



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **GHA to offer locally delivered BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice in partnership with Oxford Brookes University**

The GHA will be working in partnership with Oxford Brookes University to offer a Gibraltar-based BSc (Hons) in Operating Department Practice. A delegation from Oxford Brookes University, a range of GHA Clinicians and the School of Health Studies Gibraltar, have met to discuss arrangements to take forward this new initiative forward. This exciting and challenging programme will be accredited by the Health and Care Professions Council, (HCPC). Once students graduate, they can apply to register with the HCPC immediately and start work as a fully qualified Operating Department Practitioner. The three-year full time Degree will be run in Gibraltar, commencing in January 2019, with staff from across the GHA enrolling on to the programme.

Those selected to undertake the programme will be required to demonstrate maturity and a high level of personal commitment alongside excellent communication skills. The programme offers a unique opportunity for GHA staff to develop their knowledge and clinical skills that are needed to deliver high quality care to those undergoing surgery. Students will gain a range of experiences in the operating theatre environment and associated clinical areas within the hospital setting. As a member of the operating theatre team, staff will work alongside medical and other health care professionals.

Dr Astrid Schloerscheidt, Pro Vice-Chancellor Dean Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at Oxford Brookes University said she was delighted to be entering into this relationship with the GHA: "Working in partnership with the GHA will provide the opportunity to ensure that the programme of study is robust, fit for purpose and staff will be fit for practice reflecting the needs of not only the GHA but also the needs of the people of Gibraltar."

Mr Nigel Conway, Programme Lead, spoke of the relationship between the GHA and Oxford Brookes University: "There are a number of excellent opportunities for both organisations to come together and develop a BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice. Meeting clinicians in the GHA has provided us with some insight as to how we can tailor the needs of the local workforce ensuring that personal professional aspirations are met. We are very excited with the prospect of working with the GHA in exploring a range of possibilities to ensure that the programme offers staff numerous learning opportunities."

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Dr Ron Coram, Principal of the School of Health Studies added: “Providing a Gibraltar-based programme of study, enables us to develop our own local staff to provide local services that are responsive to local needs. This programme will recognise the unique needs of students, producing professionals who can perform effectively in the dynamic and ever changing field of health care, transforming patient and service outcomes at a local level.”

The Acting Chief Minister, the Hon Neil F. Costa MP, said he was pleased to be working with Oxford Brookes University on this new venture, commenting: “This is the first time that Operating Department Practitioners have been trained in Gibraltar. Oxford Brookes University have a proven track record of providing programmes of study for a range of health and social organisations, nationally and internationally. The BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice programme is relevant, up-to-date and closely in touch with innovation in the field of perioperative care. It will make a crucial contribution to the design and management of services now and for the future. I am delighted that we have secured this programme that will be delivered in Gibraltar. This offers a wonderful opportunity to staff members who wish to develop further in their careers, but may not have been able to study abroad due to different circumstances, such as family commitments.”