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Office of Health Information Technology Director Michelle Francis looks on as Governor Albert Bryan Jr. and CRISP CEO Craig Behm sign the Letter of Intent for the USVI to participate in a federally funded pilot program to establish the Territory's Health Information Exchange program.

Governor Bryan Signs Agreement With CRISP Shared Services To Participate in Health Information Exchange Pilot Program

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During the Office of Health Information Technology (OHIT) summit last week, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. signed a Letter of Intent with CRISP Shared Services to participate in a data and interoperability pilot program that will lay the foundation for OHIT's Health Information Exchange in the Territory.

CRISP Shared Services, a nationally recognized leader in the exchange and delivery of actionable, secure, and trusted health data, will operate the program using federal funds from a number of federal health agencies.

The pilot, establishes the initial phase of the Territory's Health Information Exchange (HIE), which will enable the instant sharing of health information among doctors' offices, hospitals, federally qualified health centers, Department of Human Services Medicaid Division, Department of Health clinics, labs, radiology, identified community-based organizations and other health care entities.

“This Letter of Intent helps us finally test our ability to connect the health care and services-related data collected by our Government to ensure the proper identification and efficient delivery of services and enhance our care to Virgin Islands residents,” Governor Bryan said. “It will provide health care professionals, agencies, and community organizations with key information to help them make quicker decisions and provide better treatments, resulting in more timely care and more positive outcomes with less burden to the patients.”



Governor Bryan initially discussed CRISP during a trip to Washington, D.C. in February in a meeting with D.C. Deputy Mayor Wayne Turnage.

During a trip to Washington, D.C. in February, Governor Bryan had initial discussions about CRISP while meeting with D.C. Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services and Director of the Department of Healthcare Wayne Turnage and other officials of the district's public health agencies.

The discussions included best practices in the evolution of clinical data exchange to a more whole-person centered public health utility that supports the coordination and data exchange between physical, behavioral, social and human services.

Craig Behm, CEO of CRISP Shared Service, said his company is excited and ready to include the USVI in the pilot to build the initial technical integration for the federally supported priorities.

“The U.S. Virgin Islands are uniquely positioned to execute rapid modernization of their public health infrastructure. The engaged and thoughtful policymakers are already aligned with healthcare constituents, allowing for the development not only of basic interoperability through an HIE but also the full-scale development of a Health Data Utility (HDU),” Behm said.

The HDU will function through the local government to be used by healthcare professionals to enhance patient care, public health officials to support the community, and the Medicaid agency to treat vulnerable individuals.

OHIT Director Michelle M. Francis said the pilot program will build the necessary infrastructure to enable USVI healthcare institutions and key government agencies to prove out the minimum necessary data elements needed to create secure workflows between providers across the Territory's health system.

“This pilot is a win for the USVI as it gives us a safe and funded space to make the first tangible, technical steps in building our HIE with a nationally recognized, pre-certified, innovative technology organization,” Director Francis said. “We have already begun the behind-the-scenes work of building out a governance structure, and along with creating local policies and agreements that comply with federal privacy and security standards to support the secure electronic exchange of health information, brings it all into focus and sets it into high gear now.”

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. established the Office of Health Information Technology (OHIT) in 2021 to enhance health and wellness in the USVI through innovative and transformative health information technology resources.

For more information about the CRISP pilot program, visit www.ohitusvi.com or www.crispsharedservices.org.

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