

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Following Meeting With Potter, Tricare Considers Reinstating Service At JFL

Health / **Published On January 16, 2016 10:55 AM /**

Staff **January 16, 2016**



ST. CROIX -- Following a meeting at Government House here with Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter, who is also the territory's commissioner of Insurance, Tricare, a health program for uniformed service members and their families --including National Guard/Reserve members and their families, survivors, former spouses, medal of honor recipients and their families, and others registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System -- is considering reinstating service to beneficiaries at the Juan F. Luis Hospital, a press release Mr. Potter's office issued on Friday has revealed.

According to the release, Tricare had suspended services rendered to their beneficiaries at JFL because of deficiencies identified by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid

Services (CMS). The temporary suspension resulted in many of the healthcare provider's beneficiaries having to travel to St. Thomas or other jurisdictions for hospital services.

Tricare had previously met with top hospital officials and toured the JFL facility to conduct an assessment, and is currently awaiting the final report from CMS, which was due to be released on January 14, and will make a decision based on those results. Earlier this month, JFL officials said the hospital had received [full accreditation status](#) from CMS, following a lengthy Systems Improvement Agreement process.

Another issue raised at the meeting was the lack of Tricare Life, brought to the fore by Patrick Farrell, director of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs. Tricare Life is a benefits service offered to individuals 62 and over, however the service is not extended to beneficiaries in the territory. According to the release, Tricare representatives acknowledged this concern, especially for retired veterans, and vowed to take the inquiry back to their offices for consideration.

"I am optimistic that the results from CMS will be favorable and the services provided to Tricare beneficiaries will be reinstated at the Juan F. Luis Hospital," said Mr. Potter. "I will most definitely meet with the Delegate to Congress to pursue obtaining Tricare for Life for Virgin Islands beneficiaries."

The lieutenant governor thanked attendees for their time and for providing his office with an update on Tricare's JFL status.

Attendees included the following persons: Jacqueline Zyck, Director, Tricare operations & network Americas Region; Colonel Alfonso Alarcon, MD, director, Tricare Area Office; Gordon Peters, MD, Medical Director, Tricare Latin America-Canada, International SOS; Keila Rodriguez-Serra, provider relationship manager Americas Region; Mr. Farrell; Gwendolyn Hall Brady, director of the Division of Banking & Insurance, Office of the Lieutenant Governor; Attorney Glendina Matthew, assistant director of the Division of Banking & Insurance, Office of the Lieutenant Governor; and Charlotte M. Jeffers, coordinator of Veterans Program of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs.

Correction: February 1, 2016

A previous version of this story included incorrect information about one the Tricare officials who attended the meeting. Gordon Peters, MD, is Tricare's Medical Director for the Latin America-Canada, International SOS regions.