



Pharmacy Council
MALTA

ANNUAL REPORT

2009

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INDEX

1.	Foreword by the President of the Council	Page 3
2.	Composition of the Pharmacy Council	4
3.	Meetings and Attendances	5
4.	Sub-Committees of the Pharmacy Council	6
5.	Registers	8
6.	New Registrations	11
7.	Mutual Recognition of Qualifications Designated Authorities Conference	11
8.	EU Twinning 'light' Project for the Health Care Professionals' Competent Authorities on the Free Movement of Health Care Professionals	12
9.	Disciplinary action procedures	12
10.	Ceremony for the awarding of licences to Pharmacists	13
11.	Meetings held with different authorities	14
12.	Main achievements and Future Projects	15

1. Foreword by the President of the Pharmacy Council

Over the past year, my first full year as President of this Council, we have seen that a lot of important work has been carried out, and other projects initiated for the future.

The Council has recognised the need of being pro-active in the field of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), and to that end, has during 2009, nominated a sub-committee entrusted with further study on the possibility of introducing CPD in a structured role for pharmacists. Ethical behaviour is also high on our agenda, and it is worth highlighting that the sub-committee entrusted with the drafting of a new Code of Ethics for the Pharmaceutical Profession has continued its sterling work on this project. The Council also recognized the need for the drawing up of areas of specialization within the profession, and to that end we have again embarked on a project, whereby a sub-committee has been tasked with the study of the way forward in this regard

Following the successful conclusion of the EU Twinning 'light' Project for the Health Care Professionals' Competent Authorities on the Free Movement of Health Care Professionals we now have a manual of Standard Operating Procedures which has a systematic, transparent and consistent pattern. We have also participated in the exercise to have the necessary changes done to Maltese legislation to bring it in line with European Law.

So, 2009 has proven to be a very busy year. Allow me to close with a final word of welcome to the twenty new pharmacists who were registered in December. The rhythm of work with which the Council functioned over the 2009 augurs well for the next year, when we hope to see what we have initiated this year develop further and come to fruition.

Dr. Victor Scerri LL.D
President

2. Composition of the Pharmacy Council – Appointments and Elections

President Appointed by the Prime Minister:

Dr. Victor Scerri LL.D.

Pharmacist Appointed by the Prime Minister:

L-Ispizjara* Dr Patricia Vella Bonanno, B.Pharm (Hons.), MSc, PhD

Pharmacist Appointed by the University of Malta:

L-Ispizjara Dr. Maria Cordina B.Pharm (Hons.), PhD (QUB) Dip. Health Out. Res.

Pharmacy Technician Appointed by the Prime Minister:

Mr. Saviour Campbell

Elected by Pharmacists:

L-Ispizjar Jurgen Azzopardi B.Pharm (Hons.)
L-Ispizjar David Camilleri B.Pharm (Hons.), MSc
L-Ispizjara Mary Anne Ciappara B.Pharm, M. Phil
L-Ispizjara Marisa Dalli B.Pharm,
Ispizjar Anthony Sammut B.Pharm (Hons.), MA (Dip. Studies),

Elected by Pharmacy Technicians:

Mr. Michael Bajada
Mr. Jonathan De Bon Dip. Soc. Std. (O.H.S.)

Lay Persons Appointed by the Prime Minister:

Mr. Noel Borg Hedley
Mr. Ray Cassar

Registrar

Mr. Joseph Busuttil B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Mangt. St.

* The title l-Ispizjar/a means Pharmacist.

3. Meetings and Attendances

i. During 2009 the Council held eleven (11) Council meetings of an administrative nature. The first Council meeting was held on the 27th. January 2009.

ii.

Member	Attended	Excused	Absent
Dr. Victor Scerri	11	0	0
L-Ispizjar Jurgen Azzopardi	8	2	1
Mr. Michael Bajada	9	1	1
Mr. Noel Borg Hedley	9	3	0
Mr. Saviour Campbell*	4	2	2
L-Ispizjar David Camilleri	9	1	1
Mr. Ray Cassar	8	3	0
L-Ispizjara Mary Anne Ciappara	8	2	1
L-Ispizjara Dr. Maria Cordina	9	2	0
L-Ispizjara Marisa Dalli	7	2	2
Mr. Jonathan De Bon	10	1	0
Mr. Anthony Sammut**	1	10	0
L-Ispizjara Dr. Patricia Vella Bonanno	7	4	0

* Mr. Campbell attends the Council meetings when issues regarding Pharmacy Technicians will be discussed.

