

The Virgin Islands Consortium

As Covid-19 Pandemic Worsens Globally Virgin Islanders Are Fortunate Explains Government House

Health / **Published On April 27, 2021 06:15 AM /**

Kyle Murphy **April 27, 2021**



Richard Motta, Government House communications director, began the administration's weekly press conference by saying that India has reported a new global high of coronavirus cases for the fifth straight day which "has been of concern of us here," and Virgin Islanders are fortunate the positivity rate is low in the territory and can begin to experience loosened restrictions.

Mr. Motta said "This is a tragedy unfolding as we speak," of the ongoing situation in India and attributed this health crisis to the fact that while the vaccine is available in India that

the country was not able to vaccinate enough people quickly enough to avoid this situation. He went on to say that in India, many hospitals reported that they are not taking new patients because they do not have any available beds and other hospitals are saying that they are not taking new patients due to concerns over the amount of oxygen they have available and people are dying.

In the Virgin Islands, Mr. Motta reported that over the 7 day positivity rate is 1.4 percent and people “can experience the benefit of that low positivity in the form of some loosened restrictions but as we continue to see across the United States and across the globe, and unfortunately in India, this virus continues to claim lives and that is why we stress the importance of following the CDC and local health department’s guidelines.”

The Covid-19 numbers that were shared in the press conference were that there are 67 active cases with 3 hospitalizations on St. Croix and 1 hospitalization on St. Thomas, 27 total deaths in the territory, and that the Department of Health has conducted 100,455 tests. On the vaccine front there have been 35,707 first doses of the vaccine administered and 25,224 people are fully vaccinated.

Esther Ellis, territorial epidemiologist, said that this was the first time the Virgin Islands reported over 100,000 Covid-19 tests. She stated that the territory is still confirming new cases daily and we must remain vigilant by wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, washing hands frequently and staying home when sick.

If a person tests positive for Covid-19, Ms. Ellis recommends they speak with their physician about if they are a candidate for monoclonal antibodies, which are available in the territory. She explained that monoclonal antibodies are a life-saving countermeasure to the virus which will help a person recover quickly and prevent more severe symptoms.

Pop-up testing events will take place this week. On St. Thomas testing will be available at Home Depot on Tuesday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and on Thursday at the Fort Christian Parking Lot from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. On St. Croix testing will take place on Tuesday at the Canegata Rec Center from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Budhoe Park on Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. On St. John the testing will take place on Wednesday at the Virgin Islands Port Authority gravel lot from 1 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ms Ellis said that they do not recommend the pop up testing for those who have been vaccinated and not sick.

She reminded the public that the vaccine is available to everyone 16 and older and the Community Vacation Centers will be relocated on May 10. St. Croix's C.V.C. will be relocating to the Nissan Building in Christiansted and the St. Thomas C.V.C. will be relocated to the Community Health Clinic on the 2nd Floor at the Schneider Regional Medical Center.

Vaccine appointments can be booked over the phone by calling (340)-777-8227 or [here](#).

Ms. Ellis shared that the D.O.H. will resume distribution of the Janssen vaccine after official C.D.C. publication is released tomorrow and that their review concludes that this vaccine is safe meaning the D.O.H. can confidently resume its use for targeted populations.

The Epidemiology Hotline is open seven days a week to report suspected cases of Covid-19. On St. Croix the number is 340-712-6299 and for St. Thomas and St. John the number is 340-776-1519.