



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Public Health, Social Development and Labor
Mr. R.J.J. Panneflek
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/146/2020-2021

Philipsburg, February 23, 2021

Re: Questions from MP C.T. Emmanuel regarding concerns dealing with SMMC, SZV and DCHA

Hon. Minister Panneflek,

Herewith I submit to you questions from Member of Parliament, Mr. C.T. Emmanuel pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution and article 69 of the Rules of Order of the Parliament of Sint Maarten.

The letter is self-explanatory.

Yours truly,

R. Brison
President of Parliament



Christophe Emmanuel

Member of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN	
Ingek. 16 FEB 2021	
Volgnr.	15/411/20-21
Par.	GR

To the Chairman of Parliament
Mr. Rolando Brison
Wilhelminastraat 1
Philipsburg

February 10th, 2021

Re:

Dear Chairman,

Please find attached letters to be forwarded to the Honorable Minister of Public Health, Social Development and Labor, Mr. Richard Panneflekk in connection with questions posed for clarification on ongoing developments within the Country.

Thank you for your Cooperation

Christophe Emmanuel
Member of Parliament



Parliament of Sint Maarten

To: The Minister of VSA
Honorable Richard Panneflek
Government Administration Building
Soualiga Road #1
Philipsburg

February 10th, 2021

Concerns dealing with SMMC, SZV and Dutch Caribbean Hospital Alliance.

Dear Minister,

It has been some time since parliament has been provided any information regarding the St. Maarten Medical Center (SSMC) and its management. Unconfirmed reports suggests that the director of the SMMC has been absent for at least a year.

Furthermore, reports point to SZV instructing pharmacies to change prescriptions written by house doctors from name brand medication to generic medication. Several patients have indicated to me personally that their physicians indicated to them that the instructions to change prescriptions came from SZV, supposedly as a cost-saving measure. Receiving medication that they do not recognize, they receive the explanation that the chemical compositions are the same. This could be a dangerous practice as there are no definitive studies that can confirm that patients will not react differently to generic medication.

Additionally, as per usual, information that should be brought to parliament, makes its way to the media first. Too frequently, members of parliament are informed of agreements made by the government that should be discussed or at least brought to parliament's attention first. In this instance a Dutch Caribbean Hospital Alliance has been established. Media reports state that it is a cooperative association between the medical institutions in the 6 Caribbean islands that are part of the Dutch Kingdom, and is to be fully launched in the first quarter of this year.

It would be incumbent upon your person to provide parliament with explanations of above mentioned information.

To that end the undersigned Member of Parliament requests answers to the following questions:

SMMC

- How long has the director of the SMMC been out and not on duty?
- Why is this? Please explain in detail.
- Is the director expected back on duty soon? If yes, when? If not, why not?

Wilhelminastraat # 1, Philipsburg, Sint Maarten
Tel: + (1-721) 542-2929 ext 123 | Fax: + (1-721) 542-0306
Email: kepedom@gmail.com | www.sxmparliament.org

- Is the director still receiving full salary and benefits?
- What is the full salary and all benefits of the hospital director?
- What are his daily tasks as hospital director?
- Has his absence from the SMMC put SMMC in any financially complicated positions or has his absence compromised operations?
- Who has been functioning in his place since his absence?
- When will the contract of the hospital director expire?
- Will SMMC execute a search for a new director at that time?
- Did SMMC employ a local counterpart to the director?
- Is there a local person being groomed to take over the position as director?
- If yes, who? If not, why not?
- Who comprises the board of the SMMC and when are their terms due to expire? Please provide names and positions.

Generic Medication

- Is SZV instructing pharmacies to change doctor prescriptions for name-brand medication to generic medication? If yes, why?
- Is the Minister aware of this practice?
- Is this a cost saving measure for SZV? If yes, how much is SZV saving per month and per year. If not, why is the practice being continued?
- Is SZV in possession of a report or study that definitely states that generic medication will not negatively affect patients? If yes, please provide such. If not, is it responsible for SZV to continue doing this?
- Who will stand responsible if something terrible was to happen to a patient who was switched to generic medication?.
- Is there specific name brand medication SZV targets to switch or is it random?

- Who determines which name brand medication to switch?
- If SZV is not doing any of the aforementioned, does the Minister have an explanation of why pharmacies are switching prescriptions from name-brand to generic?

Hospital Alliance

- Please explain in detail what is the Dutch Caribbean Hospital Alliance?
- Please provide a copy of this Alliance document.
- Who drafted this document?
- When was it finalized?
- What input did St. Maarten have specifically in the agreement that governs this Alliance? Please provide details.
- How does this alliance benefit St. Maarten specifically?
- Does this alliance fill any medical voids/services that St. Maarten that St. Maarten lacks? Please list them.
- What are the annual costs involved?
- How will this alliance ensure the continuity of specialist medical care?
- How will this alliance increase the quality and availability of medical care?
- What is meant with "ensuring our cultural values have top priority" in the context of this medical alliance?
- Please mention some examples of "enhanced collaboration" as outlined in the alliance agreement.

Awaiting your swift response to above questions.

Respectfully,



MP Christophe Emmanuel