

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Juan Luis Hospital Establishes Transition Team To Move ER To Cardiac Center

Health / **Published On May 12, 2017 11:03 AM /**

Staff **May 12, 2017**



ST. CROIX -- The Juan F. Luis Hospital late Thursday announced that it had formed a transition team whose duty was to successfully move the Emergency Room from the hospital to the Cardiac Center. The Consortium first reported that [J.F.L. would move to the new location](#), following continuing drainage and sewage problems at the hospital -- with its E.R. department -- which also houses the psych ward -- being greatly impacted.

According to a nurse who spoke to on the condition of anonymity to speak freely on the matter, J.F.L. officials said the E.R. would remain at the Cardiac Center for 12-15 months. And during a Senate hearing on Wednesday, the hospital's acting CEO, Richard Evangelista, requested that \$1 million already allocated to the hospital by the government

for psych ward development, be used to move the E.R. to the Cardiac Center, as well as to prepare sections of the Cardiac Center for the duties of the E.R.

Senator Alicia Hansen, who attended a Monday meeting at the hospital organized by senators who make up the Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services, was concerned that the Cardiac Center, once retrofitted to serve E.R. needs, would lose its original purpose, part of which she said included recovery for heart patients. She also commended Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency Director, Mona Barnes, who Mrs. Hansen said has been working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide emergency support. Mrs. Hansen, however, said that the effort to receive aid from FEMA might be pointless, as J.F.L. is moving the E.R. to the Cardiac Center and the situation might not be deemed as an emergency anymore.

"My opinion is once they have the Cardiac Center, FEMA is not going to look at it like the hospital has an emergency," Mrs. Hansen said. "So what I think they should have done is allow Ms. Barnes to proceed with the indication that they don't have an option because I think the Cardiac Center is equally important."

The nurse said once the ER moves to the Cardiac Center, only one visitor will be allowed in a patient's room; at the current location, multiple visitors are allowed. "Because the unit will be smaller, we're also cutting down on beds," the nurse said.

The drainage and sewage problems at JFL cannot be fixed by patchwork because the pipes are about 25 years old, Mrs. Hansen said, quoting JFL officials at the meeting on Monday. Governor Kenneth Mapp [has requested \\$3 million](#) for a complete reconstruction that would eliminate the problem. At a press conference at Government House on Monday, Mr. Mapp said he would amend his original proposal to the Legislature to add \$1.5 million for fixes at Roy Lester Schneider Hospital as well. To get the funds, certain gross receipts tax bonds and matching fund bonds would require reprogramming, along with funds from the Community Facilities Trust Account, according to Government House.

But Mr. Mapp and hospital officials will have to wait a bit longer for the funds, as the Senate sent all measures -- including the J.F.L. emergency funding bill -- heard during a special session on Wednesday, [to several committees for further vetting](#).

J.F.L. also said that it had lifted the code yellow implemented on Sunday at about 4:15 p.m. on Thursday, after it was determined that bypass measures implemented last week had been stabilized.