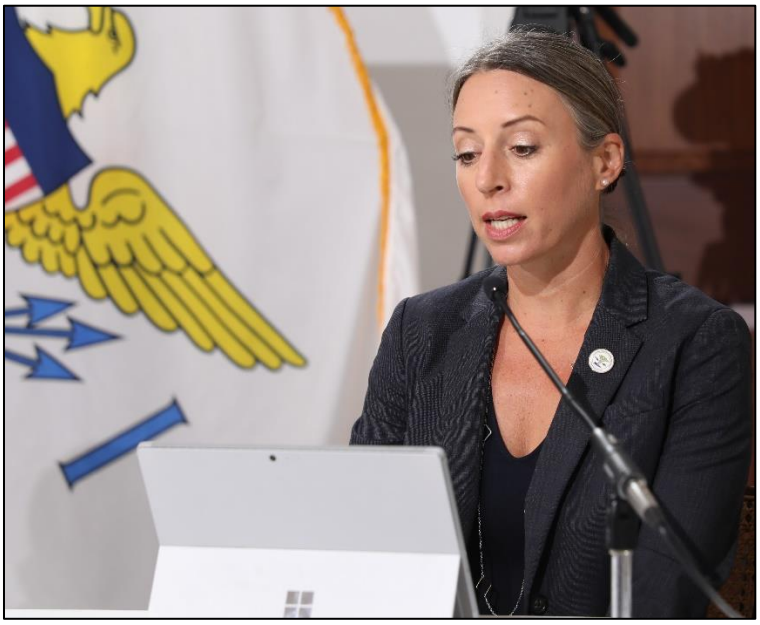
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Health Department Using New Treatment For Residents Diagnosed with COVID-19

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During Tuesday's Government House weekly press briefing, Territorial Epidemiologist Dr. Esther Ellis provided details about monoclonal antibodies treatments that are available to some residents who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and that have proven to be 100 percent effective in preventing the progression of the virus' symptoms.

The treatments are most suitable for treating mild to moderate cases in adults and in pediatric patients 12 and older who weigh at least 88 pounds who are at high risk for progressing to more severe illness or hospitalization.

To be considered high risk, patients must meet on of the following criteria:

- Significant obesity
- Chronic kidney disease
- Diabetes
- Immunosuppressive disease
- Currently receiving immunosuppressive treatment
- Are 65 or older

- Are 55 or older and have cardiovascular disease or other respiratory disease
- Are 12-17 and have a heart, lung or neurological condition or are obese or significantly overweight

These antibodies neutralize the virus and can potentially treat patients with COVID-19. The antibodies were identified from blood samples taken from some of the first patients who recovered from COVID-19 in the United States," Dr. Ellis said. "All the patients report a dramatic improvement in symptoms within 24 to 48 hours."

The treatments are not appropriate for everyone and have not been authorized for use in patients who are hospitalized due to COVID-19; require oxygen therapy due to COVID-19; or those who require an increase in baseline oxygen due to COVID-19 or those who require chronic oxygen therapy due to underlying non-COVID-19 related morbidity.

Vaccination Phase 1C
Dr. Ellis also announced that as of Tuesday, February 16, the Virgin Islands Department of Health has advanced to Phase 1C of the vaccination plan.

This phase includes individuals who work in:
- Water and waste management
- Food services
- Shelters and housing
- Finance
- Information technology and communications
- Energy
- Legal
- Media

This also includes the continuation of those are eligible but who were not vaccinated in Phases 1A and 1B.

Vaccinations administered
- 11,079 first doses
- 4,222 second doses
- 15,301 total doses administered

Anyone who thinks they may have contracted COVID-19 can call the Epidemiology hotline at 340-712-6299 or 340-776-1519. For more information, visit covid19usvi.com.

For information about the COVID-19 vaccines, call the VITEMA hotline Mondays-Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 340-777-VACS (8227).

Pop-Up testing sites
This week, pop-up testing sites will be at the following locations:
- **Canegata Rec Center** on St. Croix on Tuesday, February 23, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **The V.I. Port Authority Gravel Yard** on St. John on Wednesday, February 17, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- **The UVI Sports and Fitness Center** on St. Thomas on Thursday, February 18, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Buddhoe Park** on St. Croix on Thursday, February 18, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Unemployment

- As of January 31, the Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL) has issued 53,684 unemployment insurance checks totaling $44,459,456 to residents impacted by COVID-19 job losses.
- The department also has issued an additional 29,451 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation checks totaling $50,599,440.
- VIDOL has issued 8,182 Pandemic Unemployment Assistance checks to self-employed Virgin Islanders totaling $13,585,699 and $6,435,720 in Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation.
- Under the newly administered Lost Wages Assistance Program, VIDOL has issued 3,548 checks totaling $2,994,148.

COVID-19 cases

- Currently tracking 105 active cases.
- 45,233 individuals tested to date (more than 40% of the population).
- 42,590 of those tests were negative.
- 2,542 tests came back positive.
- 2,412 people tested since March have recovered.
- 25 fatalities.
- One COVID-19 patient is currently hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

The Bryan/Roach Administration continues to be committed to transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in government and ensuring that the disaster recovery is completed as quickly as possible.

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