

The Virgin Islands Consortium

CDC Awards Frederiksted Health Clinic \$2.5 Million Grant For HIV Initiatives

Health / **Published On July 14, 2015 07:09 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **July 14, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- Officials of the Frederiksted Health Clinic announced via press release on Tuesday that the Centers for Disease Control has awarded the facility \$2.5 million over the course of 5 years to help enhance the clinic's HIV initiatives.

CEO Masserae Sprauve-Webster and the FHC Board of Directors expressed their gratitude to the federal agency for the funding.

"This is great news for St Croix, and good news for our HIV prevention efforts," said Webster. "This is a substantial grant that will allow us to add prevention staff to our already outstanding HIV treatment staff."

Throughout the summer and fall, FHC staff will be learning several interventions approved by the CDC designed to help people with HIV better manage the virus.

"Ultimately, our goal is improve the health of our community. The HIV epidemic continues to be one of the major health issues challenging St Croix. This funding will help us address prevention," Webster added.

According to the release, a majority of the funds will be used for interventions with known HIV positive individuals. In addition, the funding will make possible the implementation of a public restroom condom distribution program and increase peer outreach designed to bring HIV-positive individuals into medical care.

"We would like to underscore this is not additional funds to support our present operations. The grant supports additional staffing and program outcome responsibilities expected from this grant. We are prepared to have significant impact on the HIV infection rate on St Croix," FHC Board President John Abramson said. Implementation will begin immediately.

FHC is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization serving the island with four medical and dental offices. The facility provides comprehensive care to over 8,000 individuals.