



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of Health, the Environment,
Energy and Climate Change

PRESS RELEASE

No: 664/2015

Date: 28th September 2015

Chemotherapy is coming home

One of the main discomforts adding to the distress that cancer and its treatments can cause patients and their families is travel. Particularly travel directly after the administration of the strong drugs used in chemotherapy.

The Gibraltar Health Authority (GHA) at present sends patients either to Spain or to the UK for 'chemo', and in both situations there is often great discomfort as well as difficulties in relatives accompanying them. This is at considerable cost to the public purse.

As one more example of improvement in the health service, and of listening to the concerns of patients, the GHA will soon be providing a chemotherapy service in Gibraltar.

A chemotherapy suite with up to four treatment points will be constructed within St Bernard's Hospital, with works commencing within the next few weeks.

Following consideration of potential service providers by a multidisciplinary team, Xanit hospital will be contracted to provide the clinical input and will work in collaboration with GHA professionals. This will mean that oncologists and specialised nurses will be on site to provide the service at St Bernard's at what will be a considerable saving.

Most importantly as from early next year patients requiring chemotherapy will be able to receive this in Gibraltar, in a purpose built suite, in the company of their relatives, without the trauma of a journey out of Gibraltar.

Minister for Health Dr John Cortes said, "This is one of the most important developments of those many that we have achieved in the past four years. It will be a dream come true for many who have had to go through this. The benefits to cancer sufferers will be tremendous. They deserve this. We will continue to work hard in bringing more positive developments as our health service continues to improve."

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: "This is a huge achievement for the GHA and for John Cortes in particular. He has fought tooth and nail to improve the quality of health services in Gibraltar and this development will ring in a really meaningful step forward for those who need chemotherapy. Having this service at home in Gibraltar at last will make it sufferers' lives easier at the time they most need it. Well done GHA and well done John Cortes. This is exactly the type of progress people want to see."

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