



PRESS RELEASE

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Elderly Residential Services announces standardised dementia-friendly environments

The Ministry for Health, Care and Justice and the Elderly Residential Services are pleased, and proud, in equal measure, to announce that standardised dementia-friendly environments will be introduced throughout all of its Elderly Residential Services sites.

By working in conjunction with the Gibraltar Alzheimer's and Dementia Society (GADS), the Health Ministry and Elderly Residential Services will embark on a programme of adaptations, improvements and developments to ensure that those living with dementia, along with their families and carers, are supported and able to function as part of the community.

Adaptations to the environment will include the use of colour coding and signage, placing illustrated directional signs at eye level and painting doors a different colour. Taking such simple steps as these will have a very positive impact to the daily lives of those living with dementia, as it will help them to experience feelings of familiarity and personal value, improving their quality of life and those of their relatives and loved ones.

Mrs Daphne Alcantara, GADS Chairperson said, "The Gibraltar Alzheimer's & Dementia Society welcomes Minister Neil Costa's commitment to standardising dementia-friendly environments, as this will have a positive impact and improve the wellbeing of people living with dementia in our community. Whether a person is living at home, in hospital, or in residential care, everyone is entitled to the right care, at the right place, at the right time; simple dementia-friendly adaptations to the environment will ensure that people with dementia can have dignified care and the best possible quality of life. Also, when a person living with dementia can no longer live at home, their families should have the peace of mind that their loved ones are in the best facilities and not have to worry whether they go to one residential home or another".

Elderly Residential Services Manager, Ms Susan Vallejo said; "Over the past years, great strides have been taken in better understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia. Adaptations such as those in which we are embarking, should have a very positive effect on the daily lives of our service users living with dementia and will help to improve their orientation.

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP added, "This is a fantastic

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opportunity to raise awareness of dementia and to continue to educate the community in how best we can help those living with this illness. Reforms such as these gives us great pleasure and satisfaction, as we can see, first hand, the positive impact they have on the lives of our loved ones.”