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Date: 25/04/2024

**Information letter**

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Ruth Grech and I am a post-graduate student at the University of Malta, reading for a Master of Science in Health Systems Management and Leadership. I am presently conducting research as part of my dissertation titled ‘**Malta - an ever-shifting cultural kaleidoscope. Exploring cultural competence in doctors working in primary health care**’; this is being supervised by Dr Miriam Dalmas (miriam.dalmas@um.edu.mt). This letter is an invitation to participate in this study. Below you will find information about the study and about what your involvement would entail, should you decide to take part.

The aim of my study is to assess cultural competence in the Maltese Primary Health Care sector. The study will involve 2 phases in a mixed-method approach. The first part of the study is a cross-sectional study amongst all the Specialists in Family Medicine working within Primary Health Care. The second part of the study involves semi-structured interviews amongst Specialists in Family Medicine within the organizational level of Primary Health Care.

Your participation in this study would help contribute to a better understanding of cultural knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors of primary health care doctors at individual level. Only data necessary for the research will be asked and any data collected from this research will be used solely for purposes of this study.

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire. The first part is a research tool used to assess cultural competence and the second part is a demographic questionnaire. The questionnaire is estimated to take around 15 minutes to complete. To ensure your anonymity, you will not be asked to write your name on the questionnaire or any personally identifiable data. Furthermore, your response to the following questionnaire will be considered as your voluntary consent for your participation in this study.

Data collected will be anonymised and only the researcher and supervisor will have access to. In special circumstances, the examiner(s) may access the data, for assessment purposes. Data will be stored in a password protected external hard disc.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary; in other words, you are free to accept or refuse to participate, without needing to give a reason. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time, without needing to provide any explanation and without any negative repercussions for you. Should you choose to withdraw, any data collected will be erased as long as this is technically possible, unless erasure of data would render impossible or seriously impair achievement of the research objectives, in which case it shall be retained in an anonymised form.

If you choose to participate, please note that there are no direct benefits to you. Your participation does not entail any known or anticipated risks.

Please note also that, as a participant, you have the right under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and national legislation to access, rectify and where applicable ask for the data concerning you to be erased. All data collected will be stored in an anonymised form and will be erased on completion of the study.

A copy of this information sheet is being provided for you to keep and for future reference.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail; ruth.buttigieg.11@um.edu.mt. You can also contact my supervisor via email: miriam.dalmas@um.edu.mt.

Sincerely,





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Ruth Grech Dr Miriam Dalmas

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