



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of Health, the Environment,
Energy and Climate Change

PRESS RELEASE

No. 262

Date: 26th May 2016

It's not a budget Squeeze, it's taking the proper care, unlike the GSD's creation of Cells for the elderly

The GSD Opposition's Roy Clinton, who presumably is stepping into health and care after the departure last week of their former spokesperson Marlene Hassan Nahon, clearly has no depth in his knowledge of the complexities involved in opening a care facility.

The dementia centres at the former Royal Naval Hospital site have not fallen at any hurdle, and are well on the way to opening. Delays in commissioning such complex buildings are common in the industry, frustrating though they are, but Government Estimates are making provision for these to open within months. Workforces are being prepared and final equipment and furnishings are awaited. When all comes together it will revolutionise how we look after the elderly and those members of our community with Alzheimer's and Dementia, as well as make a tremendous difference to their devoted carers.

Roy's ridiculous rookie rant reflects his clearly limited knowledge, as the GHA's expenditure in other areas is not relevant. His questioning of the placing of escalators at St Bernard's Hospital entrance shows how out of touch he is. Not only is it at a very different scale of expenditure, but significantly it is disrespectful to the senior citizens' and pensioners' associations who are the ones who requested them and who have welcomed their construction. His indirect criticism of the GHA, with all the progress and improvements there have been in the past four years, is an affront to the hundreds of committed staff who serve the health of our community day in and day out.

Dr John Cortes, Minister for Health, stated, "Roy is using the work and commitment of the hardworking Alzheimer's and Dementia Society (GADS) for his own political ends. The Society clearly wants the centres open soonest, and rightly makes these points to the Government, but it has never taken the matter into the political arena. Both the Dementia Residential and the Day Care Facility will be up and running during the autumn of this year, and I and the rest of the Government look forward to him, or whoever happens to be carrying the relevant portfolio at that particular time, to offer his congratulations."

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