

The Virgin Islands Consortium

With Zika Cases Expected To Rise, D.O.H. Conducts Public Outreach In St. Thomas

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ST. CROIX -- There are now [four confirmed cases of Zika in the Virgin Islands](#), all on St. Croix, and Department of Health officials have told The Consortium that the number is expected to increase as results from the 130 samples sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (C.D.C.) come in. Above, tourists disembark while others board a ship at the West Indian Company dock in St. Thomas.

As a response to the rising number of cases, D.O.H., in a press release issued on Thursday, said it continues to work with C.D.C. to prepare for additional Zika cases, with its latest effort being an outreach and education drive to local healthcare providers in St. Thomas.

C.D.C. Medical Officer Dr. Dan Baden on Thursday attended the Virgin Islands Office of the Governor Faith-Based Programs and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems religious leaders luncheon at Government House in St. Thomas to update religious leaders on D.O.H.'s Zika preparedness activities. There, Dr. Baden delivered information on key prevention activities individuals can take to aid in stopping the spread of Zika in the territory.

And he was to conduct training sessions with the St. Thomas Maternal and Child Health Clinic and East End Medical Center staff on Friday to update staff on current Zika preparedness efforts, as well as to provide important clinical information in Zika surveillance and reporting.

D.O.H. is also working closely with C.D.C. to build local laboratory capacity in the Virgin Islands. According to the department, having this capacity would allow it to conduct initial testing on St. Croix, and will reduce the number of samples sent to the C.D.C. lab in Ft. Collins, CO, for testing. This will improve the speed of testing.

For local information about Zika virus, call the D.O.H.'s Emergency Operations Center at (340) 712-6205. For more general information about the Zika virus call toll free: 1-800-CDC-INFO.