

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## C.M.S. Surveyors Unexpectedly Walked Into Juan F. Luis Hospital On Sunday

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ST. CROIX -- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (C.M.S.) without warning walked into the Juan F. Luis hospital at 5:45 p.m. on Sunday, to conduct an inspection of the facility following reports of [staff shortage](#) in the hospital's emergency room, and [equipment failure issues](#), The Virgin Islands Consortium can confirm.

According to sources with firsthand knowledge of the visit, the C.M.S. surveyors walked straight into the facility's emergency room on Sunday, beginning a surveying process that is expected to end on Thursday. This information was corroborated by Senator Kurt Violet, chairman of the 31st Legislature's Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services. Mr. Violet said the C.M.S. surveyors held a meeting with J.F.L. Acting CEO

Richard Evangelista last night, and the senator said he would be visiting the hospital at 9:00 a.m. today.

Along with the emergency room inspection, the C.M.S. surveyors will examine the hospital's governing board, nursing services and medical staff. They will also examine the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act -- a federal law that requires anyone coming to an emergency department to be stabilized and treated, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay.

Mr. Violet told this publication this morning that he is hoping for a good outcome following the survey. The senator said though there have been changes at the hospital in recent months that may give the impression of instability, he said the hospital has made great strides putting mechanisms in place that should eventually lead to a facility that residents can be proud of. And he said J.F.L. is not the only hospital in the U.S. with E.R. staff shortages, suggesting that St. Croix's situation is not unique. Mr. Violet is hoping to add his weight to C.M.S.'s considerations in an effort to see a positive outcome.

Among other responsibilities, C.M.S. is a federal agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services that administers the Medicare program and works in partnership with state and territory governments to administer Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program, and health insurance portability standards.

If J.F.L. fails the inspection and C.M.S. decides to pull the accreditation that it [only recently granted](#) the hospital, St. Croix's economy would be adversely affected, as the island's only hospital would be void of two critical services that has essentially kept it afloat: Medicare and Medicaid.