



PRESS RELEASE

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GSD MISINFORMATION REACHES NEW HEIGHTS: ELLUL HAMMOND MISLEADS PUBLIC AGAIN

The latest press release by the GSD seeks to confuse the issue of surgical waiting lists and is a weak attempt to denigrate the progress clearly being made in the delivery of health services by the GHA.

The GSD fails to state that they left very long waiting lists, including one of over 14 years, with no plan in place to tackle or reduce these. This is now being done, with the first of a number of initiatives due to be announced at the GHA Board meeting tomorrow afternoon.

The examples chosen by the GSD to illustrate their weak arguments are mischievously misleading as well as inaccurate.

They state that the dental welfare waiting list was increased by 61%. This is a play with figures and is not the case. No waiting list was kept for this service prior to July, with patients just being given the next available appointment. In order to better manage patients, a waiting list was created in July, with 61 patients on it. That does not mean that there were no patients waiting to be seen before July, merely that they did not appear on any list. This is not a 61% increase, but reflects that a list is now kept whereas before it was not.

The GSD also quote an increase in the orthodontics waiting list. There has been an increase in demand for this service, but significantly this list began to build up before December 2011, during the term of the GSD, when lack of nursing availability resulted in cancelled clinics. This has now been resolved and nursing support provided.

Other measures to reduce waiting times are actively being considered as the GHA strives to build up an improved service to the Community.

Already the health service has made achievements in one year of a new Government that should have been solved years ago. These have included improvements for mental health patients, massive improvements to the primary care appointments system and the system for repeat prescriptions, increase in beds at St Bernard's, and drastic reduction of cancelled operations. Playing with statistics for their own ends - or simply failing to understand them - is a waste of the Opposition's time and is an affront to the hard working staff of the GHA who are totally committed to the further improvements already on the way.

Dr Cortes commented, "Everyone can see that, while we have a long way to go, we are making great progress in improving our health services. We will continue to improve continuously, while Mrs Ellul-Hammond tries to undermine this work by playing petty and misleading politics. It will not work. We at GHA are a team of professionals and we mean business."