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NHI SUPPORTS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS ON #PINKFRIDAY

Staff in pink, educational materials on display

Road Town, Tortola, October 31, 2017– Breast cancer awareness was highlighted on #PinkFriday, Friday, October 27, by the National Health Insurance (NHI) of the Virgin Islands.

#PinkFriday in the BVI is usually held on the last Friday of the month of October; Breast Cancer Awareness month. Residents wear pink to show support for the cause.

The staff of the VI Social Security Board (SSB) and VI NHI followed suit and either dressed in pink or adorned themselves with pink accessories. The SSB and NHI lobbies were also decorated with pink balloons, ‘Think Pink’ banners and an information desk with a few reading materials; while educational videos played on a TV monitor. Visitors also received a pink drink – guava juice.

Deputy Director of the BVI Social Security Board with responsibility for NHI, Mr. Roy Barry said, “Breast cancer is still very present in the BVI. While NHI wanted to ensure persons take it seriously, we also wanted to deliver the message with a soft approach.”

Regarding NHI breast cancer benefits, Mr. Barry said, “NHI covers diagnostic screening and treatment for breast cancer. Beneficiaries accessing care at a private medical facility or any of the BVI Health Services Authority’s facilities have a ten-percent (10%) and five-percent (5%) co-insurance, respectively.”

NHI Medical Director, Dr. Harlan Vanterpool said women over age 40, or who have a history of cancer in their families are particularly at risk.

“Our society actually has many risk factors that we should be aware of. From our ethnicity, genetics, to our unhealthy lifestyles, poor diet and nutrition choices or being overweight. Gynecological and obstetric history like not having any children; and family history,” said Dr. Vanterpool.

Dr. Vanterpool continued, “Environmental exposures are also a big factor, as we are not certain of the kind of pollutants in our atmosphere. These are all factors that put our society at risk for a higher incidence of breast cancer.”

The medical director said that all factors aside, there still remains personal responsibility, stating, “At the end of the day, early detection and regular screening can save lives. Women and men are encouraged to perform self-checks and women who are considered at risk should get annual mammograms.”

Beneficiaries are encouraged to check out Dr. Vanterpool’s feature article in ‘*The Beneficiary*’, VI NHI’s premiere e-newsletter. The publication can be read online at www.vinhi.vg, or persons can follow this direct link: <https://www.vinhi.vg/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ISSUE-1-THE-PINK-ISSUE-October-2017-2.pdf>.

The National Health Insurance (NHI) of the Virgin Islands is designed to provide all legal residents of the Virgin Islands with affordable access to the health services they need.

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Notes to Editor(s): Photographs of staff on #PinkFriday are attached.