**THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OFFICE OF DISASTER RECOVERY**
VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
September 11, 2021
Press Contact
Laurissa D. Ellis
340-778-8135
ldellis@usvipfa.com

# Myrah Keating Smith Health Center Receives FEMA Approval for Replacement

**ST. JOHN, U.S. Virgin Islands –** After months of continuous dialogue, FEMA has approved the Schneider Regional Medical Center's multiple requests for the replacement of the Myrah Keating Smith Health Center on St. John. The medical facility will receive funding for full restoration to current industry standards.

The Schneider Regional Medical Center received close to $700K from FEMA to begin the design of the new facility. On September 3, 2021, a contract was executed for architectural and engineering services with the Smith Group for $1.5 million.

"The redevelopment of the Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center is equally important to our healthcare system territory-wide," said Darryl A. Smalls, Executive Director of Territorial Hospital Facilities and Capital Development. "While the final design will be unique to the island of St. John, it is imperative that we take on a collaborative approach across all of our territorial healthcare facilities to ensure that we achieve the standardization of our critical hospital systems."

The health center provides 24-hour emergency and outpatient services to residents and visitors. After catastrophic damages closed the clinic in 2017, services were transferred to a modular facility. The $1.4 million FEMA project executed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built eleven trailers adjacent to the current clinic. Those temporary facilities are the only means of emergency medical treatment on the island.

"Reconstructing the Territory's healthcare facilities continues to be a top priority for Governor Bryan," said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, Director of the Office of Disaster Recovery. "Residents of St. John deserve a resilient healthcare system so that in times of distress, the community will feel safer, less vulnerable and more confident in the care they will receive on island."

The design will take just over a year to complete. The restoration of the Myrah Keating Smith Health Center is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2022 and should be finished by December 2024.

**The Office of Disaster Recovery**
**"Building a Legacy of Resilience"**