

The Virgin Islands Consortium

D.O.H. Gets \$375,000 From Federal Gov't To Implement Accountability And Management Assessment

Health / **Published On May 17, 2016 01:17 PM /**

Staff **May 17, 2016**



ST. THOMAS -- Department of Health Commissioner Nominee Michelle Davis announced last week grant funding in the amount of \$375,000 that was awarded to D.O.H. by the U.S. Department of Human Services.

The grant, made available through the U.S.D.H.S.'s Technical Assistance Program (TAP), will be used towards systems assessment to strengthen the management, accountability, and implementation of federal health resources.

The grant is awarded to all U.S. territories, including Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as the

Freely Associated States of the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia, according to the release.

"I am pleased to share that a proposal I wrote in collaboration with my HHS Region 9 colleague was awarded funding to continue and expand upon activities begun under the U.S.V.I. Ignite initiative," said Dr. Davis. "I look forward to working with all involved to continue to build the U.S.V.I.'s health and human services infrastructure. Our agencies will be able to easily keep track of federal funding they receive. They will be able to track how funding is spent, and increase the percent of funding drawn down and the amount of services provided."

She added: "The United State Virgin Islands faces ongoing challenges in the provision of health and human services for their citizens. A number of sentinel events have contributed to the loss of human capital and infrastructure, while agencies have had difficulty performing essential public and behavioral health and human services activities. These sentinel events have also decreased the governments' ability to efficiently spend federal funds. Thus territorial agencies have not been able to perform at their highest level to provide quality services to their citizens."

According to the release, a U.S.D.H.S. team developed a prototype for a grants management monitoring and tracking system. This low-tech solution will allow the staff of health and human services agencies to easily monitor the federal funding that is awarded to them, track how the funding is being spent, and track requirements that must be met.

While exploring the utility and feasibility of this proposed project, the team learned that most federal agencies were experiencing the same difficulties working with the territory's staff in terms of achieving program goals and spending federal funding.

The release concluded by stating that D.O.H. staff are excited about utilizing the new tool to assist them with better organizing their agency grant function and working their colleagues who operate programs.