



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of Health, the Environment,
Energy and Climate Change

PRESS RELEASE

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Donation funds Sensory Room for Rainbow Ward at St Bernard's Hospital

The Rainbow Ward at St Bernard's Hospital was grateful to receive a £14,000 donation from the Guardian Angel Foundation. The donation has funded the refurbishment and development of the existing playroom, including the purchase of new toys, art and craft materials, two laptop computers, a music system, a soft play area and child-friendly furnishings. A large proportion of the money donated by the Guardian Angel Foundation funded the construction and equipment of a sensory room within the original play area.

The sensory room provides a relaxing space that helps to reduce agitation and anxiety; feelings often experienced by hospitalised, sick children. An interactive aroma panel activates smells, colours, sounds and breezes for aromatic, visual, audible and tactile stimulation while the bubble tube and LED projector wheel lighting is soothing and relaxing.

The sizable donation has made it possible to include an interactive colour match panel which can transform the room from a calming and soothing place, to an exciting and engaging interactive space used to engage the child, stimulating reactions and encouraging communication.

Sensory areas are especially useful for children with sensory processing disorders such as autism, cerebral palsy or brain injury. These children often suffer agitation and frustration from a lack of choice and control. Sensory rooms aim to give children choice and control by allowing them to explore and interact with their environment. The purchase of a wireless controller will allow the children with fine/gross motor skill difficulties, visual impairment and limited mobility to still be able to control and interact with the colour match panel, aroma panel and bubble tube.

Staff at the Rainbow Ward would like to thank the Guardian Angel Foundation for its substantial donation, the second in 18 months, helping them improve the experience of hospitalised children in Gibraltar. Everyone at the Rainbow Ward is also delighted that Naomi Duarte, Young Artist of the Year 2016 volunteered to paint child friendly scenes in the main play area.

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Minister for Health, the Hon Dr John Cortes, said: "I am very grateful to the Guardian Angel Foundation for their generous donation to the Rainbow Ward. I am certain that the addition of a sensory room will be of enormous benefit to the patients, aiding their development and recovery and making their experience of going to hospital as comfortable and pleasant as possible".

Note to Editors

The Guardian Angel Foundation was set up in March 2013 with the intention of improving the standards of care and living for local children affected by genuine financial distress or suffering from any illness which impairs their physical or mental well-being. Furthermore, the Charity aims to provide financial or other support to any care homes or institutions which provide care, support or services to children in need. We would also hope to be able to fund activities which may benefit children and make their lives happier with less worry, which really is what childhood should be all about. This Charity, unlike others, will not accumulate long-term funds in its bank account waiting for a project or cause. It will specifically find projects to fund and complete, and therefore always have a focus and reason to improve the life of children in need. In effect, every penny raised is used solely for the projects that have been identified. Therefore, all administrative and other costs associated with running the charity will be met by the Committee members themselves.

The charity launched its Facebook page in April 2013 and almost immediately received a number of messages of support which have been moving and encouraging. This has no doubt given the committee members increased motivation. The page currently enjoys over 600 hundred "likes" and is growing in popularity. For further information on the charity's past projects and forthcoming initiatives please refer to our Facebook page.