** Mr. Anthony Sammut was excused from meetings due to health reasons.

4. Sub-committees of the Pharmacy Council

4.1 Sub-committee on Pharmacy Technicians' Education and recognition

The monitoring committee is composed of 3 members assisted by the Registrar. The members are Mr. Jonathan De Bon, l-Ispizjara Mary Anne Sant Fournier and l-Ispizjar Dr. Anton Theuma.

The Council entrusted the committee with regularly monitoring the course throughout the year so that a quality student output is ensured. The sub-committee held regular meetings with officials from the Institute of Community Services at MCAST. This committee also monitored the examination papers as well as the answers given by the students.

The Council also entrusted the sub-committee to identify possible developments to the course. The committee is currently discussing a new course structure together with MCAST. The aim is to give the course more structure and a more solid weighting whilst also obtaining recognition from BTEC.

4.2 Sub-committee to draft a new Code of Ethics

This sub-committee was composed of l-Ispizjara Mary Ann Ciappara (Chairperson), l-Ispizjar Anthony Sammut, l-Ispizjar Jurgen Azzopardi and Mr. Jonathan De Bon. The sub-committee had been entrusted with the drafting of a new Code of Ethics for the Pharmaceutical Profession and to consult with stakeholders on this document.

4.3 Sub-committee on prescribing rights

This sub-committee is composed of 1-Ispizjara Dr. Patricia Vella Bonanno (Chairperson), 1-Ispizjara Dr. Maria Cordina, 1-Ispizjara Marisa Dalli, 1-Ispizjar Anthony Sammut and 1-Ispizjara Valerie Vella.

4.4 Sub-committee on Continuous Professional Development

The Council nominated a sub-committee on Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This sub-committee is entrusted to study the possibility of structuring CPD for pharmacists regulated by the Council. This is composed by 1-Ispizjara Mary Anne Ciappara (Chairperson), 1-Ispizjar Jurgen Azzopardi, 1-Ispizjar Dr. Maria Cordina, Mr. Jonathan De Bon and 1-Ispizjar Anthony Sammut. This sub-committee was also entrusted with the task of studying the possibility of introducing formal CPD requirements and associate these to the registration process in Malta in the future. The subcommittee is assessing the situation in other professions in Malta, and in the pharmacy profession both in the EU and internationally.

4.5 Sub-committee on Pharmacy Specialities

This sub-committee was constituted to study the need to have a specialist register for pharmacists. This sub-committee was given the task to assess the situation in other member states and also third countries such as the USA and Australia and make recommendations to the Council. This sub-committee is composed of 1-Ispizjara Dr. Maria Cordina (Chairperson), 1-Ispizjara Mary Anne Ciappara, 1-Ispizjara Marisa Dalli, 1-Ispizjar Dr. Claude Farrugia, 1-

Ispizjara Marise Gauci, l-Ispizjara Lilian Wismayer, and l-Ispizjara Mary Anne Sant Fournier. The aim of the sub-committee is to first establish the definition of specialist in pharmacy whilst also identifying activities which have the potential to develop into specialities.

4.6 Sub-committee to study applications for recognition of professional qualifications not in compliance with EU Directives or which were awarded by third countries

The members of this sub-committee are l-Ispizjara Dr. Maria Cordina, l-Ispizjara Mary Anne Ciappara, l-Ispizjar David Camilleri and l-Ispizjara Prof. Lilian Azzopardi. The task of this sub-committee is to compare such qualifications with the course offered at the University of Malta in order to identify any differences and thus offer compensatory measures to the applicant. In 2009 the sub-committee concluded the evaluation of 3 applications and subsequently offered the applicants compensatory measures to bring their qualification in line with the Maltese qualification. Currently the Council has two pending applications for evaluation by this sub-committee.

