

MCFD Annual Report 2022

Dear Colleagues,

2022 marked the year in which as family doctors, though not completely out of the woods, could gradually and surely make steps forward to recover from the COVID19 pandemic. Likewise, MCFD with the return of the Continued Medical Education activities in the quantity we are used to, and more ease in carrying out the Summative Exam 2022. At the start of the year candidates for the election of the Council of the MCFD were called for, and as the number of candidates equalled the number of posts there was no need for elections. The new Council took office on 20th March 2022.

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A) Internal Structure

1. VO/0973

MCFD is a **Non-Governmental Organisation** with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (OCVO) with VO Number VO/0973. Hence the rights and responsibilities of MCFD are within a regulated framework. Members can refer to the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations or check on website www.voluntaryorganisations.gov.mt.

MCFD is certified as compliant with the OCVO until 2020. The audited accounts of 2021 and 2022 cannot be completed as by the end of 2022 one of the new members had as yet not submitted the due diligence documentation to the auditor. Hence the OCVO has not received the due audited accounts from the MCFD. Consequently, the MCFD is not compliant for 2021 and 2022, and cannot use the Civil Society Funds to cover the WONCA Membership fee, the WONCA Council meetings and the Vasco da Gama/EYFDM exchanges.

Despite the protestations of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector, the Malta Business Registry (MBR) continues to impose hefty fines plus daily administrative fines to those Voluntary Organisations who fail to send due timely notice of

change in the beneficiary ownership and/or fail to register with the MBR. Additionally, now all council members are recognized as administrators of the VO and the MBR needs to be informed of, and due hard copy documentation provided, within 14 calendar days.

The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector has launched its online directory <https://maltacvs.org/vo-directory/>. All Voluntary Organisations linked to Health are grouped together.

2. MCFD Council

Elections of the MCFD Council took place in January 2022.

The **members of the council until the new council took over** were:

- a. Dr Edward Zammit – Honorary President, President-Elect and SAC Representative;
- b. Dr Jason Bonnici – Honorary Secretary;
- c. Dr Dorothy Zammit – Honorary Treasurer;
- d. Dr Jean Karl Soler – CPD Lead;
- e. Dr Natalie Psaila – Education Officer;
- f. Dr Ann Marie Scerri – Honorary Registrar and WONCA Representative;
- g. Dr Ian Baldacchino – Assistant Officer as National Exchange Co-ordinator;
- h. Dr Jacob Vella – Assistant Officer as GP Trainee 5’ representative;
- i. Dr Karl Cutajar – Assistant Officer as GP Trainee 3rd year representative and Vasco da Gama Movement representative;
- j. Dr Zac Micallef – Assistant Officer as GP Trainee 2nd year representative;
- k. Dr Maria Grazia Grech – Assistant Officer as GP Trainee 1st year representative and WONCA Observer;
- l. Dr Leonard Callus – Assistant Office as GP Trainee representative for the latest intake and current webmaster.

The **members of the council as from 20th March 2022** are:

- a. Dr Edward Zammit – Honorary President and SAC Representative;
- b. Dr Jason Bonnici – Honorary Secretary;
- c. Dr Dorothy Zammit – Honorary Treasurer;
- d. Dr Ann Marie Scerri – Honorary Registrar and WONCA Representative;
- e. Dr Stefania Micallef nee Abdilla – CPD team;
- f. Dr Marica Galea – Deputy registrar (resigned 12th April 2023);
- g. Dr Gianluca Bezzina – Vice-President (resigned 12th April 2023);
- h. Dr Karl Cutajar – CPD team;
- i. Dr Jacob Vella – member (resigned 18th March 2023).

Dr Jean Karl Soler is CPD Lead.

Dr Marco Grech is lead for committee looking into extending the training program for Specialists in Family Medicine to 4 years.

Dr Leonard Callus is Assistant Officer as GP Trainee representative and webmaster.

Dr Jordy Borg is Assistant Officer for the administration of MCFD’s facebook page.

Council Meetings took place on:

- 22nd March 2022 at the Malta Federation of Professional Associations;
- 25th July 2022 online on Microsoft Teams;
- 24th August 2022 at the Malta Federation of Professional Associations;
- 28th November 2022 online on Microsoft Teams

In between all deliberations took place via emails. Minutes of the council meetings are available.

In MCFD work we have the assistance of Ms. Louise Agius in 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”.

