



## PRESS RELEASE

No: 157/2019

Date: 5th March 2019

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### **GHA Strengthens Children Services**

The Gibraltar Health Authority (GHA) is delighted to announce three significant appointments, over the past twelve months, to further improve the provision of children health services in Gibraltar. Three new Consultant Paediatricians have commenced employment in February, October and December of 2018 respectively.

Consultant Paediatricians are secondary care specialist doctors, who provide specialist hospital-based medical care to infants, children and adolescents. To become Consultant Paediatricians, doctors are required to complete a minimum of seven to eight years of additional specialist training after attaining the first medical degree. Some Consultants are sub-specialty specialists and would have spent even more time in further post-graduate training.

Dr Lorena Soler Casale qualified in Argentina and engaged in extensive sub-specialty training in Neonatal & Perinatal Medicine in Canada and Australia. She brings with her a wealth of relevant clinical and managerial experience, having single-handedly set up and led the Neonatal service at the Turks and Caicos Islands prior to joining the Enhanced GHA Paediatric Service.

Dr Sarra Ahmed is a consultant specialist in Acute General Paediatrics. She has sub-specialty expertise in the fields of Paediatric Diabetes, Endocrinology and Gastroenterology, gained through direct clinical experience in tertiary referral centres in the UK, such as Great Ormond Street Hospital and The Evelina Children's Hospital.

Dr Sen has over 28 years of clinical experience from his professional time in India and UK. His sub-specialty interests are Paediatric Respiratory Medicine (including Cystic fibrosis) and Paediatric Allergy and he worked closely with Manchester Children's Hospital and Alder Hey Hospital, Liverpool. He is also an appointed Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health examiner.

These new consultant appointments have come at an exciting and transitional period for children health services in Gibraltar, and complement the scheduled inauguration, later in the year, of the Children's Development and Neuro-disability Service. The service will be based at the Paediatric Community Health Centre (PCHC), where the recently commenced Gibraltar Child and Adolescent

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Mental Health Services will also eventually be based. All of these developments will form the first chapters of an enhanced GHA Paediatric Service.

Dr Annie Dai, Consultant Paediatrician and Clinical Lead of the GHA's Paediatric Service, commented: "The new team will work together to future-proof Paediatrics for Gibraltar, by affording wide-ranging specialist availability at a local level, improving accessibility of service to the most vulnerable, and continuing to lead in Gibraltar's efforts to help our children grow up to be healthy, happy and productive individuals of a future that we can all be proud of."

The GHA's Medical Director, Dr Daniel Cassaglia, said: "The new Paediatric Community Health Centre due to open in 2019 marks the beginning of an expansion and strengthening of children health services that will be felt for generations to come and putting the child and family at the center of the service. The recruitment of highly experienced and skilled consultant paediatricians is an integral part of this service development."

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP added: "I would like to sincerely welcome Dr Soler Casale, Dr Ahmed, and Dr Sen to the GHA family. I am extremely pleased with the progress we have made in terms of children services; an integral part of our health services. These developments further corroborate Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar's unwavering commitment to providing our cherished children and young persons, with the very best health care services. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank my Medical Director and Consultant Paediatrician, Dr Daniel Cassaglia and Lead Consultant Paediatrician, Dr Annie Dai and our fantastic team Human Resources department, for their excellent work."