



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry for Environment and Tourism
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Epidemiological Study

Government has, for some time, been exploring the possibility of undertaking a comprehensive and independent epidemiological study of cancer prevalence and cancer risk in Gibraltar and the surrounding region, firmly intending to undertake this study jointly with the Spanish Authorities for the Andalucian region. However, lack of response from some of the relevant Spanish Authorities and the continuing public concern has compelled the Government of Gibraltar to undertake the study alone although this would not necessarily restrict the study to Gibraltar, but would take full account of the available information for the region.

Government has some time ago initiated the process of seeking proposals for a research project from credible institutions with a track record in environmental cancer epidemiology.

The two main aims of the study are:

- To establish whether Gibraltar and its region are a high-risk community for cancer, due to its location within the vicinity of potential sources of environmental exposure or health hazards, resulting in unacceptable levels of exposure to contaminants or pollutants.
- To establish whether there actually exists an incidence of cancer greater than is normal.

Although the aims have been tightly specified, researchers are being briefed that these underlie the need to paint a broader picture of the health and environmental safety of the area, with wider related questions needing to be addressed, such as:

- Is there evidence to suggest a greater incidence of diseases other than cancer but known to be related to an excessively prevalent environmental pollutant(s)?
- Is there an increased incidence of a type of cancer not knowingly linked to environmental pollutants?
- If an environmental cancer risk is found, can it be related to a particular industry or activity?

It is also expected that any such discoveries will be highlighted and followed up as far as possible within the scope of the intended study.

Some of the world's best research institutions with simultaneous expertise in cancer causation, environmental risk assessment and geographical epidemiology have been selected and invited to submit proposals to carry out the study independently of the Government. The Government hopes that the Junta de Andalucia and the Mancomunidad de Municipios del Campo de Gibraltar will join it in commissioning this epidemiological study.