The last Annual General Meeting was done on 18th November 2021, as the COVID-19 restrictions allowed a face-to-face meeting.

During 2022 proceedings on Council were bumpy. A number of initiatives (such as the Assessment Team, the Summative Exam, the training program, the CME events, the Graduation Ceremony, the Training the Teachers course) which are routine operations of the College, were received with antagonism by a number of newly graduated Specialists in Family Medicine. In particular, members of the MCFD Council received various communications about an MCFD Council member talking about a vote of no-confidence in the present MCFD Council. After the due investigation and through the help of various well-meaning members of the College, including other newly graduated Specialists in Family Medicine, it transpired that the negative vibe was coming from the actions and discourse of at least one council member – Dr Jacob Vella. This, and the response of council, were communicated to members via the mcfdmembers@googlegroups.com channel and subsequently brought to the table on Council during the meeting of August 24th. It was pointed out that a significant number of members, including some involved in important College work, as well as others in non-College important roles and positions, have stated that they will not be comfortable to work in the future with Dr Jacob Vella and/or be involved in College roles if he is in anyway involved in their area of responsibility. Subsequently, the involvement of Dr Jacob Vella voluntarily decreased considerably, until he eventually resigned in March 2023, when he refused to be registered with the Malta Business Registry as administrator of the Voluntary Organisation.

3. Changes to Statutes

No proposals for changes to the statutes in 2022. However, a proposal for change of statutes in response to 6. Reporting Obligations (see below) is planned for the AGM 2023 by the subcommittee for revision of the statutes, which has been informed of happenings related to the listing of all council members as administrators with the Malta Business Registry and the due diligence exercise of all council members for the audited reports, and prompted to intervene by the Honorary Secretary.

4. Membership

By end of 2022, MCFD has:

- 216 fully paid-up members;
- 120 members with pending membership fees;
- 11 fully paid-up associate members.

Of note is the increase in paid-up full members because of the return of CME activities, an effort to ensure payment of membership fee if the family doctor is getting any sort of remuneration from the MCFD and the office secretary's work. Slowly GP Trainees and FY doctors are becoming associate members of the MCFD so that they can attend the CME events rather than pay 25 euro per session.

It is to be noted that the prices for the hall and catering for the CME events has risen substantially since pre-COVID times. Efforts are continuously done to find more financially appropriate venues, hence the change in venues from the tradition of the previous years. Non-members have to date been asked to pay 25 euro for attendance, but this amount nowadays does not cover the expenses anymore and the amount to be charged needs to be revisited in the near future. Paid-up members, both full and associate, attend events (in person and on line) free of charge however the membership fee nowadays covers the expenses for not more than 3 events – the membership fee may also need to be revisited in the near future but was not revisited at this stage to make up for the relative lack of events during the COVID-19 pandemic years where members diligently kept paying their membership fees to retain the MCFD nomenclature.

5. Fellowship of the Malta College of Family Doctors

The MCFD Council is interested to confer Fellowships to members who deserve it, as it has been some time since the last conferment and it thinks that there are members who deserve it. Hence in 2023 it will ask the present Fellows to

meet as the Board of Fellows, as per statutes, and suggest names maybe for the 35th Anniversary of the founding of the MCFD.

6. *Reporting obligations*

MCFD is obliged to deliver reports to a number of entities:

- (i) The Malta College of Family Doctors is listed in the Fourth Schedule of the Health Care Professions Act. As per requirement of the relevant Act, each listed association needs to submit an annual activity report of the preceding year to the Superintendent of Public Health by not later than the end of the first quarter of the year. The MCFD is compliant up to 2021.
- (ii) All the documents pertaining to years up to 2020 have been sent to the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (OCVO). Subsequently, for the documents pertaining to 2021 and 2022 the MCFD is not compliant because a council member, Dr Gianluca Bezzina, to date refuses to go through the due diligence process by the auditor for the period of his office. Hence the accounts for 2021 and 2022 are not approved by the auditor, and subsequently the MCFD has not forwarded the audited accounts to the OCVO and as such is not compliant with the OCVO. As such it cannot apply for funds which provide part refund of the WONCA membership fee, attendance to WONCA Council meetings and attendance to Vasco da Gama/EYFDM exchanges. This officer eventually resigned in 12th April 2023.
- (iii) The MCFD is up-to-date with the requirements of the Malta Business Registry (MBR) until 2021. For 2022 and subsequently the MCFD learnt in 2023 that all council members are now recognised by the MBR as administrators, not only the Honorary President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. Communication has subsequently ensued with the Unit concerned to fill in the necessary documentation. However, one new council officer, Dr Jacob Vella, refused to give his details to the Malta Business Registry to be recognised legally as an administrator of the MCFD and subsequently be checked. He eventually resigned on 18th March 2023. The MBR has been informed. A fine is expected from the MBR.
- (iv) Labour Force surveys by the National Statistics Office.

