



PRESS RELEASE

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St Bernard's A&E Undergoes Major Expansion for Better Patient Care

A comprehensive refurbishment at the Accident and Emergency Department in St Bernard's Hospital has been completed, along with an expansion project to streamline patient care. In addition, the capacity of the minor injuries unit, (as it is also known), has been increased so it can now provide medical attention to five patients at a time, instead of two, as was previously the case. These changes have already resulted in considerable reductions in waiting times.

The A&E extension has been equipped with the latest infection control furniture, together with three extra stretchers, a new ceiling and flooring, oxygen masks, new call bells and other features. Additional nursing staff has also been assigned to the unit, together with the recruitment of a new experienced A&E senior consultant, who will be responsible for the overall management of this vital Department.

As part of the A&E overhaul, GHA policies and protocols have been updated to standardise treatment for all patients, to improve clinical outcomes and ensure that patients receive the highest possible standards of medical care.

Dr Albrecht Kussner, Associate Specialist at A&E said: "Our Emergency Department is now treating 100 patients a day, a considerable increase from when the Hospital opened in 2005, where an average of between 50 and 60 patients were being treated daily. The A&E remit has also widened since. We now run busy daily dressing clinics, administer intravenous medical treatments for patients who previously required admission, along with specialist assessments for patients returning from tertiary Hospitals. This extension reflects an increasing demand for our services. Three more cubicles have been added to the Minor Injuries area. A new nursing station with computer access to medical records and monitoring equipment, plus ample storage for wound care materials, are now part of this new five-bedded area. Furthermore, three additional rooms were added to the Department, allowing for expansion and reconfiguration of our premises."

Director of Nursing, Sandie Gracia declared: "A measure of success of the transformation within the Accident and Emergency Department is that the people of Gibraltar can see and feel the improvements being made within their health care facilities. The new and improved Minor Injuries



area and Infusion room will provide extra capacity in a busy Department to help staff see and treat patients more effectively. For the staff it is reassuring that we have the backing of the Government to put practical plans developed by Nurses and Doctors into place to improve upon patient care and clinical outcomes.”

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, said he was delighted at the completion of the A&E refurbishment and the greatly improved service that was being provided to the community. Mr. Costa said: “We are constantly looking at ways in which to enhance patient care and to deliver the best possible patient experience. The A&E Department is often the community’s first point of contact with St Bernard’s Hospital and we set out to continuously achieve the dual aim of delivering high quality, compassionate healthcare and also to improve even further the current average waiting times. The GHA will continue to work in conjunction with our dedicated clinical staff, patients and their families, to achieve an ever improving health care service.”