

MCFD AGM 2016: secretary's report April 2015 – May 2016

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The experience for us as part of the council of the Malta College of Family Doctors and as Honorary Secretary has continued its learning curve during the past year. In this we have the assistance of Ms. Lorraine Gauci at the MCFD Secretariat. A copy of material that passes through MCFD Council is retained at the MCFD Secretariat as a “soft copy” and as a “hard copy”.

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A) INTERNAL STRUCTURE

1. VO/0973

MCFD is a Non-Governmental Organisation with the Commissioner of Voluntary Organisations with VO Number VO/0973. All this places the rights and responsibilities of MCFD within a regulated framework. Members can refer to the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations or check on website www.voluntaryorganisations.gov.mt. Funds exist for Voluntary Organisations working alone or in partnership with other VOs, but MCFD has not to date taken up the opportunity.

2. MCFD Council 2013-15

Four Council Meetings took place during this time: 23.04.15; 13.07.15; 06.10.15; and 18.11.15. The members of the council were: Prof. Pierre Mallia (President), Dr. Philip Sciortino (Vice-President), Dr. Tanya van Avendonk (Treasurer and Events Co-ordinator), Dr. Adrian Micallef (Registrar), Dr. Doreen Cassar (Education Secretary), Dr. Jason Bonnici (Secretary), Dr. Marco Grech (Assessment Lead and Assistant Secretary), Dr. Jean-Pierre Cauchi (officer co-ordinating revision of statutes), Dr Edward Zammit (officer involved in Continued Medical Education activities), Dr. Daryl Xuereb (officer involved in Continued Medical Education activities) and Dr Jan Chircop. Dr Jan Chircop resigned in October 2015. Through the provisions of the statutes approved during AGM 2013, one of Dr. Anne-Marie Scerri and Dr. Martina Falzon was assistant officer on behalf of the GP Trainees for a number of council meetings.

3. MCFD Council 2016-19

Elections took place in January 2016. New Council and their roles

- a. Prof Pierre Mallia – President (moved on from the role of President-Elect) and Editor of JMCFD
- b. Dr Philip Sciortino – Vice-President; officer in charge of CME activities
- c. Dr Edward Zammit – SAC Representative; CSA Lead; co-chair of the Education Secretary; assisting webmaster Jan van Avendonk in the IT changes
- d. Dr Daryl Xuereb – Honorary Treasurer
- e. Dr Natalie Psaila – co-chair of the Education Secretariat
- f. Dr Jason Bonnici – Hon. Secretary
- g. Dr Ann-Marie Scerri – GP Trainee representative; will be trained in the role of Registrar by outgoing registrar Dr Adrian Micallef.
- h. Dr Elanja Grech – GP Trainee representative.
- i. Dr Myriam Farrugia – co-opted with full voting rights.

Three Council Meetings took place during this time: 23.02.16; 29.03.16 and 24.05.16.

4. Changes to Statutes

The statutes as changed in the previous AGM have been implemented. Fellowship of the Malta College of Family Doctor has been conferred. The obligations of contractual agreements in case of a caretaker council have meant that the education subcommittee continued with its preparation for the GP Licensing Exam 2016.

5. Membership

The **membership database is being updated**. Office secretary Lorraine Gauci, Jan van Avendonk, previous registrar Dr Adrian Micallef and previous treasurer Dr Tania van Avendonk are compiling a spreadsheet that can be updated for membership according to attendance to CME and in respect to membership fees paid.

At the end of 2015, MCFD had 232 full members and 19 associate members who were fully paid. Continued MCFD membership linked to attaining CPD points may seem not worth enforcing as there is no utility for members but members need to keep in mind that accreditation in some form may come in at some point.

6. Honorary Fellowship of the Malta College of Family Doctors

The conferring of the Hon. FMCFD was done during an activity combined with the Graduation of the new FDs and the 25th Anniversary of MCFD in October 2015.

7. Premises

The realities of yearly GP Licensing examinations, possible future courses including MRCGP(Int) for GPs with grandfather clause and the CME activities mean a lot of time and energy is spent in finding suitable sites and shuffling dates to accommodate other bookings. The present council has aired the suggestion to search for premises dedicated to MCFD to cater for these and other future needs. **A suggestion was forwarded to the Ministry for Health for common premises for all medical colleges;** with a couple of exceptions there is consensus among colleges for this call. No definite proposal of site has been officially mentioned.

The previous council had aired the proposal to **submit interest with estate agents within the parameters of the required specifications and the current finances at disposal**. The present council is interested to continue along this path. Proposals brought forward would be discussed without commitment.

B) EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. The GP Licensing Examination

The house keeping done in respect to the GP Licensing Examination shows that a minute number of GPs are involved. More recruits are needed to free stretched volunteers to other efforts. A number of issues arose that meant that change in personnel occurred: the Assistant Leads took over the roles vacated by the previous Leads, but the latter continued to contribute as part of the team.

- **The tri-partite contract between MCFD-DH-RCGP is due for renewal.** The MRCGP(Int) gives respectability to our specialty. The contract needs to be renewed and for this MCFD needs the support of all GPs/FDs. MCFD has political direction to renew as per previous conditions.
- **The board responsible for seeing out the execution of the examination** is the remit of Dr Edward Zammit as Assessment Lead and CSA Lead, Dr Marco Grech as AKT Lead and Dr David Sammut as Examination Lead. Dr Edward Zammit and Dr Natalie Psaila as education co-chairs are responsible for seeing out the logistics of the examination.

