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Dr. Luis Amaro Resigns as CEO of Schneider Regional Medical Center

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Dr. Luis Amaro.

Dr. Luis Amaro, interim CEO and chief medical officer of the Schneider Regional Medical Center, on Thursday submitted his letter of resignation to the Territorial and District Board of Directors, according to a release from the hospital.

The Consortium, citing a source with intimate knowledge of the matter, [reported Thursday morning](#) that Dr. Amaro was not chosen as the permanent CEO and that he would tender his resignation as early as today.

In the release issued Thursday afternoon, he said:

“After learning from the board of directors that I am no longer a candidate for the permanent CEO position, I spent some time reflecting on my future. It is with a measure of sadness and excitement to tell you that I will be returning my focus full-time to my private practice after ensuring a smooth transition to new executive leadership.

“While I am excited to return to serving this community through my private practice, I must acknowledge that my tenure here has been marked by my profound respect for the team of dedicated healthcare professionals Schneider Regional Medical Center, who are unsurpassed in the Caribbean.

“I am humbled by their faithful and tireless commitment to meet and overcome the challenges these islands face from deadly hurricanes, a merciless pandemic, and so many other tests.

“As the community prepares for new leadership, I’d like to recognize what we accomplished together. We achieved major milestones in timely, efficient, and affordable healthcare delivery; fiscal and operational systems enhancements; advancements in human resources services; building and plant upgrades; facility expansion and renovation; medical technology modernization; preventive medicine expansion; positive community relations; and a general improvement of the quality of life for the citizens we serve.

“Schneider Regional Medical Center is positioned to continue its record of significant achievements under its new leadership. I am confident that the new leadership will be served with the same dedication demonstrated to me as interim CEO. This team embodies this institution’s culture of excellence.

“I will miss the daily interaction with everyone at Schneider Regional Medical Center. I look forward to continued interaction with all of you as friends and colleagues in the community that I intend to continue to serve.”

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.