



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Domiciliary Care Services

One of the factors that impinges most on persons as they get older is the loss of independence. Being able to remain independent enables a sense of achievement which in turn generates a sense of self-worth as well as dignity, control, and fulfilment. This is something that Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar values and promotes in the development of its services to the community; examples of this are Bella Vista Day Centre for persons with dementia, opened in January 2017, and the Waterport Day Centre, opened in January 2014. These are services of which this Government is proud, and which support vulnerable persons in maintaining their independence and be able to continue to live in their own homes.

Another area in which this Government has invested heavily has been the domiciliary care service. Domiciliary care is an invaluable free service that the Care Agency provides to persons, over the age of 60 years, who still live in their own homes and require additional support; this allows them to maintain their independence and quality of life.

Within the domiciliary care service, there is also provision for home support. This service provides assistance to persons who require support with basic daily living activities, without which they would not be able to maintain links with the community. This service assists families in managing difficult situations with dignity.

In continuing to develop its services, the Care Agency introduced a hospital social work service in St Bernard's Hospital. Hospital social workers and health professionals, work in conjunction, assessing patients in hospital and arranging packages of care for those persons ready for discharge. In 2017 alone, a total of 109 patients have been discharged from hospital with packages of care.

Domiciliary care has been instrumental in enabling persons to remain living in the community for longer, before requiring residential care. It has also reduced the number of 'long-stay' patients in hospital by providing support to persons who were ready for discharge, but unable to live at home without support. Additionally, home support has provided independence to persons with complex conditions helping to improve their quality of life.



Natalie Tavares, CEO for the Care Agency said: “By providing these services, the Care Agency ensures the well-being, both physically and emotionally, of its service users and their families. Domiciliary care enables persons to remain independent for as long as possible. It enables them to keep in contact with friends and the community, and this in turn generates a better quality of life. Both, health professionals and community social workers, continue to assess those requiring packages of care, and review those already in place, so as to ensure the seamless continuity of this important service.”

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Hon Neil F. Costa was happy with the service, commenting: “I have worked very closely with the Care Agency in the last eighteen months to ensure the development of domiciliary care services. It is of great importance to Government that those who are vulnerable within our community are properly cared for and are offered the right support. We have demonstrated our commitment in this area with the significant increase in recipients of domiciliary care. We will continue to work diligently to ensure that those in need continue to enjoy this service, which undoubtedly has a positive impact in their lives and the lives of their love ones.”