

The Virgin Islands Consortium

ER Door at JFL Where Ambulances Drop Off Patients Broken For Months, With Rain Wetting Some Patients During Makeshift Transfer

Health / **Published On December 14, 2021 05:22 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **December 14, 2021**



Ambulance at the Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center on St. Croix. By. ERNICE GILBERT/ V.I. CONSORTIUM

There is a special entrance where ambulances drop off patients to the Emergency Room of the Juan F. Luis Hospital that sees the patients immediately being transferred from the ambulance to the ER for immediate care. But the door has been broken for months, according to JFL medical staff working at the ER, and this has led to situations that have affected patients.

The ER staff came to the Consortium with this concern Monday after a news report from the publication on the dire situation at the hospital's intensive-care unit led to the government of the Virgin Islands springing into action and [promising the hospital 12 additional medical employees](#).

Regarding why the door hasn't been fixed after being broken for several months, the hospital cites finance issues, according to ER staff. But the problem has negatively impacted patients. "The patients have been diverted to the front-side door of the ER. The paramedics have to push said patients in the parking lot to get to this door and it has happened in the rain where patients have gotten wet because of this," said an ER staff to the Consortium on Monday. "CPR also has taken place while trying to get them inside."

Government arms sprung into action following a V.I. Consortium [report Monday morning](#). People familiar with the matter told the publication Sunday evening that the ICU at JFL had basically fallen apart and would be unable to provide services to the community for at least four weeks. Additionally, a source with intimate knowledge of the situation told the Consortium Sunday that because of the lack of a functioning ICU at JFL, all PTS, or post-thrombotic syndrome patients would be sent off island for care.

Following the article, meetings were held that resulted in the Bryan administration offering support to JFL by providing 12 additional medical employees. Governor Albert Bryan told the Consortium Monday afternoon that following meetings with JFL leadership, his administration agreed to provide funding for additional employees to mitigate the situation at the intensive-care unit.

"We don't understand what the issue was. We have help, all they had to do is ask. They are getting the personnel they need," Mr. Bryan told the Consortium. The governor further confirmed that PTS, or post-thrombotic syndrome patients would no longer be sent away for care, as had been earlier reported by the Consortium.

An ER is a medical treatment facility specializing in emergency medicine, the acute care of patients who present without prior appointment either by their own means or via ambulance.

JFL has been struggling to retain employees, particularly nurses, for a while, and the matter was exacerbated when the territorial hospital board mandated Covid-19 vaccination. To that end, Governor Bryan has provided [a combined \\$16 million](#) to help retain and recruit these essential employees at JFL and the Schneider Regional Medical Center. Mr. Bryan said earlier this month that the first tranche of \$3 million each was in the process of being released as the hospitals try to manage facilities that are lacking adequate staff and in turn straining those who remain to perform critical work.

In October, Mr. Bryan acknowledged that the hospitals were under pressure, singling out JFL. "Right now JFL is going through it," he said. "Every single day we're looking for new ways to help them." According to a JFL schedule examined by the Consortium at the time, the hospital's Critical Care Unit had a shortage of 9 nurses from Oct. 3 through the 9th.

On Friday, the hospital [announced a permanent CEO](#) to replace Dyma Williams, who was the interim chief executive at the facility [since September 2018](#), steering JFL through the turbulent aftermath of hurricanes Irma and Maria, and more recently through the

Covid-19 pandemic.

© Viconsortium 2026