B) Educational Activities

Educational activities are the *raison d'être* of the Malta College of Family Doctors, and it is understandable that they take the majority of the time and effort of the volunteers and service providers available.

1. *The Specialist Training Program for Family Medicine*

The process leading to the Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) that opens the door for full Membership of the Malta College of Family Doctors (MMCFD) and consequentially the recommendation to be given the MRCGP(Int) has been one of the pillars for improving the quality of provision of family medicine since the first training program in 2007. It is made up of a 3-year long training process that concludes with a Work-based Assessment and the Summative Examination. In the last decade it has been one of the main remits of MCFD.

The assessment of Specialists in Family Medicine 2020 was to be a big milestone for MCFD in view of re-accreditation of our process for the next 5 years. Previous accreditations were initially for one year and subsequently for three years. However due to COVID-19 this could not materialize as the RCGP could not send a delegation to Malta. Accreditation is currently being extended yearly. The tri-partite contract between MCFD-DH-RCGP is also being renewed yearly.

(i) New RCGP IDA

As of October 2021, Professor Lindsey Pope is the new RCGP International Development Advisor for Malta instead of Dr Jeremy Stupple, who has retired. She is Professor of Medical Education at the University of Glasgow Medical School and Director of Community Based Medical Education and Director of Professionalism. With a doctorate in health professions education, a postgraduate certificate of medical education and an accolade of other relevant qualifications and achievement, Prof Pope has extensive undergraduate and postgraduate experience and expertise and is intimately familiar with the RCGP assessment framework, having been recently appointed as Deputy Future Module Development lead for the MRCGP. She is to visit Malta to familiarize herself with the Specialist Training Program in Family Medicine and its stakeholders in January 2023.

(ii) Curriculum

The updated Curriculum for Specialist Training Programme in Family Medicine was completed in 2021 and is now in use by the more recent cohorts of Trainees in Family Medicine.

(iii) Training Program

The draft proposal for extending the training program from 3 to 4 years produced in 2021 was given to a new subcommittee led by Dr Marco Grech and consisting of members Dr Jacob Vella, Dr Gianluca Bezzina and Dr Karl Cutajar to beef it up by contacting the necessary stakeholders. A few months into the process Dr Marco Grech reported to the Honorary President, who in turn informed Council, that the subcommittee was not manageable. Since then there has been no interest for a handful of colleagues to embark on delivering this process.

(iv) Regulations for the Summative Examination

The Regulations for the Summative Examination for Specialists in Family Medicine updated and polished in 2021 after a number of meetings with Dr Joseph Gatt, a lawyer in Administrative Law, are now in use.

(v) The Assessment Team

The Assessment Team responsible for seeing out the execution of the Summative Exam for Specialists in Family Medicine in 2022 was made up of Dr Natalie Psaila as Assessment Lead and Dr Nicola Laporto, Dr Cristina Farrugia and Dr Maria Callus as members. Dr Patricia De Gabriele was contracted as mentor. The work includes co-ordination of the examiners, marshalls and Angoff teams, the training and co-ordination of the AKT Writers group, where producing good quality AKT questions in quantity annually is a challenge, and training of the examiners for the RCA. Dr Kenneth Vassallo and Dr Ann Marie Scerri were the members of the Quality Assessment team. For the past two years the running of the Assessment Team has been stable; the newer formula of its composition seems to be working a balance between flexibility and experience.

For 2022, draft contracts were produced to regulate the work of the Assessment Team by lawyer Dr Joseph Gatt, through a number of meetings with Honorary President Dr Edward Zammit and Honorary Secretary Dr Jason Bonnici. Dr Patricia De Gabriele signed the contract as mentor but the Assessment Team proper declined to sign any contracts due to the uncertainty caused by the gossip propagated as described above.

