



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of Health, the Environment,
Energy and Climate Change

PRESS RELEASE

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Gibraltar obtains green light for organ transplants

After many years of uncertainty and concern on the part of Gibraltar patients who need an organ transplant, the Gibraltar Health Authority is pleased that following an understanding with the UK's organ transplant service, NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), this has now been resolved. The GHA has worked together with the Gibraltar Dialysis Association in this initiative, which has also involved the Chief Minister's office and that of the Minister for Health.

Up until now, patients requiring a transplant, including those on long term dialysis, were not on an official transplant list either in UK or Spain, and could not be guaranteed that they would have any chance of receiving a transplant.

Following this agreement, there have already been several patients who have either been transplanted, have appointments for assessments, or are on the point of receiving an appointment in one of the three UK centres earmarked for this. These are the West London Transplant Centre, King's College Hospital and Harefield Hospital.

In addition, HM Government of Gibraltar and NHSBT are exploring ways in which Gibraltar residents who want to can contribute to the donor pool.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC, said: "The possibility of receiving transplants is life saving and it was of great concern to me, as to my Minister for Health, that this had become impossible for Gibraltar patients. I was happy to raise this directly with the Prime Minister, who was totally supportive. The new arrangement with NHS Blood and Transplant will change lives and save lives. What can be more satisfying than that? I would like to commend all involved, both in the GHA and in the Gibraltar Dialysis Association, for their work in achieving this."

Minister for Health, Dr John Cortes commented, "This is another massive achievement for our patients. Over the past four years we have been working hard on this, exploring the various options. I have been talking to patients and relatives who were distressed at finding all doors closed. We have finally been able to resolve this, and some of our patients are

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already being treated. This is life changing. In addition we are hopeful that our discussions with NHSBT will allow those residents of Gibraltar who want to, to be on the donor list. I am really, really pleased.”