



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **GHA and GHITA Carry Out Survey on Hearing Loss**

The Gibraltar Health Authority (GHA) and the Gibraltar Hearing Impaired and Tinnitus Association (GHITA), are currently undertaking an initiative to register persons affected by hearing loss or impairment who wish to do so. Primary Care staff and GHITA volunteers will set up an information desk at the Primary Care Centre reception area and at St Bernard's Hospital's main entrance and will be distributing questionnaires to members of the public to collate data and information. The survey, which commenced on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September, will run until the end of October.

This will also help identify areas within the current services, which may be enhanced to better provide for persons living with hearing loss or hearing impairment in the community.

Statistics in the United Kingdom indicate that 41% of over 50 year olds and 71% of those over 70, find it difficult to hear people speak, however, over a third of those are unaware of the fact, or feel uncomfortable in seeking professional advice.

The term 'hearing loss', includes conditions such as deafness, Tinnitus, Meniere's disease, Hyperacusis and persons that are hard of hearing. Symptoms of Hyperacusis include sounds, frequencies or volumes which are painful to hear and can cause temporary hearing loss. Meniere's disease causes dizzy spells, sickness and a sudden reduction in hearing. Research also shows that 1 in 10 people are living with Tinnitus, a condition that causes a ringing, buzzing or other intrusive sound.

Clinical Nurse Specialist for Primary Care, Mrs Suzanne Romero commented: "I would like to thank Mr Triay, the GHITA volunteers and my colleagues here at the Primary Care Centre for their efforts in helping organise and carry out this important survey, which will benefit those in our community affected by hearing loss."

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa said: "The purpose of the survey is to gather information which will help identify areas within our current services which may be improved to better cater for persons with hearing loss. Just as significantly, it will help raise awareness on hearing loss and encourage persons in our community, who may be affected by hearing loss, to seek professional advice. I would like to thank Mr Triay, GHITA, and my team at the



Primary Care Centre led by Ms Suzanne Romero for their enthusiasm and hard work in leading this initiative.”