



Deputy Chief Minister

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Government of Gibraltar Assists Local Samaritan Group**

The Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Joseph Garcia and the Minister for Health and Care Neil Costa, have on behalf of the Government, assisted the newly established local group of Samaritans. A cheque was presented to the group's chairperson Mrs Marielou Guerrero and the money will be used to cover some of the costs of coaching Samaritan trainers and volunteers.

Mrs Guerrero thanked the Government for the cooperation received for their Samaritan initiative.

Mrs Guerrero said: "On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank the Gibraltar Government for their enthusiasm and support for our Sams project, which I believe will be of great benefit to many and complement existing community services and other charities. The Sam Helpline 116123 will be a Freephone number, totally untraceable, so people can speak about whatever problems are causing them distress in the knowledge that it is anonymous and absolutely confidential. We do not advise, judge or tell them what to do; we are just there to actively listen and thus help them to sort themselves out.

"I would especially like to thank Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Joseph Garcia and Minister Neil Costa, who have been absolutely brilliant in their prompt actions to assist us in setting up the service."

For his part the Deputy Chief Minister said: "We are delighted to be backing the local section of the Samaritans Group. This is a very worthy cause and the Government is pleased to be associated with and to closely collaborate. The Samaritans carry out sterling work in helping persons experiencing emotional difficulty with their friendly listening service and provide a shoulder to lean on. It is truly commendable that there should be people who give of their own time on a wholly altruistic and voluntary basis to help and support others undergoing problems and to get back on their feet again."

The Minister for Health and Care Neil Costa said: "I would like to congratulate Mrs Guerrero and the Board of Trustees for a worthwhile initiative, which will greatly assist individuals going through troubled times and complement existing social, health and community services, as well as all those who have volunteered to help run the Samaritan service."