



PRESS RELEASE

No: 710/2016

Date: 13th December 2016

Opposition Continues to Make Political Mischief in Respect of GHA

It is clear that the Opposition continues to try to make political mischief in respect of the GHA. The GHA has already explained the many steps that management has taken to improve the advisory structures to ensure full clinical participation in management decisions. Contrary to the Opposition's latest press release, the GHA has not said that it has ignored the poll and has noted that it will continue to deepen collaboration with clinicians at all levels of management. The GHA has the highest respect for the invaluable service carried out by all clinicians and the facts betray that the Opposition is merely seeking to denigrate the GHA and its management by its latest Press Release.

The Opposition deploys the statistic that 13% of doctors are leaving in the next 6 months as evidence of huge dissatisfaction with the GHA. 13% of those polled equates to approximately 4 Doctors out of a complement of 81.5 and, therefore, actually only 5 % of the complement. Two out of the four Consultants are retiring and the third Consultant's contract has expired and is voluntarily returning to his country of origin. The fourth Consultant, who is retiring after 22 years of service, sent a heartfelt thanks to all the staff at the GHA. The doctor described his time at the GHA as "...the best years of my career..." and went on to say that "...the GHA administration has always been supportive to me during all these years." The GHA can also confirm that it has received many other positive comments from those departing, which actually place the GHA, as an organisation, in a very positive light. As a result, and contrary to the distorted impression the GSD either recklessly or falsely sought to portray in its first Press Release, these 4 Consultants' departures had absolutely nothing to do with low morale.

It is also significant and noteworthy that the survey actually highlighted that 61% of the Doctors polled did not feel low on morale; a statistic that clearly did not suit the Opposition's disingenuous narrative and which they conspicuously failed to highlight in their extremely short Press Release. The Opposition either knew of this fact and decided to hide it from the electorate or, they did not have a clue, but decided to issue a Press Release anyway, clearly politically designed to create panic.

In addition to the formal appointments of clinicians to statutory boards with full voting rights, as the GHA has already explained, the GHA notes that the Medical Advisory Committee (MAC), a statutory body established in law and which had been ignored by the previous administration, has been re-established. There have already been 3 meetings this year.



Furthermore, the MAC has been actively advising the GHA management on important medical matters. The MAC was recently involved in advising the GHA with reference to restructuring of the post of Medical Director. The GHA management, CEO and Minister fully supported this initiative and agreed on the way forward. The GHA, therefore, now have a new Medical Director with more time allocated to Director duties and, crucially, supported by a Deputy Medical Director.

Further examples of formal clinical management positions in the organisation:

- Accident & Emergencies: lead.
- Diagnostics (Pathology & Radiology): lead.
- ITU & Anaesthesia.
- Surgical Department: lead.
- Medical Department: lead.
- Three GPs at Primary Care.

Further, as part of the wider push to improve clinical practice and governance, it has been this Government, and not the Opposition in its 16-year tenure, which has been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements in medical regulation and appraisal. This will ensure our medical staff achieve the standards set by the UK General Medical Council supported by Wessex Appraisal Services UK contracted to facilitate this process.

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Hon Neil F Costa MP, said: “Another week, another unsurprising, yet lamentable, attempt by the Opposition to score cheap political points. Whereas I will be the first to say that my Ministry and GHA Management have a lot of work to do, it is incontrovertible that the GHA I inherit is a much improved and much better managed service than when we first came into Government in 2011. I intend to leave no stone unturned and spare no effort in ensuring that I build on my predecessor’s formidable legacy and improve where we can the quality of the services we deliver. I am currently engaging as widely and thoroughly as possible with all stakeholders to make sure that we get things exactly right.”