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Just Like the USVI, BVI Struggles With Patients Dropped Off and Left at Hospitals

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Dr. D Orlando Smith Hospital in Tortola.

Like its U.S. neighbor, the British Virgin Islands public healthcare system is being weighed down by “boarders”.

In early October, the Chief Executive Officer of the Juan F. Luis Medical Centre on St. Croix complained to lawmakers that frail seniors with nowhere else to go [were being housed at the facility](#), occupying sorely-needed bed space and costing the hospital about \$1,800 per bed per day.

Now, Moleto Smith, chair of the BVI Health Services Authority, is making a similar lament — the Dr. D Orlando Smith Hospital on Tortola is, for all intents and purposes, home to over twenty

people with no relevant medical needs, but who have become long-stay residents of the facility.

“Now, we have to carry 24-hour around the clock care for individuals who should have been discharged”, Mr. Smith said at a Thursday press conference. “The hospital is not a nursing home”.

Mr. Smith told local reporters that the financial strain on the territory’s Health Services Authority has been at crisis level from the agency’s inception. However, he strove to reassure the gathered journalists that that did not mean that interruptions in service delivery or staff reductions were imminent. The financial stresses of BVIHSA, Mr. Smith said, stem from challenges in balancing the services public health facilities offer with the revenue the authority is able to generate.

Mr. Smith promised that the BVIHSA board would be working on resolving those challenges with the resources available to it. “We won’t kick the can down the road or abdicate our fiduciary responsibility to do those things that are within our remit to do,” he said.