(vi) Data Protection Policy

To date the material related to the exams since 2010 has been kept in the personal homes of the people involved in the Assessment Team and in late 2021 lawyer Dr Joseph Gatt has been requested to provide advice on a policy on data protection for the MCFD. Subsequently lawyers Dr Ilona Agius and Dr Joseph Gatt, through a number of meetings with Honorary President Dr Edward Zammit and Honorary Secretary Dr Jason Bonnici, prepared Data Retention Policy and General Privacy Policy documents for MCFD. The documents are available on the MCFD website.

(vii) Get Qualified Scheme

The administrative issues with the Get Qualified Scheme on what is the official award and which is the awarding institution has been cleared up by the Honorary Registrar Dr Anne Marie Scerri, allowing the GP Trainees to reclaim expenses through the Get Qualified scheme with the correct titles. This should make it easier for the MCFD to plan a way forward to attain at least break even in the expenses related to running the Summative Exam. The list for the Get Qualified Scheme for 2022 has been forwarded to Malta Enterprise and it was arranged with that office that new specialists in family medicine can apply for the Get Qualified Scheme by using either the CSST or the MMCFD, to allow specialists in family medicine who do not wish to apply for membership of the MCFD to also be refunded by the Get Qualified Scheme.

(viii) Graduation ceremony

Due to the COVID-19 related restrictions of 2020-2022, 3 cohorts of Specialists in Family Medicine were due for the graduation. With a reduction in COVID 19 restrictions in 2022, it was possible to do a standing event. An attempt was made to do it close to World Family Doctors' Day on 19th May, but this was not possible due to the large number of family doctors involved having to take vacation leave. Due to the short deadline for organizing a Graduation in bigger numbers than usual (3 cohorts + 3 guests per graduate), past workings were adopted by the MCFD officers. The Graduation ceremony was done at the Casino Maltese in Valletta on 30th June under the auspices of His Excellency the President of Malta Dr George W. Vella. The President of the Republic Dr George W. Vella and his wife attended the whole event and delivered a speech on the relevance and role of the family doctor in today's world. It was a new experience for MCFD officers to facilitate the President's attendance and oblige to the requirements of the official

protocol including security needs. Other speakers were MCFD President Dr Edward Zammit, who outlined humane support for doctors in training, Dr Mario Sammut obo the Specialist Training Programme Co-ordinators, who outlined the efforts of many along many years to establish the training programme, and PHCD CEO Mrs Roseanne Camilleri, who outlined a vision of health centres being the place where secondary care is made available closer to the public and praised the Telemedicine Centre. Total number of attendees was almost 200. The Office of the President produced a video and a press statement about the event and put it up on its social media page. The ceremony was followed by a reception. It was noted that there was a higher turnout of VIPs for the event of 2022 than was usual. The College received good feedback on the event by the VIPs, new specialists in family medicine and the trainers in family medicine.

Dr Edward Zammit and Dr Dorothy Zammit were subsequently contacted by new Specialists in Family Medicine who regretted that they responded to solicitation and did not attend the reception. The MCFD Council discovered that a number of misconceptions circulated in and around the timing of the Graduation, through the sending of communications by a number of Council members to MCFD members and non-members. These communications reached other council members through various formats. The issues included why there is a different fee for the first-time and for subsequent membership of the MCFD, whether the College makes any profit from the Graduation and whether new Specialists in Family Medicine have expenses for the Graduation other than their toga and personal expenses (the paid reception is only optional). The Graduation ceremony and reception eventually cost the MCFD close to 6,000 Eur.

2. *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. After the timid attempt to restart activities in 2021, there was an upstart in 2022.

The Officer in charge of CPD is Dr Jean Karl Soler. Dr Philip Sciortino kept and finished his commitment in respect to the Cardiology Update. The members of the subcommittee are Dr Darren Micallef, Dr Matthew Pizzuto, Dr Stefania Micallef, Dr Dale Brincat, Dr Elena Fava, Dr Sean Francalanza and Dr Karl Cutajar with the Honorary Treasurer Dr Dorothy Zammit and the Honorary Secretary Dr Jason Bonnici as ex-officio members.

The MCFD delivered 8 CME activities and accredited 3 CME activities in 2022 for a total of 28 points (minimum of 27 points requested via the Continued Professional Development Accreditation Scheme (CPDAS) folder). By the end of the year, through the input of Dr Dorothy Zammit, the MCFD organized hybrid educational sessions (in person and online), which was positively accepted.

