PRESS RELEASE

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GHA's brand new Catering Facility opens on Saturday

The Gibraltar Health Authority's new Catering Facility at St Bernard's Hospital will start to function preparing food for patients on Saturday morning. The facility, which is located to the west of the main hospital building in an area which was formerly a void over the garage entrance, is linked directly to the hospital and replaces the old kitchen at the North mole.

As from Saturday, food will no longer need to be transported by van from the North Mole in trolleys, but will be wheeled in directly into the hospital corridors, ensuring much greater freshness. At the same time the opportunity is being taken to change the way that food is presented for patients. Food will no longer travel on plates covered with plastic lids, but in bulk containers to be served on the wards.

The new facility is purpose built, to the highest standards of hygiene and efficiency, including energy efficiency. Flows of food, from delivery, through preparation and serving to removal of waste will be in a continuing flow thus reducing the risk of cross contamination. The amount of food waste will also be significantly reduced. The design, which can cater for the production of up to 2000 meals a day, also means that the need for daily maintenance is greatly decreased. Staff facilities are also greatly improved. All equipment is energy saving and water saving, there is full ventilation and, a challenge for any building that uses so much electrical equipment, it has attained an 'A' rating for energy performance and environmental impact.

Minister for Health Dr John Cortes said, "This new facility will ensure much better quality food, better prepared and served to the benefit of all patients and the other users of this service. It has boosted the morale of staff who were working in sub-standard premises with old, inefficient equipment, as it has greatly improved working conditions and has allowed for training of the personnel. The whole process will be more efficient, but above all, the food that patients receive on their plates will be of a much higher quality. That's what we're all here for in the GHA, to improve the patient experience."

Some Technical Details:

- The project has achieved an A-rating in Energy Efficiency as well as in Environmental Impact.
- Low energy LED light fittings installed.
- Light fittings provided with occupancy sensing and switch off automatically
- Ventilated Ceiling System has a built-in control system: sensors automatically control the fan speeds of the cooking requirements of each area according to the activity of the cooking performed. Benefits of this control system are that it saves up to 62% of fan energy costs and up to 45% on heating/cooling costs on conditioned air. (This will also reduce the CO2 emission.)
- Most of the kitchen appliances are energy efficient: Some units for example will reduce power requirements by up to 30%. Energy and heat are kept where they belong by insulating the entire cooking chamber. The closed vacuum heating system will heat up ultra-fast with minimum energy consumption.
  Most of the equipment relies on a level of automation of controls that relate to conditions of operation so when the oven reaches the required temperature for cooking a thermostat adjusts the input of energy automatically.
- Heat Pump technology for air conditioning and warm water.
  The air-conditioning system is based on heat pump technology. This uses electrical energy to provide a very efficient source of cooling and is used to provide the primary source of energy for the heating of the hot water needed for the facility.
- Inverter Controlled Motors.
  The air supply and chiller equipment are all provided with inverter controlled motors. These react precisely to changes in demand and maintain high efficiency.
- Electronic Master Controller
  The installations are fitted with an electronic master controller. This controller is able to provide reports on the energy usage of the facility thus giving maintenance operatives the tools to fine tune the equipment and maximise the efficiency.
- Acoustic louvres have been installed in the plant room and a noise level survey has been carried out stating the noise level from the plant will be below the recommended design rating noise levels.
- Water is being filtered to minimize damage to the kitchen appliances.

- Wash hand basins work on sensors, (no water spillage/wastage)
- Ventilated Ceiling System has a built-in UVC system which destroys the grease particles in the extract duct work. An integrated wash down system cleans the ceiling on a daily basis. The main air extract unit in the plant room is foreseen with carbon filters to remove (absorb) odours and a variety of mechanical filters. An electrostatic precipitator collects all airborne particles. The system will collect 90% or more of the contaminants which means practically no smell or fumes.
- Kitchen appliances are quick and easy to clean.