The Virgin Islands Consortium

JFL Says It's Not Out Of Financial Trouble Yet; But Improvements Are Being Made

Business / **Published On December 04, 2015 11:16 AM /**

Staff December 04, 2015

ST. CROIX -- In a press release issued on Thursday, the Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center said that while its financials had seen some improvements, the hospital does not want to give the notion that all its money woes had ended, even after its Chief Financial Officer, Tim Lessing, said that the facility's bottom line had realized four straight months of improvements.

"Four months of positive financial performance does not mean JFL is out of the woods when it comes to their financial issues," said Mr. Lessing in a board meeting on Tuesday.

According to the JFL release, the financial performance of the past four months demonstrates that the previously designed Financial Improvement Plan (FIP) is working and that the efforts of all the employees at JFL contribute to the overall financial success of the organization. The release further stated that part of FIP was to redesign the entire revenue cycle of the hospital. The redesign of the revenue cycle started with the improved collection of patient and insurance information, improved clinical documentation allowing for improved billing accuracy, and timely billing of patient’s accounts. All three of these revenue cycle improvements aid in improving the financial performance of the hospital, the release says. Other aspects of the FIP include an update of the clinical and accounting information systems allowing for easier access to patient information by clinicians and improved documentation of the patient’s visit to the hospital.

Mr. Lessing said he is confident that the improvements made thus far will continue to improve, but it will not resolve the long-standing debt of the organization.

“It’s like we are now able to operate without the continued use of a credit card but we have not resolved what we previously charged on the card. We still owe on the credit card," he said. "A positive month of financial performance means the revenue earned, exceeded the expenses accumulated for that given period."

This does not mean the hospital was able to pay on many of its long-standing debt issues; but it does mean JFL did not go further into debt for the month’s operations, the release contends. “In financial terms, we were in the black for the past four months versus being in the red, and this is the direction the hospital needs to continue to move in, in order to get to the point where we can start to take the positive earnings and start to pay on the long standing debt of the organization," Mr. Lessing concluded.

The hospital says it's planning on conducting town hall style meetings with the staff to inform them of the details on the hospital’s performance and its plans going forward.