- The **AKT Writers group** is made up of AKT Lead Dr. Marco Grech, AKT Assistant Lead Dr Myriam Farrugia and the following GPs: Dr. Alexia Harney, Dr. Edward Zammit, Dr Doreen Cassar, Dr Tania van Avendonk and Dr. Francis Borg. Producing good quality AKT questions in quantity annually is a challenge.
- The **CSA Writers group** is made up of CSA Lead Dr Edward Zammit and the following GPs: Dr. Doreen Cassar, Dr. Marco Grech, Dr. David Sammut, Dr. Myriam Farrugia, Dr. Alexia Harney, Dr. Tracy Lee Vidal, Dr. Fabrizia Azzopardi, Dr. Lynn Pace, Dr. Glen Micallef and Dr. Simone Deguara.
- There is currently no **Curriculum Group**.
- The **Psychometrics** in 2015 was done by statistician Dr Victor Martinelli. He will have the same role in 2016.
- Dr Tania van Avendonk, Dr Lynn Pace and Dr Miriam Farrugia are finishing the QA Report for 2015. A new team is needed for 2016. MCFD has contacted the University of Malta to see if this can be farmed out.

The preparations for the examination itself (set-up, personnel and logistics) took and to date still take a lot of time, effort and energy:

- meetings with training co-ordinators;
- on-site meetings with the officers responsible for the facilities where the separate parts of the examination take place (the written AKT part at the Medical School and the clinical CSA part at Qormi Health Centre);
- issuing calls for candidates, examiners, marshalls, AKT writers, CSA writers, and members of the Angoff team; and
- training sessions for the colleagues involved in all these processes.

We encourage colleagues who have received training on any of these processes to come forward and be part of the team. A particular appeal is to the graduands of the previous years, they who have been examinees a short while ago, to come forward and make the contributions they yearned for.

2. The Graduation Day for GPs

The graduation day of the new FDs was combined with the conferring of the Hon. FMCDF during an activity marking the 25th Anniversary of MCFD in October 2015.

3. Teachers' Course Nov-Dec 2015

First session took place at MCAST with 13 participants and 3 tutors. Second session is due at Tal-Virtu Seminary. Assignment was due on 6th January 2016. Another Teachers' Course is planned to take place in September and October 2016.

4. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Continued Medical Education (CME) Activities

The program of CPD for the paid up members of the MCFD remains its **main educational service for the members of the College**. It is the major point of contact with the general membership. Average attendance is of approximately 50 members.

The CME team is made up of Dr. Philip Sciortino, Dr. Tania van Avendonk, Dr Edward Zammit and Dr. Daryl Xuereb. The core team takes care of the academic, logistic and promotional aspects of the events. However, there is a wider number of people who provide secretarial, IT and administrative support.

The content is designed by balancing the **perceived needs** by the CPD team with the sponsorship opportunities. Sometimes the activity is co-organised with another professional body.

5. CPD for GP Trainers

An original offer by PHCD for a CPD for GP Trainers did not materialize into an activity. An alternative activity for GP Trainers was organized in November 2015 by the co-ordinators of the Specialist Training Programme for family doctors. PHCD has in 2016 submitted an improved offer for a CPD for GP Trainers. Three Tutors have submitted interest to MCFD to organize it. The ball has been set rolling to make this happen.

6. Training with the RCGP

Members of MCFD involved in running the GP Licensing Exam attended a run of the RCGP Licensing Exam in March 2016. The representatives were Dr Marco Grech, Dr Edward Zammit and Dr David Sammut.

7. APPEL-RCGP

The RCGP has set into motion its mechanism to render the MRCP(Int) by acquired experiential learning to those members of MCFD who cannot sit for the exam because of their previous commitments and who have contributed to family medicine in Malta. The necessary calls have been issued in May 2016.

C) COMMUNICATION

1. Journal of the Malta College of Family Doctors

The Journal continued its work thanks to the efforts of its Editorial Board: Prof. Pierre Mallia as Editor, Dr. Anton Bugeja and Dr. Mario Sammut as Assistant Editors and Dr. Glorianne Pullicino as member. Three issues per year are being printed and distributed to the membership. The latest issues of the JMCFD have been uploaded on OAR@UoM and are accessible via this link: <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/5332>

2. Media Project

MCFD has taken up a suggestion by APFD to submit a TV project depicting the work and role of the family doctor. All is in its premature stages and members interested to be involved are welcome. The College of Pharmacists may be involved too.

3. Webpage

MCFD webmaster Jan van Avendonk is responsible for updating the webpage and for sending the **email alerts**. The members who are not receiving the email alerts are invited to update the webmaster on contact@mcfcd.org.mt with the details of the email address. Assisted by Dr Edward Zammit a Dropbox address and the use of iCloud to store MCFD material is being undertaken.

D) INTERNATIONAL FORA

1. EUROPREV

MCFD participation in EUROPREV has been lacking since 2013. Any member who is interested to participate in this international forum is welcome to contact any council member to move things forward.

2. WONCA EUROPE (World Organisation of Family Doctors – Europe branch)

The MCFD Hon. Secretary attended the WONCA Europe meeting in July 2014 and October 2015, and has registered to attend the WONCA Europe meeting in June 2016. No attempts are being made to send a MCFD representative to the WONCA Europe meeting prior to the WONCA World meeting (where the new WONCA President will take the seat) in September 2016.

3. Vasco da Gama Movement

MCFD has put things in order with WONCA Europe so that if the GP Trainees want official participation in the Vasco da Gama Movement they can do so. Dr. Anne-Marie Scerri, one of the GP Trainee representatives, has presented to her colleagues what the movement is about. An open invitation is in place for the GP Trainees and the GPs who have graduated in the past 5 years to take this opportunity. None has been forthcoming to date.

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