed a problem," she said. "But, I think the turnover, the management and the board not being in place [affected the hospital], and even when it [the board] was in place, perhaps it did not fully exercise its full authority."

When asked if someone should be held accountable for the hiring of Nedra Dodds, Christensen said that "in normal circumstances, most places the person [responsible for the hire] would not be working."

The Delegate added: "We are a small community and we know that we have to manage the hospital and everything else better than we do today, and we cannot be about personalities and friends and special interests. We have to have at the forefront the interest of the people of the territory. And I'm sure that Dr. Griffith is really committed to seeing this through, and maybe he will stay on if he gets it done, [or] maybe he will go back to his practice, but I know he is really committed to seeing this through -- but he is going to need a lot of support."

The *VI Consortium's* big video interview with Christensen will go live on Friday evening.