

# **STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION**

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The answers given by the Government to questions about the Dr Giraldi Home at the last meeting of Parliament, can be seen as an admission that it has failed in its duty of care towards some of the most vulnerable members of our society. The ultimate authority who is the Minister must be held politically accountable for what has happened.

In answer to questions on the Social Services Agency by Shadow Minister Neil Costa regarding allegations made in respect of the treatment of persons with disabilities, it was admitted that an investigation had occurred when a medication disappeared and was not found to be in the appropriate drugs cupboard under lock and key.

A search by members of staff failed to locate its whereabouts and sometime later it was “found” and “produced” by the acting flat senior. The approach of the Government in the answer given implies that as long as the missing medicine eventually materialized everything was all right.

This is not an isolated incident, there have been many allegations about inadequate controls over medication, mistake in doses given to persons with disabilities and lack of properly qualified staff to handle the administration to residents, of prescribed drugs.

These allegations have never been denied or properly investigated.

A disabled person resident in one of the homes run by the Agency is entitled to the same safety standards in the administration of

medication as any patient that is given the equivalent medication in the Health Service.

To provide an inferior level of protection and thus fail to ensure an adequate procedure in the administration of medicines is tantamount to discrimination, against those with disabilities, which is prohibited by law.

In the UK there is a legal requirement for homes that have persons in their care, whether with disability or otherwise, to adhere to specified standards in the procedures followed for providing medication.

In the GHA there have always been clear guidelines as to the level of qualification and the grade of staff entrusted with the responsibility for administering drugs to patients and for the security of the storage and disposal of prescription drugs.

This does not appear to be the case in the homes run by the Agency and this means that vulnerable persons with disabilities, who may be in no position to question whether the medication they receive is correct, are being put at serious risk and no action has been taken over the alleged incidents that have occurred in the past. The Opposition consider that these are very serious issues and there has been no indication that anything has been done to put in place measures to prevent a repetition.

ENDS