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Schneider Hospital Interim CEO Dr. Luis Amaro Not Chosen for Permanent Chief Executive Position

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Dr. Luis Amaro By. SCHNEIDER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

ST. THOMAS — Following news that Juan F. Luis Hospital Acting CEO Dyma Williams was not among finalists for the permanent chief executive position on St. Croix, the Consortium learned Wednesday that her St. Thomas counterpart serving as interim CEO at the Schneider Regional Medical Center, Dr. Luis Amaro, was not chosen for the top job either.

According to a person with firsthand knowledge of the matter, Dr. Amaro was informed by the board of its decision to choose another person for permanent CEO, and Dr. Amaro is expected to tender his resignation this week — as early as Thursday, said the person, who spoke to the Consortium on the condition of anonymity.

Dr. Amaro has been employed at SRMC since 2005 serving in a variety of capacities, and he was named interim chief executive officer in January 2020 following the retirement of Dr. Bernard Wheatley. At the time, he was hailed as someone with exceptional qualifications for the position.

One of his first actions on the job was [the approval of pay increases](#) for hospital executives, which he described at the time as a “modest” income boost for the management team that he said steered the hospital from near-fiscal ruin to firm financial footing.

“Schneider Regional Medical Center is far from being in shambles,” Dr. Amaro said in January 2020. “We have improved and brought the hospital from the financial red and into the black. I think that should be rewarded.”

The pay raises, which totaled \$71,000 spread among eight senior executives, or less than 1 percent of the hospital’s cash balance at the time, invited backlash from community members and senators alike. “Our hospitals are in shambles and Virgin Islanders are being forced to fly off-island for basic services,” fumed Senator Kenneth Gittens. “Lives are literally being put at risk and families are going into debt in order to receive care in Puerto Rico or the states. Where are our priorities? We should be looking at salary decreases for executives right now given that neither of our hospitals are fully functional.”

More recently, Dr. Amaro has navigated the hospital through the tumultuous pandemic era of Covid-19, instituting policies meant to keep both employees and patients safe. The hospital [recently launched](#) drive-through Covid-19 testing, which Dr. Amaro said would provide additional revenue for the medical facility.

Some of the positions he held at S.R.M.C. include chief of medicine, president of the medical staff and chief medical officer from 2015 to 2020, according to information found on the hospital's website. Dr. Amaro also owns a private medical practice, Comprehensive Primary Care Specialists, LLC.

Both Dr. Amaro's and Ms. Williams's departures come as hundreds of millions of dollars provided for disaster recovery by FEMA for the territory's hospitals are set to come online. The facilities were badly damaged by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, and the local government, beginning with the Mapp administration and continuing under the Bryan regime, has worked to secure the funding. In the coming months, consequential decisions regarding rebuild will be made, especially as it relates to the procurement of services.