



THE LINK

Newsletter for Midwives and Nurses

Issue 15

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A Message from the Director

CREATING HEALTH ...

The 21st century is offering challenges that are entirely different from those facing our ancestors at the beginning of the 20th century. People, particularly those in the developed world are living longer and enjoying a higher status of human development. However, they are faced with an increasing number of health challenges such as obesity, chronic disease, increase alcohol and drug use, an increase in mental health problems amongst a widening chasm between the developed world and that of the third world. Some African countries have really fallen back in their health determinants due to the increase in poverty, lack of education, inequality and inaccessible health care systems and prevalent disease such as AIDS which is crippling many African societies. Health is a difficult state to attain if major determinants such as general political and socioeconomic conditions are not guaranteed. Other determinants such as living and working conditions and social and community influences cannot be ignored from the issue of creating health. The WHO Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) describes a way how to create health: - "Health is created in the context of everyday life: where people live, love, work and play."

It is important that health is improved or even created through improving health determinants. This requires nurses amongst other health professionals to be on the forefront by influencing policies that have an impact on health determinants and as a result affect the health of the people in a positive manner. It is a vital issue that policy planners whether on a regional, national or transnational level (EU or otherwise) think first and foremost 'health'. How will this new policy or change influence the outcome of societal or individual health? I believe that health professionals should be on the forefront in lobbying for the consideration of health as a major influencer or designer of policy or regulation. 'Health information alone will not be useful to people who do not feel they have the power to act. Other complementary strategies are needed, such as community development and participatory health education...The health care system also needs to acknowledge the lack of power which many people feel, and to explore ways in which it can assist people in taking more control over their lives and their health.' (Health Canada, 2003). I reiterate and firmly affirm that nurses and any other health care professionals have an ethical and professional duty to commit themselves towards not simply the restoration of individual or societal health, but to the creation and promotion of health in the context of everyday life, whether that is the home, the place of work or recreation.

WHO (1986). Ottawa charter for health promotion. Geneva: 1986.

Health Canada (2003). How does literacy affect the health of Canadians? <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/phdd/literacy/literacy.html>.

Jesmond Sharples

Director Nursing Services

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Kindly let us know if your mailing details or the amount required have changed so that you will be able to receive this newsletter.

AMON INTERNATIONAL ORTHOPAEDIC CONFERENCE



The International Conference itself was attended by about 160 delegates and it included introductory speeches by the Directorate of Nursing as well as MUMN.

On the 12th and 13th October 2006, the Association of Maltese Orthopaedic Nurses (AMON) held its first International Conference at the Coastline Hotel. This Conference was called 'Knights Hospitallers' and was held in collaboration with the Directorate of Nursing and the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses.

Being the first experience of the sort for the Association, it was quite a challenge to ensure that everything went smoothly and the organization itself required a lot of input from the AMON Committee members. However the outcome was quite successful and the International conference attracted about 40 speakers and delegates from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, USA, Canada, Hong Kong and Turkey. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Directorate of Nursing, MUMN, the AMON Committee and all our international friends who assisted us in ensuring a successful outcome.

The International Conference itself was attended by about 160 delegates and it included introductory speeches by the Directorate of Nursing as well as MUMN. The main themes of the Conference were Practice development and Nurse led clinics, prevention of falls in the elderly and research. An interesting presentation relating to Leadership was also given by Ms. Robin Voss from USA while Ms. Elaine Collins discussed the introduction of an early discharge scheme that has made a difference in their hospital. There were also a

few presentations from local speakers including nurses, an Orthopaedic consultant and a physiotherapist. The first day included concurrent sessions that tackled different themes related to orthopaedic nursing.

AMON also organized several social activities for the international delegates including the Conference Dinner and visits to the cities of Birgu and Valletta. From the feedback received it is clear that the delegates enjoyed themselves and the international delegates are already requesting us to do another conference in two years time. Who knows... we might be tempted to accommodate their wish in the future!

More information and photos of the conference as well as educational material are available on AMON's website at www.amon-nurse.com

Reggie Aquilina
(Chairperson AMON)

CNOs and CMOs meeting in Helsinki

The Director Nursing Services. Mr. Jesmond Sharples and Director General (Health), Dr. Ray Bussuttill attended a meeting for European Union, Chief Nursing Officers and Chief Medical Officers respectively in Helsinki, Finland between 12-13th October 2006. This was the first time ever that an effort was undertaken by a EU presidency (Finland) to try and organize these important meetings simultaneously offering a unique opportunity for Chief Nursing and Chief Medical Officer

collaboration for the European Union, including an opportunity for the sharing and discussion of various ideas and common challenges. Both of us feel privileged in Malta to have been able to work together in a collaborative manner for these last 4 years. The emphasis of the whole meeting was on how to incorporate health in

all policies and the implications for nursing practice and management, the issue of health impact assessment and the need of policy makers to think more 'health'. I have already referred to this theme in this issue's editorial – whilst it is important to create wealth, this should not be at the expense of health. Thus, the importance of incorporating health in all decisions that policy makers carve for our society and our country is also an integral part of a larger European Society.