4.7 Sub-committee on the Roles of Pharmacy Technicians

The sub-committee is composed of l-Ispizjar Jurgen Azzopardi (Chairperson), l-Ispizjara Mary Anne Sant Fournier, l-Ispizjar Javier Fenech and Mr. Mario Saliba and Ms. Mariella Attard as Pharmacy Technicians.

5. Registers

In 2009 the Council continuously updated its Registers through information sent by Pharmacists who made changes to their entry.

The Council also received the renewal forms from pharmacists who renewed their registration for 2010-2011. Through this process of renewal, the Council updated its registers and also its registers according to the special areas of practice of pharmacists.

i. Pharmacists

The Register of Pharmacists is comprised of the names, localities, registrable qualifications, date and number of registration of Pharmacists. The number of registered Pharmacists in the EU List by the end of 2009 stood at 659. This includes the 20 new Pharmacists registered in December.

The Registers according to the areas of practice are composed as follows:

Area of Practice	Total	Male	Female
Community Pharmacists	166	61	105
Hospital Pharmacists	63	22	41
Importation and Wholesale Dealing	139	68	71
Industry	79	35	44
Regulatory Affairs/Medicines Authority	13	6	7
Other Areas of Practice	57	26	31

N. B. Please note that this data is based on the information given by those Pharmacists who renewed their registration and who returned all their forms duly filled.

The data above is based on the pharmacists' full-time employment.

With regards to Pharmacists working in other Areas out of the 57, 9 work as Academics at the University of Malta, 11 work in medicines procurement, 3 in Pharmaceutical Policy and 5 in Research. The rest work in other areas of practice.

ii. Pharmacy Technicians

The Register of Pharmacy Technicians is comprised of the names, localities, date and number of registration of Pharmacy Technicians. The number of registered Pharmacy Technicians by the end of 2009 stood at 427. This included 7 new Pharmacy Technicians who qualified from MCAST.

iii. Temporary Register of Pharmacists

The Temporary Register of Pharmacists is comprised of the names, localities, registrable qualifications, date, period of validity and number of registration of Pharmacists who did not yet receive their certificate. The number of temporary registered Pharmacists at the end of 2009 stood at 20. All of these were registered in the register of Pharmacists before the end of the year.

iv. Temporary Register of Pharmacists for non-EU nationals

This register lists those persons, who have graduated from the University of Malta or whose qualification is listed in Part III of the Second Schedule of the Health Care Professions Act or any qualification recognised by the Pharmacy Council, but are not EU nationals. These are given a temporary registration of not more than two years but are not given a Licence to practice in Malta since they

do not fulfill all the necessary conditions laid down by the Health Care Professions Act. By the end of 2009 there were two pharmacists registered in this register.

6. New Registrations

- i. In 2009 the Pharmacy Council registered 20 Pharmacists in the Temporary Register of Pharmacists. The validity of these temporary registrations was until the 31st. December 2009 in accordance with Article 17(4) of the Health Care Professions Act (Cap. 464 of the Laws of Malta.). In December 2009 the Council registered 20 new Pharmacists in the Register of Pharmacists.
- ii. In addition, the Pharmacy Council also registered 2 Pharmacists who graduated in Malta in 2008 but still had not yet applied for their Permanent registration.
- iii. The Council registered 7 Pharmacy Technicians in the Register of Pharmacy Technicians.

7. Mutual Recognition of Qualifications Designated Authorities Conference

The Malta Qualifications Council organized the fourth conference for the designated authorities in Malta. This conference, which was held on Wednesday 4th November 2009, gathered all the professions to discuss matters of common interest, legislation and also to share problems.

The aim of this conference is to:

- facilitate and promote uniform application of the Act and related regulations

- co-ordinate the activities of the designated authorities
- ensure the timely dissemination of information on matters governed by the act and regulations.

At this conference the Council was represented by the Registrar.

8. *EU Twinning ‘light’ Project for the Health Care Professionals’ Competent Authorities on the Free Movement of Health Care Professionals*

In January 2009, the EU Twinning ‘light’ Project for the Health Care Professionals’ Competent Authorities on the Free Movement of Health Care Professionals was concluded after eight months of intensive work from all the Councils involved including the Pharmacy Council. The main achievement of this project was a manual of standard Operating Procedures. The manual reflects the Regulatory Councils’ desire to ensure that their role in the mutual recognition of professional qualifications follows a systematic, transparent and consistent pattern.

