



PRESS RELEASE

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Continuation of Repatriation of Medical Services at the Gibraltar Health Authority

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar's policy to repatriate as many services as possible to the Gibraltar Health Authority (GHA) continues to significantly increase the provision of speciality services at St Bernard's Hospital. In addition, the increased availability of beds has enabled a rise in elective surgery.

In addition to the various specialisations already repatriated as announced in previous press statements, the Ministry of Health, Care and Justice and the GHA wish to note that the repatriation of Bariatric and Thyroid surgery is being provided by a Visiting Super Specialist from the Royal Marsden and Charing Cross Hospitals in London. Vascular Surgery procedures are also being conducted in-house, by a visiting team from Quiron Hospital.

The provision of Specialist Plastic Surgery by the excellent team at Leicester University Teaching Hospitals has been expanded, with the addition of Mr Nakul Patel and Mr Matt Smith, who will each visit once a year to support the quarterly visits by Mr Graham Offer, Plastic Surgeon.

As well as surgical procedures, there has also been an increase in Visiting Consultants in various Medical Specialities, such as Paediatric Cardiology, Paediatric Surgery, Paediatric Gastroenterology and Adult Allergy & Immunology. These specialist services mean that patients may be treated locally, without the stress and inconvenience of travelling abroad. Services in Neurology will also be further enhanced by expanding the Visiting Consultant programme to include Super Specialists in Multiple Sclerosis and other neurology subspecialties.

The GHA is also investing in expanding its specialist equipment. In September 2018, the Urology team operated on nine patients with Renal Calculi. These patients would previously have required travelling to Spain for their procedure; however, the GHA have now invested in the latest, state-of-the-art, laser equipment. The Urology team carried out all nine operations successfully at St Bernard's Hospital, another first for the GHA. The team from Olympus, who supplied the equipment, the Theatres team and the Radiography team supported Mr Tamas Tacaks and Mr Juan Arocena.

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The Urology team will also be able to carry out laser prostate operations in Gibraltar, routinely by the summer of 2019.

The Medical Director, Dr Daniel Cassaglia said, “The GHA has embarked on a transformative programme that includes streamlining services and maximising the availability of local services for patients. I would like to thank all GHA staff for their hard work and continued commitment to the transformation programme, which will result in significant improvements to the quality of patient care.”

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, welcomed the developments, stating: “It is critical that we constantly review our current practices and repatriate as many services as we possibly can. Due to the size of our health services and our local population, in comparison to other countries, there are instances in which it will not be viable to repatriate surgical services. I am however, extremely pleased with the services we have repatriated thus far. My Ministry and I, together with our excellent professionals at the GHA, continue to work diligently in this regard. I am sure that the community welcome receiving medical care at home.”