



**GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES**

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ST. CROIX OFFICE
RICHMOND
CHRISTIANSTED, ST. CROIX, U.S.V.I. 00820-4370
HARWOOD MEMORIAL COMPLEX
TEL: (340)718-6551 * FAX: (340)718-1376

ST. THOMAS OFFICE 3500 ESTATE
1303 HOSPITAL GROUND, SUITE 10
CHARLOTTE AMALIE CHARLES
ST. THOMAS, U.S.V.I. 00802-6722
TEL: (340)774-0117 * FAX: (340) 777-4001

PRESS RELEASE

June 3, 2022

Ginny Dargan
Ginny.Dargan@doh.vi.gov

VIDOH Announces Addition of Health Disparities Program

US Virgin Islands — Virgin Islands Commissioner of Health, Justa Encarnacion announced the Virgin Islands Department of Health (VIDOH) has added a Health Disparities Program (HDP) to its cadre of available programs and services. The Health Disparities Program is fully funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) OT21-2103.

The HDP will work to increase partnerships with community organizations to address the health care needs of the entire Virgin Islands community by working to remove barriers and developing strategies to promote and improve the health of older adults, minorities, children, adolescents, and members of the underserved community.

HDP will utilize an approach that identifies and addresses social issues that may hinder some from seeking healthcare or environmental concerns that prolongs healing (The Social Determinants of Health) by collaborating with community organizations to identify solutions that will prevent or provide for illness identified within the Territory. The community-led, cross-sector plan to engage community outreach workers throughout the islands to drive the meaningful, positive change needed to find these solutions. Additionally, the HDP is committed to developing a communitywide environment where everyone is valued equally.

The HDP's work will also include promoting health equity in diverse communities through education, guidance with health disparity issues and by streamlining efforts to mitigate related challenges.

Commissioner Encarnacion encourages the community to be on the lookout for more information on HDP's Townhall Meetings, Health Disparities Leadership Conference and Symposiums all coming up in the near future.

For additional information on the Health Disparities Program please contact Program Director Lavern Marsh-Cole at lavern.marsh-cole@doh.vi.gov or telephone 340-718-1311 Ex 3694.

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