

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION 96/2007

23 October 2007

The Opposition has received complaints from several pensioners about the form they are being required to fill by the International Health Clinic when applying for a Gibraltar Health Authority, Health Card.

"It appears that Government now require pensioners to supply details of their personal income before granting the Health Card which they have a right to independent of the income they might have. To add insult to injury these pensioners are being asked to sign a paragraph authorising the Commissioner of Income Tax to reveal information about their income," said Shadow Minister for Health Neil Costa.

The Opposition received one complaint a year ago but thought that the person had been given an incorrect form to fill in and did not take the issue further since the details had already been supplied by the individual concerned.

The latest complainant was asked by the Opposition to return to the Health Clinic to make sure the correct form had been provided to them. The person did this and confirmed that a notice placed in front of this particular form says it is for pensioners, the unemployed and persons with low income.

"The Opposition wants to make it clear that neither the Health Authority nor the Government have any right whatsoever to question pensioners about their personal income before agreeing to grant them a Health Card which is theirs by right. Less so should they be subjected to giving authorisation to the Commissioner of Income Tax to reveal details of their income.

The Health Authority should immediately withdraw this form for pensioners and substitute it for an appropriate one," said Mr Costa.

ENDS