The membership of the CPD team was more or less erratic, with a number of people communicating for some time then disappearing for other time, meaning that for most of the sessions the bulk of the work (communication, teaching objectives, logistics and delivery of the event) fell on the shoulders of the same few, as members could see for themselves when they attended the sessions.

A main stumbling block for MCFD to organize CMEs itself is the reluctance of family doctors to come out and deliver educational talks for their peers - Specialists in Family Medicine seem much happier to listen to talks by other Specialists. Dr Elton Caruana and Dr Matthew Pizzuto took the initiative to deliver a session each on evidence-informed practice. Later in the year, Dr Stefania Micallef nee Abdilla took the initiative to rope in a number of her cohort (Dr Sean Francalanza, Dr Leonard Callus and Dr Karl Cutajar) and propose a set of 6 GP-Led sessions for 2023.

Dr Elena Fava and Dr Leonard Callus took it on themselves to start producing posters to promote the events on social media for 2023. Dr Elena Fava took it on herself to design a template for digital certification of attendance to an event, to be used as from 2023.

The CPDAS (Continued Professional Development Accreditation Scheme) folder created some 14 years ago is still in use and a certificate is provided to those who submit the necessary yearly CPD points by contacting the Honorary Registrar.

The presentation of evidence of CME attendance is a requirement such as for example in the call for Fellowship of the Malta College of Family Doctors and may be required for other applications. MCFD keeps the attendance records until the yearly reconciliation with the CPDAS certificate; it is the duty of the member to reconcile his/her attendances to get the yearly certificate.

The following were the sessions organised by the MCFD:

26th January 2022	Evidence-informed practice – Dr Elton Caruana; Dr Matthew Pizzuto	Online	MCFD – Synapse – 3 points
26th May 2022	Orthopaedic examination of the shoulder - Mr Kurstein Sant	Corinthia Palace	MCFD in collaboration with Menarini – 3 points
19th September 2022	Prostate cancer referral - Mr. Apap Bologna	Salini Resort	MCFD – 3 points
13th October 2022	Burns, trauma and referrals - Ms. Juanita Parnis	Salini Resort	MCFD – 3 points
20 October 2022	Cardiology Update – various speakers	Corinthia Palace	MCFD through Dr. Philip Sciortino and the Cardiology Department – 3 points
27th October 2022	Update on vascular surgery - Prof. Kevin Cassar	Salini Resort	MCFD – 3 points
22 November 2022	Management of Addiction Disorders in the community - Dr. John Zammit Montebello	The Notch	MCFD – 3 points
14 December 2022	Surgical Management of Pancreatic Cancer and Liver Lesions, including Colorectal Metastases	The Notch	MCFD – 3 points

The following are the sessions endorsed by the MCFD:

09/03/2022	Seminar on Vaccinology as relevant to COVID-19	MCST – 1 point
11/08/2022	Hepatitis C Virus Educational Seminar	1 point
30/09/2022	DIMENSIONS OF CANNABIS FOR MEDICINAL AND RESEARCH PURPOSES	Malta Medicines Authority – 2 points

3. Other Educational Initiatives:

- (i) The Ministry for European Affairs and Equality had embarked on the EU-funded project TRANSFORM with the Ministry for Health, MUMN, the University of Ghent and MCFD as partners. The portfolio eventually changed to the Ministry for Equality, Research and Innovation. The aim is to create awareness and provide training to professionals, staff workers in health services and the public on transgender issues. The activity for Family Doctors took place online in October 2020; the recorded event was subsequently made available for GP Trainees. Activities for staff at MCH and PHC had a number of absentees, and further repeat activities might be needed to achieve the target numbers. Other activities were done for Casualty and MDH staff. More information on the project is available on the MCFD website <https://mcfcd.org.mt/generalpublic/transform>. The Ministry for Health will schedule the exchange visits of the Multi-Disciplinary Team of the Gender Wellbeing Clinic to Ghent University Hospital in November and December 2021. Awareness raising material was prepared, made available on request and eventually disseminated. A final conference took place on Wednesday 19th January 2022. The project officially ended on 22nd February 2022.
- (i) A number of undergraduate and postgraduate students, mostly from Maltese medical and pharmacy courses and a minority from overseas, request the support of MCFD to forward questionnaires to members to have the input on a topic. This is done through goodwill for the benefit of collegiality and of scientific research. Most requests are polite. Only a couple have over the years actually kept their original

promise of proving family doctors with feedback on their findings by organising an event or by sending a final report.

