

U.S. Virgin Islands | Justa Encarnacion, RN, MBA, HCM

Health Commissioner and Chief Public Health Officer

United States Virgin Islands Department of Health

Justa E. Encarnacion, affectionately known as “Tita,” is no stranger to the U.S. Virgin Islands nor to healthcare. A St. Croix native, Commissioner Encarnacion began her career in healthcare at the Charles Harwood Memorial Hospital as a volunteer in the Nursing Education Department at the mere age of 14-years-old. This experience set the stage for her career as a healthcare professional. She returns to the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex as Commissioner for the Virgin Islands Department of Health.



Commissioner Encarnacion is a pediatric nurse by trade. She received her Associate of Science in Nursing from the former College of the Virgin Islands. She completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Barry University and received her Master of Business Administration in Health Care Management from the University of Phoenix.

Commissioner Encarnacion has over 30 years of experience in healthcare with 15 years of experience leading staff in inpatient and outpatient settings. Encarnacion has served in a number of capacities in both the private and public sectors, leading a number of projects. She was the first Health Services Supervisor and assisted with opening the first health center on the St. Croix campus at the University of the Virgin Islands. Other roles held include: Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Clinical Services at the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center; part-time faculty at the University of the Virgin Islands; and a Clinical Advisor at Case Western Reserve University Francis Payne Bolton School of Nursing. She has developed policies, implemented process improvement initiatives, headed transitions, and conducted strategic planning.

Commissioner Encarnacion believes in community and collaboration. Community begins with public health. The Virgin Islands Department of Health is the steward of public health in our territory. She is ready to serve the Virgin Islands community and execute the mandates of the department.