This project also identified and proposed changes needed to the Maltese legislation to bring it in line with the directive. This project ultimately provided the necessary training and expertise to the Council with regards to the interpretation and implementation of Directive 2005/36/EC.

9. *Disciplinary Action Procedures*

The Chairperson of this Committee is lawyer Dr. Francesco Depasquale. The permanent members of this committee are l-Ispizjar Reginald Fava, l-Ispizjar Mario Barbara and Ms. Mary Rose Zammit. The sub-committee also has a reserve list of members who are called to the committee according to the case concerned.

In 2009 the Pharmacy Council referred 2 cases to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee also has one pending case before it from 2008. The inquiries into these cases are currently underway.

The Council also dealt with other complaints related to Pharmacists which were not sent to the Disciplinary Action Committee. In one instance the Council requested the complainant to forward the complaint under oath whilst in another instance the Council felt that there weren't enough grounds to forward the case to the Disciplinary Committee.

10. Ceremony for the awarding of licences to Pharmacists

In 2009 the Council organized the ceremony for the awarding of licences to practice pharmacy to newly registered Pharmacists. This ceremony was presided by the Hon. Dr. Joe Cassar, Parliamentary Secretary for Health, the Elderly and Community Care. The President of the Council presented the new pharmacists with their registration certificate and professional card. At the end of the ceremony the Pharmacists took their professional oath. The Pharmacist oath was written in 2008 and was based on Hippocratic Oath and developed to take into consideration developments in the profession, and patients' rights.

In another ceremony, Hon. Dr. Joe Cassar presented the certificates of registration to the newly qualified pharmacy technicians who graduated from the first MCAST course for Pharmacy Technicians.

11. Meetings held with different authorities

11.1 Meeting held between the Council, the Ministry of Education

and the EU-Directorate OPM: The President and the Registrar attended a meeting at the Ministry of Education on Monday 16th March 2009 to discuss the issue of the compliance of the B. Pharm course with the EU directives. During this meeting it was agreed that the issue should be shelved due to recent correspondence from the EU Commission confirming that only courses after 1st May 2004 will be declared compliant. During this meeting it was also agreed that the Council together with the EU-Directorate of the Office of the Prime Minister will be monitoring the pending applications with other EU competent authorities of Maltese citizens whose course is not in compliance with the Directive and who do not benefit from acquired rights.

11.2 Meeting with Dr. James Calleja – CEO of the Malta

Qualifications Council: On Friday 15th May 2009, the Registrar together with the other Registrars of the Regulatory Councils met Dr. James Calleja, CEO of the Malta Qualifications Council. This meeting was one of orientation for Dr. Calleja as the newly appointed CEO. During this meeting each Council gave a brief presentation of what each represents whilst also presenting some problems which the Councils face with regards to the recognition of professional qualifications.

11.3 Meeting with the Registrar of the University of Malta:

the Registrar together with a delegation from the Council, namely 1-ispizjara Dr. Maria Cordina, 1-ispizjar Mr. David Camilleri and 1-ispizjara Mary Anne Ciappara met the Registrar of the University of Malta Ms. Veronica Grech together with 1-ispizjara Prof. Lilian M. Azzopardi, Head of the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Malta. This meeting was to discuss the issue of compensatory

measures for EU and non-EU applicants. An agreement was reached for these compensatory measures to be undertaken by University.

12. Main Achievements and Future Projects

During 2009, the Council continued to express its opinion or position on various issues which concerned the pharmaceutical profession even if some of these issues were not directly within its regulatory jurisdiction.

One of the main aims for the future is to review the various legal notices which affect the Council and the regulation of the profession. The Council will also be focusing on concluding work pursued in the various sub-committees.

In early 2010, the Council will be undergoing changes in its composition since the elections for members on the Council are due to be held. Furthermore in 2010 the Council will be finalizing the register of Qualified Persons.

**Joseph Busuttil B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Mangt. St.
REGISTRAR**