



PRESS RELEASE

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RGP and Care Agency sign protocol for the protection of adults with learning disabilities

The Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police have signed a joint protocol for the protection of vulnerable adults within the Adult Learning Disability Residential Services when such adults leave care without authorisation.

The main objective of this active, collaborative approach is to ensure that vulnerable individuals, who leave residential care without permission, return to residential care safely and as quickly as possible. The Memorandum of Understanding sets out and clarifies the response of both agencies, including risk assessment provisions and it provides a consistent framework to ensure good practice and positive outcomes.

The Memorandum of Understanding details levels of risk and concern, with police involvement only becoming necessary when there are concerns for the safety of vulnerable adults. It is important to note that not all persons who leave residential care are exposed to risk; nonetheless, the protocol will ensure that all areas of concern are assessed and acted upon.

The agreement has been described by Natalie Tavares, CEO (ag) at the Care Agency as 'A further development in establishing robust protocols and resiliency in working practices, and represents another welcome move in improving an already positive working relationship with the Royal Gibraltar Police.'

Commissioner of Police Eddie Yome has also welcomed the initiative, which he says, 'Consolidates the RGP's long-standing working partnership with the Care Agency.'

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, welcomed the protocol and said, 'This Memorandum of Understanding is the second agreement the Royal Gibraltar Police and the Care Agency has entered into since my appointment as Minister for Care and Justice. We are confident that these mechanisms will effectively support individuals with learning disabilities, who leave residential care without authorisation. By bringing together the professional resources of the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police, this protocol will provide assurances to family members that there are agreed systems in place between the two organisations, and, guidance to



staff working with vulnerable adults. This protocol will be reviewed periodically by the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police and updated, if and when, required. The excellent professionals in the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police are the best guarantors of our firm commitment to look after vulnerable adults in our community to provide them the safety and quality of life they deserve.'