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Replacement of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute Approved by FEMA

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Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute By. THE OFFICE OF DISASTER RECOVERY.

After months of verbal assurances, FEMA provided official documentation on June 6, 2021, approving the full replacement of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute, the Office of Disaster Recovery has announced. Replacement signals that the two-story cancer facility can be reconstructed to industry standards in accordance with the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. This approval will lead to the next step of determining the cost to rebuild the shuttered facility.

According to O.D.R., FEMA's determination was based on a prudent replacement analysis. The evaluation process consisted of a thorough review of the documentation submitted by the territory, which outlined the interior and exterior damages, including the extensive mold growth, failed

systems, infrastructure deficiencies and the facility's pre-existing condition.

EYP Architecture & Engineering commenced the design phase for the new facility in April 2021 while the project continues the FEMA process for funding. The Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team has begun meeting with various internal stakeholders and will soon expand their collaborative efforts to include vitally important benefactors such as former and current users of its facilities, according to the release. At the current pace, the design of the new Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute should be substantially completed by January 2022.

“While rebuilding our Territorial Healthcare Facilities is vitally important to the entire Virgin Islands, providing quality, comprehensive and resilient Cancer Care with positive outcomes for our patients and residents is a major priority,” said Darryl A. Smalls, executive director of hospital facilities and capital development for the Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team.

The reconstruction of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute remains a top priority for the recovery, O.D.R. said. Prior to the 2017 hurricane season, the cancer institute was the only option for residents to receive life-saving and sustaining medical treatment. Residents of the territory and visitors from other Eastern Caribbean islands have since been forced to travel long distances for critical adult and pediatric oncology services.

“Through a shared goal of building a resilient healthcare system, FEMA, the staff at Schneider Regional Medical Center and the Office of Disaster Recovery herald this approval as a significant step forward,” said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, O.D.R. director. “The Office of Disaster Recovery and the hospital redevelopment team remains focused on moving the project through the remaining steps so that construction can begin.”

Once the cost is agreed upon, the board will release a solicitation for the reconstruction of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute, according to the release, adding that construction could begin as early as the first quarter of 2022.