- (ii) WONCA provided weekly educational webinars on health-specific subjects throughout the year. The links were made available to members through the weekly WONCA Europe and the monthly WONCA World newsletter which were disseminated via email.

4. *Research Activities*

No new research activities in 2022.

5. *Trainers and Teachers in Family Medicine*

(i) Teachers' Course

This took place in May and June 2022 with two modules, one in person and one online at Dar tal-Providenza is-Siggiewi with 2 tutors (Dr Doreen Cassar and Dr Philip Sciortino) and 11 participants (Dr Jekaterina Juskevici, Dr Bjorn Buhagiar, Dr Ian Gauci, Dr Charlene Magri, Dr Julian Grima, Dr Kirsten Schembri, Dr Mauro Sacco, Dr Sacha Buttigieg and Dr Stephanie Palmier. All participants passed the assessment certifying them as Teachers in Family Medicine.

(ii) CPD for Trainers in Family Medicine

A Trainer's portfolio created by EURACT has been forwarded by Education Lead Dr Natalie Psaila through the Training Co-ordinators to Trainers in Family Medicine for use. Process is voluntary but greatly encouraged.

The FutureLearn online courses 'Clinical Supervision: Assessing and Providing Feedback', 'Clinical Supervision: Confidence', and 'Clinical Supervision: Teaching and Facilitating Learning' run by the University of East Anglia, were identified by the MCFD Education Committee as the CPD requirement for 2021, 2022 and 2023 respectively required by the 'Contract for Service - Trainer in Family Medicine'.

(iii) EURACT Course Level 1 and Level 3

The MCFD has shown interest in hosting EURACT Course Level 1 in Malta in March/April 2023 and this was accepted. Subsequently it showed interest to be nominated to host EURACT Course Level 3 in Malta in the last quarter of 2023 – decision pending to date. Such events entail a lot of work on the few same people in the preparation, logistics, finances and carrying them out, but are seen positively as they put MCFD on the map of organizations of family doctors within the WONCA family and are evidence of the commitment of Maltese family doctors to improve the quality of delivery of family medicine. Financially both EURACT Level 1 and Level 3 will come at best as breakeven but more probably at a small loss for the MCFD.

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 resigned from the role of Editor. Dr Anton Bugeja and Dr Mario Sammut took up the vacant role as Co-Editors until a substitute is found; a Call for Editor of the JMCFD returned no interest but Dr Marco Grech showed interest to join the Editorial Board. Dr Glorianne Pullicino is Assistant Editor. The issues are nowadays distributed online only due to increasing difficulty in finding sponsors and increasing distribution costs of the paper version; they are uploaded on OAR@UoM and are accessible via this link: <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/5332>. The next issue of the JMCFD is expected in December 2021; this will be the only issue of 2021 due to lack of submissions.

2. Public Relations

A sustained effort was done to continue to bring the message of family doctors amongst the general public. Dr Jordy Borg is posting on the facebook page of the MCFD. Dr Leonard Callus is posting some of the CME events on social media.

- (i) 2 Press Releases were done jointly with the Association of Private Family Doctors:
 - a. Joint Press Release MCFD and APFD – World Family Doctors’ Day (14.05.2022);
 - b. Joint Press Release MCFD and APFD – Proposals for Budget 2022 (20.09.2022). Submission to Finance Department also done in line with the Press Release statements.
- (ii) During 2020 MCFD produced a self-care guide on common colds, influenza and COVID-19 for the general public, thanks to the work of Dr Mark Camilleri and Dr Dorothy Zammit. It was produced in both English and Maltese versions. Reference to the self-care guide was made in a number of Press Releases. It was distributed amongst a number of companies and agencies thanks to the initiative of some members, amongst teachers enrolled with the Department of Education, amongst University staff and students, amongst the staff of the Homes for the Elderly and amongst all the Voluntary Organisations. The Guide is available for download on the MCFD website <https://mcfid.org.mt/generalpublic/selfcare>

3. Website

In 2022 the new website was slowly but gradually replenished with new text and new sections. Of note are: a list with contacts of “Specialists in Family Medicine in your area” for the general public to access in case of need: <https://mcfid.org.mt/generalpublic/specialists-in-family-medicine-in-your-area>; how to apply for the Get Qualified scheme; How to start working as a private family doctor; the members’ only section of the website which needs prior online login includes most of the Agendas and Minutes of council meetings of previous years which are being slowly inputted; the CPD events eligible for the CPDAS folder; the material related to the Specialist Training Program in Family Medicine, the Press Releases issued; the JMCFD, the Vasco da Gama Movement and the possibility of paying the membership online.

