



PRESS RELEASE

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Cancer Hospice to be set up at Cancer Relief Centre

HM Government of Gibraltar is delighted to announce that it has agreed to providing the funding to Cancer Relief Gibraltar to operate a hospice unit at the Cancer Relief Centre.

Cancer is one of the highest causes of death locally and most of the patients, whose disease cannot be cured, die in hospital. It is recognized internationally that a general hospital is not the ideal place to provide the holistic care that people with advanced cancer and their families need. Busy hospital wards cater for the differing and often competing needs of acutely ill patients, those needing surgery, those with chronic illnesses as well as patients in need of palliative care. The sole purpose of a hospice is to provide a supportive environment and specialized medical and nursing care for patients with advanced cancer and their families. In this way the patient's quality of life is enhanced as they benefit from specialist symptom control, respite care for families and specialist care at the end of life.

For these reasons HM Government of Gibraltar, as well as already providing a specialist GP to care for patients at the Centre and in the community, is pleased to support the establishment of the hospice. In this way the continuity and sustainability of the in-patient unit, which will offer care around the clock 365 days of the year, is guaranteed. This is a giant leap forward for Cancer Relief Gibraltar. The charity's present services for people with cancer from diagnosis, through treatment and thereafter, will continue to be funded by the generous donations raised by the community throughout the year. The hospice unit will be funded by the Government of Gibraltar in partnership with Cancer Relief.

Minister for Health, the Hon Dr John Cortes commented: "Cancer Relief Gibraltar is already working very closely with the GHA and is doing excellent work in providing services for cancer patients and their families. This project take this a step further and will provide a facility we have never had before which will be of tremendous benefit to all. This is a further example of Government working hand in hand with healthcare charities in furthering the wellbeing of the community."

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo, said: "So many families in Gibraltar are touched by cancer. We have to do something to better deal with peoples' last days with their loved ones, to bring greater dignity to those who are dying from this cruel disease. Funding the provision of the hospice will enable us to ensure we in Gibraltar are reaching the standards that other nations now provide for their citizens in such situations. It's the right investment for the future as we further modernise and improve aspects of health care in Gibraltar."