

Malta Eczema Society (MES)

by **Michael Boffa**

Consultant Dermatologist & President, Malta Eczema Society

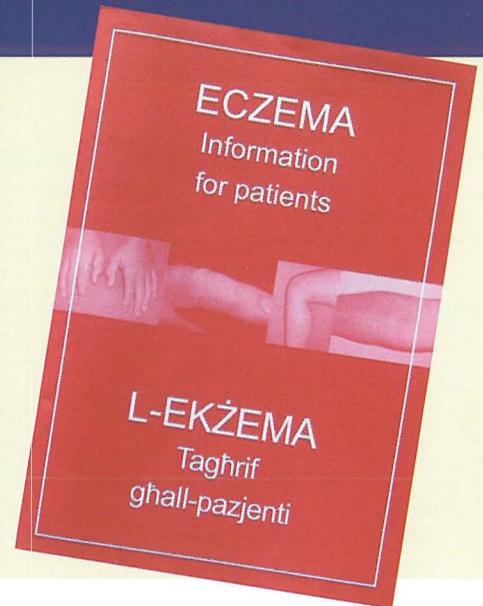
The MES was set up in 2001 to help patients with eczema and their families. The society aims to help by providing support, information and practical advice via public talks and other activities, to represent the interest of members with government and other authorities and to increase awareness about eczema and the problems it may cause.

A recent survey of schoolteachers in Malta undertaken by the MES confirmed widespread misconceptions about the condition - for instance more than 10% of participating teachers wrongly thought that eczema is contagious and many did not know about its career implications.

The MES has lobbied with the Maltese Health Authorities regarding entitlement for free medication for eczema sufferers. At present eczema sufferers are not eligible for free medication no matter how severe and chronic their condition is because eczema is not included in the Schedule

V list of chronic diseases. The MES feels that the present system is unfair and discriminatory and requests that eczema sufferers are given the assistance they deserve.

The MES has recently published a patient information booklet about eczema, in English and Maltese, kindly sponsored by Novartis Pharma Malta. Free copies and information on joining the MES may be obtained from Treasurer Mrs M Bongalais (Tel 21 435649) or other committee members: Mrs A Baldacchino (Tel 21 386 850), Mrs J Borg (Tel 21 436 550), Mr H Debono (Tel 21 335 140) or Mrs J Vella (Tel 21 637 007). ☐



Psoriasis Association Malta

It is a fact that people suffering from Psoriasis face on a daily basis a lot of challenges not only in accepting and treating this condition but also facing people who have never heard of the word Psoriasis let alone know what it is.

With this in mind, the Psoriasis Association Malta has been setup with two main objectives.

1. Increase awareness of this condition among the general public, focusing on informing what Psoriasis is and that it is not contagious.
2. Provide psychological support to psoriasis sufferers through the services of a psychologist and be a main source of information through publications and seminars aimed at Psoriasis patients.

In October 2005, the Association launched a poster awareness campaign titled 'I know what Psoriasis is...do you?'. It has also published a Maltese story book narrating the story of Mark, a child psoriasis sufferer and his trials and tribulations at school. This month, the book will be distributed to all secondary schools in Malta with the aim at increasing awareness on this condition.



The Association has recently launched the 'Psoriasis Association Malta Bulletin', a newsletter which will be distributed on a quarterly basis to all its members. An informational leaflet 'Psorjasi: il-fatti' is also available on request.

Furthermore, the Association is in the process of publishing a handbook on Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis which will include a number of articles of interest and a guide of treatments available in Malta.

The Association's committee is made up of psoriasis sufferers and persons who have direct contact with psoriasis patients. Membership with the Psoriasis Association Malta is Lm 3 a year.

For further information contact Lucienne on 21437606 or Therese on 21416288 or email info@pam.org.mt. The Association also has a website at www.pam.org.mt. ☐