In 2022 the Newsletter option started to be used. This needed manual addition of members’ email addresses from the membership database prior to the launch and continuous addition of new members, although it is possible, and a number have actually done so, to subscribe to the newsletter online. Feedback has been positive as the image portrayed is more professional.

MCFD officers have their distinct MCFD emails. Members are encouraged to use MCFD official emails in their communication with MCFD officers to allow a continuation of the communication thread if and when handover of offices occurs.

4. Consultations

- (i) The Department of Primary Health Care invited MCFD and APFD to collate a list of private family doctors for training on the Electronic Patient Records for Primary Care, which eventually took place in early 2023.
- (ii) MCFD was involved in the working group to define the protocols for schools during the academic year and ongoing measures; its representative is Dr Dorothy Zammit.

D) International Fora

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

- (i) Honorary President Dr Edward Zammit attended the online WONCA London 2022 Scientific Committee meeting on 10th June. The role of this Committee is to develop a scientific programme for the 27th WONCA Europe conference in London in 2022. This event will be conjoint with the RCGP annual conference, and the Chair welcomed the expertise and contributions from the members of this Committee. The conference will be held at the ExCel exhibition centre in London, the conference will benefit from up to 12 parallel sessions, and the Scientific Committee has full discretion and oversight in

selecting abstracts and keynote presentations. It was also agreed that meetings should be scheduled approximately monthly for a whole year in advance of the WONCA Europe London 2022 conference.

- (ii) As of 2021 Dr Anne Marie Scerri has taken up the role of official delegate and Dr Maria Grazia Grech is the observer delegate to WONCA. They have attended online meetings of WONCA World and WONCA Europe. Unfortunately, as the MCFD is not compliant with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, because a council member has to date not undergone the due diligence process with the auditor, it is not possible to apply for refunds of their expenses to attend meetings in person through the funds for VOs.
- (iii) WONCA newsletters and invitations for conferences, debates and seminars are reaching members through the email service.

2. *EURACT (European Association of Teachers in Family Medicine/General Practice)*

- (i) During 2022 MCFD applied to host the EURACT Level 1 Trainer's course. This was seen as an opportunity for family doctors from Malta to learn alongside family doctors from other countries while achieving the necessary certification. The MCFD also hopes for a continued collaboration with EURACT and is interested to eventually apply to host the EURACT Level 3 course. Such events put MCFD on the map of organisations of family doctors within the WONCA family and are evidence of the commitment of Maltese family doctors to improve the quality of delivery of family medicine.
- (ii) A Trainer's portfolio created by EURACT has been forwarded via MCFD through the Training Co-ordinators to Trainers in Family Medicine for use. Process is voluntary but greatly encouraged.

3. *EUROPREV (The European Network for Prevention and Health Promotion in Family Medicine and General Practice)*

MCFD participation in EurPrev has been lacking since 2013. Since 2019, Dr Maria Grazia Grech, a GP Trainee, is a EUROPREV council member.

4. *Vasco da Gama Movement/ European Young Family Doctors Movement (EYFDM)*

In previous years MCFD had encouraged the GP Trainees to get involved in the Vasco da Gama project, sort of the youth section of WONCA, that eventually in 2022 became the European Young Family Doctors Movement (EYFDM). Dr Esther Muscat, a current trainee in the Specialist Training Programme in Family Medicine, is the Vasco da Gama Representative for the Malta College of Family Doctors and has attended the online Vasco da Gama pre-conference and the council meeting in 2022. Dr Yanica Vella, a recent Specialist in Family Medicine, has been designated as the National Exchange Co-ordinator. Exchange opportunities have been advertised through GP Trainee channels and through the MCFD Newsletter and a number of GP Trainees have attended events in Antwerp (Belgium) and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Unfortunately, as the MCFD is not compliant with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, because a council member has to date not undergone the due diligence process with the auditor, it is not possible to apply for refunds of their expenses to exchanges and meetings through the funds for VOs. The work done by previous representatives so that foreign GP Trainees can be hosted for a 2-week study visit in Malta is on hold as the current officers feel that this should not be run by a team of 2 only but will resuscitate the initiative as soon as a bigger team of volunteers is available.