



PRESS RELEASE

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GHA Reforms Improve Accident & Emergency Department

- *Two Charge Nurses deployed to A & E*
- *A&E to be streamlined to focus on accidents, emergencies and acutely unwell patients*
- *More than 500 GP appointments saved each month by new repeat prescription service*

The steadfast commitment of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar to improve the quality and the delivery of healthcare continues with a firm focus on supporting and strengthening the emergency services. The Gibraltar Health Authority is proud to announce the first step in a series of reforms in the Accident & Emergency Department.

The reforms have begun with the deployment of two additional A&E Charge Nurses. This ensures that a highly skilled, senior member of the nursing staff leads and manages the A&E team in every shift. The Charge Nurse role is crucial, as they are the front line management on the "shop floor". They are responsible for organising and supporting the whole clinical team on each shift and ensure that all A&E patients receive high-quality, safe, compassionate and timely clinical care.

Sister Natasha Cerisola, nurse manager, from the A&E department supports that view. She said: "A&E is a very busy and dynamic Department, which needs strong and experienced leadership".

This A&E reform comes after the success of the recent Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) Courses carried out in Gibraltar for the first time. These courses were provided by the faculty from St George's Hospital NHS Trust in London, a major teaching hospital, well known as a result of the very popular UK Channel 4 TV programme "24 Hours in A&E". The intensive four-day course was hosted at the University of Gibraltar in October 2016 and again in February 2017, and ensured that our front line A&E staff are fully trained and accredited to provide gold standard clinical care.

Further, the services of A&E will be streamlined in order to allow the Department to concentrate on providing timely care for accidents, emergencies and acutely unwell patients. While A&E will continue to issue initial sick certificates for patients, where appropriate, extensions of these certificates will no longer be issued from A&E. Patients who need further sick leave will need to make an appointment at the Primary Care Centre with a GP for medical review and further sick certification. The GHA's team of GPs will make sure that those patients who may require sick certificate extensions are seen in a timely manner.

The recent launch of the repeat prescription service at the PCC saved 300 routine appointments in

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February alone and is forecast to save at least 320 GP appointments every month. Additionally, the new sick note telephone service saved 192 GP appointments in March and is forecast to save over 220 appointments every month. The combined result is an increased availability of over 500 GP appointments per month. These saved appointments mean that the excellent and dedicated clinical staff of nurses and GPs will be able to spend more meaningful time with patients at their consultations. Patients and patient welfare are firmly at the heart of the Government's reforms.

Commenting on the first phase of A&E reforms, the Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Hon. Neil F. Costa MP, said: "On advice from our clinical leads at A&E, my Ministry, in consultation with the GHA's Medical Director, decided to commence our reforms with the deployment of two highly competent and skilled Charge Nurses. As with all the reforms we are introducing, my Ministry and the GHA will keep a close eye to ensure its effectiveness. The reforms I have announced today are part of a wider reform process and I very much look forward to making further announcements in the next few weeks."