



PRESS RELEASE

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New GHA Child and Adolescent Psychology Service for Gibraltar to commence in January 2019

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Hon Neil F. Costa MP is pleased to announce that the Gibraltar Health Authority's first-ever dedicated Child and Adolescent Psychology Service will commence in January 2019. This psychology service represents a Gibraltar-specific format based on the NHS's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, known as CAMHS. This important announcement is timed to coincide with World Mental Health Day.

The much needed service, which has been the focus of representations by various charities and associations concerned with mental health, will be able to meet the mental health needs of children and their families in the community. The two clinical psychologists will be tasked with the development of a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency child & adolescent mental health service for Gibraltar, in the form of a new Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology Service.

Mr Costa said that the introduction of the new service, which has been the product of advice and work by the GHA Mental Health Team and his Ministry over the last 18 months, reflects the GSLP-Liberal Government's enduring commitment to the continued expansion and modernisation of professional mental health services in the community. The new service, specifically, draws attention to the essential need to provide clinical services for children as part of a comprehensive community mental health programme.

The Child Psychology Team will be an integral part of the GHA Paediatric Neurodisability service to ensure that all children, especially those with additional needs, are afforded timely and effective professional mental health care by the relevant professionals. The Team will also assist in the development of locally relevant, individualised care plans for children and their families.

In the context of World Mental Health Day, it is important to note that:

1. in percentage terms, the level of investment in Gibraltar's Mental Health has increased materially from almost 2% of the overall GHA budget in 2011/12 to over 6% in 2018;
2. since April of this year, the complement of Consultant Psychiatrists was increased from 3.5

Ministry of Health, Care and Justice

HM Government of Gibraltar • Zone 1, Level 7 St Bernard's Hospital, Harbour Views Road • Gibraltar GX11 1AA

t +350 20007011 (Centrex 2027) f +350 20059942 e ministry@gha.gi w gibraltar.gov.gi



to 4.5 full time posts. Of these posts, 2.5 are currently filled by substantive employees. Of the two remaining full time posts, one is being filled on a locum basis, until the commencement of the substantive post-holder on 7th January 2019; and one has been re-advertised as the successful candidate subsequently turned down the offer of employment. This latter post is also being covered on a locum basis;

3. since 2011, the number of Registered Mental Health Nurses has increased by three and Mental Welfare Officers have increased from two to three. The recruitment process for a fourth is currently underway;
4. since 2011, the total staff numbers in all areas of Mental Health has increased by 30%, since the GSLP/LIB came into office in December 2011. In nursing only, numbers have increased in all grades from December 2011 to date: Sister/Charge Nurses from 5 to 7, Registered Mental Nurses from 28 to 31, Enrolled Nurses from 12 to 22 and Nursing Assistants from 15 to 16;
5. clinical psychologist posts have doubled from two to four;
6. since 2014, the GHA has employed a dedicated General Manager to oversee the Mental Health Service;
7. in 2015, the Government opened Ocean Views Mental Hospital, providing 52 beds over five wards as a replacement to the appalling KGV;
8. in 2017, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar inaugurated the Bella Vista Day Centre and Hillside Residential Home to assist those in the community living with Alzheimer's and Dementia;
9. also in 2017, the GHA provided a two bedroomed flat, where former Ocean Views in-patients are supported in re-integrating into society and being able to live independently;
10. the GHA has also engaged the services of a second opinion additional Consultant Psychiatrist;
11. in June 2017, the GHA expanded community mental health services, with after hours and weekend nursing support and a crisis telephone line for known patients. Our partnership with Clubhouse Gibraltar, GibSams and the Mental Welfare Society, provide greater assistance to the more vulnerable persons; and
12. when the new Primary Care Centre opens, mental welfare and counselling services will be doubled.

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa said: "The provision of mental health care in Gibraltar has, rightly, increased since we came into office. There have been well-documented radical improvements in the past seven years. The commencement of this valuable new child psychology and adolescent clinic is further testament of the importance my colleagues and I attach to mental health issues, to the care of the most vulnerable persons and to our community-centred approach to mental health. I would also like to sincerely thank the



Gibraltar Mental Welfare Society, Gibraltar Clubhouse and GibSams for their partnership, hard work and valuable advice. My Ministry, the GHA and I will continue to strive to ensure that all children can grow up healthily and in a happy environment. I can think of few projects more important and worthwhile than to secure all our community's children's wellbeing."