Mr Jesmond Sharples (right) Director Nursing Services and Dr. Ray Busuttill (left), Director General (Health) in Helsinki, near a monument to Jan Sibelius, a Finnish composer.

Congratulations!

Our sincere congrats to:

All nurses and midwives who obtained their degree in Master Health Science last November 2006. This Masters degree in Nursing/Midwifery was offered for the first time within the University of Malta.

Also for the first time, to all graduands in Mental Health Nursing.

All those who obtained their nursing/midwifery degree in the diploma-degree course.

All nurses who have successfully undergone EN-SN conversion course.

All newly qualified nurses, who have recently been employed in the health division.

Congratulations to Mr. Anthony Zammit who works at Zammit Clapp Hospital who was awarded the worker of the year award. Mr. Scerri was the 3rd nurse in 2006 who was awarded the worker of the year award.

Announcing...

The 6th European Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Nurses' Federation, entitled: Commonwealth nurses advancing nursing care: collaboration in Europe, to take place between 9 March and 10 March 2007, in London (UK).

'Paediatric and Adolescent Oncology Conference Looking Towards the Future.' to take place on Friday April 13, 2007. Applications for this conference will be out shortly.

Your comments are greatly appreciated.

Kindly send all correspondence to: -

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Educational Opportunities in Community Health Nursing/Midwifery

At present two Staff Nurses, Ms Rebecca Cachia Fearné and Ms Mariella Galea are following a Masters' degree course at Salford University (UK) in Community Health Nursing. This scholarship intends to address the development of Primary Health Care Services with particular emphasis on the health of the community.

Tied to this initiative the University of Malta has recently offered a part-time course in Community Health Nursing. This course is being offered to all nurses and midwives who are interested in pursuing a career in Primary Health Care.

Continuing Professional Development: registration and way forward.

1200 nurses and midwives applied to register their CPD activities during October and November. Unfortunately the majority of applicants came to apply during the last week of registration. This created an incredible work load on the staff within the DNS and long periods of waiting for those who came to apply. Cooperation and patience were demonstrated by the majority of those who came to our office and facilitated the overall process. Registration of activities will now continue every first week of every month. The dates are included in the guidelines issued by the DNS.

Requests for subsidies can also be made during this period. Please remember that although subsidy requests and registration of activities must both be submitted within four months. This does not mean that they can

be submitted together. The four month clause applies to registering activities for CPD credits four months within completion, which is the date of issue of the result or certificate. Regarding requests for subsidies one must make their claim four months within the date of receipt of payment. All claims must be related to educational resources and initiatives. Therefore claims for administrative fees or repairs will not be considered. These include fees for transcripts, and computer repairs. The DNS is compiling a set of guidelines which will be distributed to all sections. If you have not had the opportunity to read these guidelines please inform the manager in charge of your section.

IV THERAPY COURSE

In December 2005, the Directorate Nursing Services embarked on a nationwide training programme in intravenous therapy for all qualified nurses. The course includes a number of lectures, a written and clinical assessment as well as a self-assessment based on individual reading. The main idea behind this course is to increase nurses' awareness about the implications of various aspects of intravenous therapy.

Courses are held every month at the Institute of Health Care for nurses working at St. Luke's Hospital, Zammit Clapp Hospital and St. Vincent de Paule Residence for the Elderly, with an average of 50 nurses participating in each course. Two courses have also been held at Gozo General Hospital covering about two-thirds of the nurses working in Gozo. Moreover, in September and

October, two courses were carried out at Sir Paul Boffa Hospital and all nurses working at this hospital have now completed the course. The intravenous therapy course is now an integral part of undergraduate nursing curricula at both diploma and degree level and has also been incorporated into the EN to SN Conversion Course. Should you require more information about the course please contact me on 21223336 or send me an email on josef.trapani@gov.mt or visit the course website on <http://www.sahha.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=332>.

May I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for the coming year to you and your families.

Josef Trapani
IV Course Co-ordinator

Email us:
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