

Seven years later

The Malta Medical Journal has been in print for seven years under the aegis of the Editorial Board. During this time the Journal has adhered to its remit of providing a forum for the publication of articles relevant to the practice of medicine in Malta. The increasing number of submissions over the years confirms the general perception that the Journal provides a medium for the dissemination of information and for continuing professional development and medical education. A rigorous peer review system ensures that submitted articles are scrutinised and are only accepted for publication on the recommendation of the reviewers. Regrettably as with any Journal, there are times when articles are deemed not suitable for publication in the Journal.

The Journal has continued to grow and develop. As an open access journal it is now proud to have a website that is attractive, user friendly and provides access to scientific and medical information on the development to the local and international community. The Editorial Board are proud that that the Journal is now listed in a number of databases with the most recent addition being to EBSCO. Thanks to the unstinting efforts of the members of the board, it has been possible to keep production and printing costs to a minimum and we hope to be in a position to carry on to provide this service free of charge to the health care profession. We are also indebted to our reviewers for their time and invaluable feedback and to our sponsors for their support. Finally the continuing unconditional support of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery over these years has ensured and protected the autonomy of the Editorial Board and the Journal.

This issue of the Journal includes a range of articles which attest to the history and excellence of medical practice in Malta. The Wyatt article provides interesting information regarding Sir Temistocles Zammit and the Museum in Valletta whilst the article by Agius et al highlights the important observations of Maltese researchers with regard to cannabis use and psychosis. Advances in patient care are mirrored in the review dealing with the first years of the Breast Care Clinic and the more recent improvement in outcomes in the management of patients afflicted with glaucoma. From a public health aspect, although Malta is portrayed as a country of low prevalence with regards to Tuberculosis, given the differences in the demographics of the young versus the elderly sectors of Maltese society, it is crucial that particular vigilance be exerted with regards to the elderly. With regards to populations at high risk, the paper by Savona Ventura et al provides evidence that a fasting blood glucose above 4.6mmol/l and a 2 hr postprandial cut off higher than 9.6mmol/l can be associated with adverse outcomes for both mother and child.

The content of this issue of the Malta Medical Journal emphasises the necessity to study the epidemiology of different diseases as well as the outcomes in response to standardised medical treatment in specific settings and populations due to the diverse genetic, cultural and environmental influences which can affect both the course of disease and outcomes. The Maltese population is no different in this respect and evidence based medical practice cannot fail to take this into consideration. It is such ongoing analysis and surveillance that should ensure the continuing provision of a high standard of medical care in the Maltese islands

Josanne Vassallo

Editor