



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **GHA Improves Advance Appointments System and Telephone Access to Primary Care Centre**

The Gibraltar Health Authority is pleased to announce the introduction of a new voicemail service which will make it easier for patients to get an advance appointment with a GP at the Primary Care Centre.

The new voicemail service will allow callers to leave their name and telephone number. The call will be returned by a member of staff during the course of the day to arrange an advance appointment. The voicemail service can be accessed on telephone number **200 78857**.

The Primary Care Centre will also continue to provide the existing advance appointments service on telephone number **200 52441**. Callers to this number are placed in a queue when lines are busy at peak times. A message will now be activated which will advise the caller to either hold the line until the call is answered, or to call the new voicemail number if the person does not wish to hold. Patients who require an appointment on the actual day that they call, are requested to continue calling **200 52441**.

The GHA advises users that both lines will be open from **08.00 hrs until 15.00 hrs**

An appointment reminder service has also recently been introduced which has resulted in a considerable decrease in the number of lost appointments due to non-attendance by patients. As a result of staff calling patients to remind them of their appointments, a large number of potential non-attendances are avoided and allow for those appointments that are no longer required to be released for other patients. An electronic web-based and voicemail cancellation service is also available and Primary Care Centre opening hours have been extended from 08.00 hrs to 18.00 hrs. Calls for advanced appointments are also now diverted to the GHA's call centre at St Bernard's if all lines in the Primary Care Centre are busy.

Minister for Health, Yvette Del Agua, said: "I am confident that all these measures, in combination, will serve to significantly improve access to the Primary Care Centre and will help alleviate the problems that some patients have encountered in the past".