



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**Ministry for Environment and Tourism**  
**Joshua Hassan House**  
**Secretary's Lane**  
**Gibraltar**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

No. 103/2009

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009

### **Epidemiological Study**

The Government of Gibraltar is pleased to announce that following the conclusion of the international selection process it has now commissioned an independent scientific study into the prevalence of Cancers in Gibraltar.

Cancer is a matter of concern to people in Gibraltar, partly because of a perception, that there may be a higher incidence of cancer in Gibraltar and the surrounding region of Spain than one would expect. Despite the repeated publication of statistics and reports showing that Gibraltar is generally a healthy place, these concerns have remained because there has been no specific scientific investigation or study, conducted to international standards of scientific excellence, to address the question.

After an extensive and detailed consultation, selection and tendering process, in which specialists from the Government's Technical, Environmental and Health departments took part, the tender to carry out the epidemiological study has been awarded to the National Environmental Research Institute, at the University of Aarhus in Denmark.

The Epidemiological Study will investigate the historical and contemporary patterns of cancer in Gibraltar and surrounding areas. It will aim to establish whether or not there is a higher incidence of cancer in Gibraltar and if so, whether Gibraltar is a high-risk community for particular types of cancer and will be scientifically exploring their causes, taking full account of geographical and health hazard exposure to pollutants and contaminants. The study will culminate with the production of a detailed report on the findings, accompanied by appropriate scientific comments.

The National Environmental Research Institute at the University of Aarhus is a renowned institution in this field. It has a track record of reporting at the national level, to the UN and to the EU. The scientists themselves are of international repute having acted as advisors and project managers for the EU and World Health Organization, on several projects involving the study of diseases and their distributions.

The study will commence within a month and is expected to be completed by early next year.