



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Organ Donation

The GHA continues to introduce new services, increase staffing in key areas, enhance governance and strengthen its links with the NHS.

One key development has been the agreement with the UK Department of Health in May 2015, when Gibraltar-based patients became eligible to enrol on NHS transplant waiting lists, allowing people suffering from end-stage kidney failure and other conditions to remain in their own homes while awaiting their transplant.

The next logical step is to give the people of Gibraltar the opportunity to give the gift of life by making organ donation after death possible. To that end, the Ministry of Health and the GHA have been working with NHS Blood and Transplant to make this long aspired goal a reality.

HM Government of Gibraltar and the GHA are therefore, delighted to announce a site visit by a senior delegation from NHS Blood and Transplant Service to Gibraltar to help the GHA prepare the ground to make organ donation after death an option for the people of Gibraltar for the first time. Gibraltar residents will be able to register themselves as an organ donor on the UK register. The GHA anticipate that there will be one to two potential organ donors per year in Gibraltar. It is important to note that one organ donor can potentially give the gift of life to up to eight recipients, and this opportunity to change the life of others for the better is one that will surely be taken up by many members of our caring community.

The UK Transplant team is activated as soon as a potential organ donor is identified in Gibraltar. This will set in motion a protocol to send a team from the UK to retrieve the organs in Gibraltar, if the donor is suitable. The organs will then be allocated for recipients on the UK transplant list, which includes Gibraltarians.

The UK delegation includes Dr Paul Murphy, Dr Dale Gardner, Tracey Gibson and Shibu Chacko. Dr Murphy is the National Clinical lead for Organ Donation and was a member of the Organ Donation task force. Since the publication of the task force's recommendations in 2008, Dr Murphy and his

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team of regional and local clinical leads for organ donation have overseen a 75% increase in deceased organ donation in the UK. Dr Dale Gardner became the UK Deputy National Clinical Lead for Organ Donation for NHS Blood and Transplant in 2013 after being both a local and then regional lead for organ donation in Nottingham, where he is a Consultant in Adult Intensive Care. Tracey Gibson is the Team Manager of the South East England Organ Donation Services Team with whom we plan to develop our operational links. Shibu Chacko is a Specialist Nurse in Organ Donation (SNOD) with NHS Blood and Transplant UK.

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, was immensely pleased with the visit: “It is vitally important that we continue to work closely with the Department of Health in the UK to ensure that the process of enrolling in the NHS transplant waiting lists, and receiving organ transplants, is one that works for our patients. The fact that our patients can remain longer at home whilst waiting to receive a transplant will provide some comfort during what can be a traumatic period in their lives and those of their loved ones. It is also important that we have become eligible to register as an organ donor, to allow Gibraltarians to contribute to the number of organs available for life saving and life transforming transplants. As ever, I wish to sincerely thank the Intensive Care Unit Lead Consultant, Hamish Thomson, and my Medical Director, Daniel Cassaglia, and all persons involved in this process, whom have worked incredibly hard to make organ donation a reality.”

#### **Note to Editors:**

Gibraltar residents can record their desire to become an organ donor after death by signing up to the UK Organ Donor Register at [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk) or by calling 0044 300 123 23 23. After you submit your registration, the Organ Donation team will have a record of your wishes. After you register, it is also important to make your wishes known to your family members so they can support you in making the gift of life after your death.