



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry for Equality, Social Services & the Elderly
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Gibraltar

PRESS RELEASE

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MRS ELLUL-HAMMOND SHOWS THAT SHE STILL DOES NOT UNDERSTAND

Mrs Ellul-Hammond once again shows that she simply does not know what she is talking about. What is worse is that she has clearly learned nothing but instead she is intent on scaremongering and sensationalising her untruths.

In her latest tirade against the Minister for Social Services, she accuses the Government of trying to use the elderly for political gain. Nothing could be further from the truth. She reduces the whole argument down to one of room sizes.

But it is glaringly obvious that Mrs Ellul-Hammond is seeking to confuse the public when she refers to comments made by Minister Cortes in relation to the mental health hospital – a completely different facility. She should be aware by now that the old RNH site houses three different facilities; a dementia residential unit, a mental health hospital and a day centre for people with Alzheimer's and dementia.

In her latest statement she quotes Minister Cortes's comments in relation to the room sizes at the mental health facility. Does she not realise that this is a separate and independent facility run by the GHA? Does she not know that this facility has nothing to do with the dementia residential unit? Is it not clear to her that, save for a few overlapping services, the two facilities will run independently of each other? Finally, is she not aware that many people admitted to the mental health facility will be there for a short period of time whereas those in the dementia facility will live there for the rest of their days?

Simply put, Mrs Ellul-Hammond misses the point that dementia patients require totally different standards to those of other patients.

In the new design for our dementia residential unit, it was our intention to strive for room sizes in accordance with the Minimum Care Standard UK as set out in the 3rd (the current) edition. Even so this was not achieved due to the constraints of the existing building but, even so, rooms will still be bigger than in the previous designs.

The principal philosophy adopted in producing this amended design is based on the belief that people with dementia deserve to be given the opportunity to live in surroundings which provide security, safety and comfort in a pleasant and stimulating environment. We must also take into account the fact that this will be their home for the remainder of their lives.

This issue should not be a political one. We have stated the facts and the advice as they have been presented to us. The tax payer is entitled to know that experts have assessed the original design as not being fit for purpose and we have modified the designs accordingly, trying to make the best use of a building with heritage value.

"Mrs Ellul Hammond may not like what I have to say because I have explained that the reasons for the changes are due to the shortcomings of the previous administration's plans,' said Minister Samantha Sacramento. 'Our decision has been purely based on the advice of professionals at the Care Agency who are responsible for this facility as well the advice of an independent expert in the field. Essentially, Mrs Ellul-Hammond has shown herself up once again and she does not seem to have learned anything from the response to her previous (almost identical) press release on this issue in June. In her latest press release she demonstrates how little she knows on the subject, and more worryingly, that she does not even attempt to inform herself before lashing out. She is trying to sensationalise the subject but there is no truth or substance to what she is saying. Perhaps she is trying to apply the Orwellian principle that if you repeat a lie often enough it will become the truth. Her ignorance results in irresponsible politics and she shows the community her true colours, that she doesn't care about people with dementia. It is she who is using the vulnerable and the elderly to try to make political capital and failing."

Whatever happened to the constructive policies that the GSD said they were going to engage in?