



PRESS RELEASE

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Over 215 New Elderly Care Day/Residential Places: Demonstrates Firm Commitment by Government on Alzheimer's and Dementia

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar adds its voice to all those calling out for greater awareness of the facts of Alzheimer's and Dementia, their fast diagnosis and the highest standards care for patients.

In this respect, the Government will have added, by the end of the year, over 215 places for elderly residential and day care, demonstrating Government's firm commitment to the elderly care sector. Since 2011 the Government has been proud to open the Calpe Ward in St Bernard's Hospital, with 19 beds, and the John Mackintosh Home, with 54 beds, and is already in the process of preparing for the opening of the new residential block at the former Royal Naval Hospital (RNH) site.

In supporting the excellent, and relentless work undertaken by professionals at social services and elderly residential services on a daily basis, and considering the large amount of research being carried out on Alzheimer's and Dementia internationally, the Government is committed to introducing in Gibraltar every new method of diagnosis and treatment that may be developed, in the shortest possible time.

The Government also commends the awareness and fundraising efforts of the Gibraltar Alzheimer's and Dementia Society (GADS), and is pleased to welcome Angela Rippon to Gibraltar as the guest-speaker of tonight's World Alzheimer's Day conference.

The Government will also, as part of its commitments in the next manifesto, pledge to an even more dementia-friendly Mount Alvernia. This commitment to state of the art facilities is unprecedented in Gibraltar, and will go hand in hand with the Government's Dementia Strategy, which is being developed in consultation with GADS, and will be published in a few weeks' time. In addition to existing dementia provision, dedicated floors will be specifically geared to care for residents living with dementia, with bespoke bathroom facilities to be installed.

Minister for Health, the Hon Dr John Cortes, said: "Both Samantha Sacramento and I, and Charles Bruzon before us, have been working hard to improve our care for the elderly. The Government will continue to improve and expand facilities and care, as well as promoting awareness. It's the least we could do to honour a generation whilst simultaneously implementing a long-term, sustainable policy that ensures support and dignity for generations to come."



Minister for Social Services, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, said: "The introduction of a one-point entry system into elderly services through the Social Services Department of the Care Agency, which is needs-based through assessment, has consolidated the way in which this Government looks after our elderly citizens. This is all the better achieved with the introduction of new facilities, better resources and more importantly, inter-agency and multi-disciplinary communication between professionals. Together we have formulated a strategic approach to elderly care, including those who suffer from Alzheimer's and Dementia, which aims to provide optimum services, encourages independence and enhances quality of life."

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC, said: "The care we give our elderly is a demonstration of our humanity. By setting a new standard of care in the new John Mackintosh Wing and throughout Elderly Care, and without domiciliary care, we have shown how important our elders are to us. With the cruel onset of Alzheimer's and Dementia, some need our support even more. Working with the Gibraltar Alzheimer's and Dementia Society even more closely than we already have to date, we will provide better care for those that need it most. We now look forward to receiving the new facilities for residential and day care for those with Alzheimer's and Dementia from the contractor so that we can improve our services in this crucial area even more. The developing numbers suffering from these conditions is frightening and we have to be ready for a future where people live longer and need more care."