



PRESS RELEASE

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The GSD Jumps on the Bandwagon Yet Again

The Gibraltar Ambulance Service is an essential and crucial part of pre-hospital care that impacts on patient clinical outcomes. Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar continues to actively further the development of the present service to meet our local community demands by delivering an Ambulance service that is not only up to modern standards, but also assures a quality provision of care delivery in a timely response.

The strategic development of the workforce is presently undergoing an enhancement of skill and competencies at all levels to support the Ambulance staff with active leadership and clinical governance.

With this in mind, Ambulance Care Assistants undertook training to Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level in order to provide staff the opportunity to progress in their career. The GHA's Human Resources department, on the 15th March, advertised for the recruitment of EMTs and the Ambulance Service staff have been informed of these vacancies accordingly. Furthermore, to bring our Ambulance Service in line with the UK model, the GHA is actively recruiting fully qualified/registered Paramedics, as well as supporting staff and potential candidates, to gain a recognised academic qualification in pre-hospital care. Further, the GHA is presently engaged in a process of attaining professional regulatory status for the EMT employees.

It is important to note that 8 months ago, the executive responsibility for the Ambulance Service was taken on by a senior clinician, who works in full collaboration and in conjunction with the Chief Ambulance Officer (CAO). The CAO post is currently being covered on an acting capacity by a senior paramedic, and the GHA will be in a position to announce the results of the review in the strategic and clinical direction of the Ambulance Service leadership in due course. This will further strengthen the Ambulance Service to provide a professional and holistic service to our community.

The record will reflect this Government's service-by-service transformation of health, elderly and care services, including the important improvements in infrastructure and greatly increased staffing resources. In the Ambulance Service alone, staffing levels have increased from 35 in November 2011 to the currently existing 44, with the skill mix being further enhanced by the inclusion of the Paramedic grade in October 2014.

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Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP said: “I am not surprised by the GSD statement regarding our Gibraltar Ambulance Service, given their well-known proclivity to jump on any and all band-wagons. In the light of the many, and well-known, service improvements delivered by this Government in our health service, you would have thought that the GSD would remain silent. This is especially so, as we inherited a service, which was integrated with the GHA in 2007, with no provision of facilities, or strategic and operational direction. In fact, Ambulance Service staff were sat in plastic chairs within the Accident and Emergency Department. The GHA have already, for the last 12 months, embarked on the necessary preparations, and have plans in place, for a purpose built ambulance facility that addresses, not only the local community’s need, but also that of the ambulance employees. The Government fully recognises and endorses the hard work and dedication of our ambulance employees and is fully committed to commissioning this project in the coming Financial Year. This project has required due diligence and professional clinical and non-clinical participation to ensure that the facility meets the highest standard possible.”