



**MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT AND LABOR**

Philipsburg, 03 AUG 2020

To: State Secretary Blokhuis
Ministry public Health, Social Development and Sport
Netherlands

Subject: Request for financial assistance for the accommodation of the medical technical support in combatting COVID-19

Dear State Secretary Blokhuis,

During the first quarter of 2020, St. Maarten was severely impacted with the outbreak of COVID-19. This resulted in the need for additional technical assistance in the medical field. With the support of VWS, Sint Maarten received support in the form medical staff (AMI) to support the St. Maarten Medical Center, as well as additional staff from the RIVM, Netherlands to support the Collective Prevention Services of the ministry of VSA.

The verbal agreement at that time was a shared approach, where salaries would be paid by the Netherlands and the government of St. Maarten would cover accommodations.

Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints and liquidity reality, Sint Maarten is encountering some major issues in complying with this verbal agreement.

In addition to the above, the needed capacity at CPS in the form of an epidemiologist, an infectious disease doctor and public health nurses has to date not been possible to attain.

Based on the discussions held in the structural 4-country meeting of July 23, 2020, Sint Maarten was advised to submit an official request. By means of this writing, your support is hereby requested for the following:

- Cover the current outstanding accommodation costs for the 3 staff members outsourced by RIVM to support Collective Prevention Services in the continuation of combatting a resurgence of a COVID-19 outbreak;
- Cover the additional costs related to the 45 day extension of the medical staff currently supporting the SMMC (AMI);
- Cover accommodation costs associated to future medical technical assistance received through the intervention of the Netherlands in the continuation of COVID-19 resurgence prevention;

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- Provide additional technical support at CPS in the form of an infectious disease doctor and epidemiologist and public health nurses for a period of minimum six months.

With your approval, the ministry of VSA will remain in direct contact with VWS and RIVM to further discuss logistics on how this and other future matters pertaining to COVID-19 resurgence prevention should be approached henceforth. Considering this only addresses certain needs, an additional request will also be forthcoming regarding support to CPS as well as the laboratory needs to increase access and capacity for testing, as well as PPE needs.

Sincerely,



Richard J. J. van der BEEK
Minister of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

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