

“Learning is about knowing how to find out what you don't know”

Editorial

The pharmacy profession is in a transition period as it is changing its focus from a product oriented to a patient-oriented one. Pharmacists world wide are embracing the philosophy of pharmaceutical care which advocates the rationalising of patients' drug therapy, educating patients about their medication and disease state and monitoring the outcomes of therapeutic plans. Contemporary pharmacy practice focuses on the patient and aims to optimise the interaction between the patient and drug product whilst encouraging the clinical aspects of patient management.

Studies carried out locally demonstrated that pharmacists, especially the younger forward-looking pharmacists, are willing to practice within the framework of this philosophy and those who have already done so locally proved to be as competent as

their foreign counterparts. The Maltese general public has also expressed the desire for pharmacists to be more active in primary health care and are willing to participate in pharmaceutical care programmes.

The Malta College of Pharmacy Practice recognises the increasing importance of continuing education and continuing professional development in preparing pharmacists to practice within a pharmaceutical care framework. Over the past year a significant number of pharmacists practising in different fields have obtained postgraduate degrees both from local and foreign institutions. These pharmacists are voluntarily contributing to MCPP educational programmes and I would like to take this opportunity to offer them our sincere thanks. Their contribution to both undergraduate and postgraduate training, together with all the

pharmacists having vast years of experience, continues to strengthen our profession.

Pharmacists who take an interest in the Malta College of Pharmacy Practice, by participating or through sponsorships, recognise the importance of continuing education. A recent editorial in the British Medical Journal cited the three most important words in education as being “I don't know” and stressed that in the modern world the most important thing was for a professional to be able to identify and admit to that which he does not know.

Respondents to our assessment questionnaire have clearly understood the meaning of the above statement and have offered their suggestions as to how we could do better in continuing education and for this we thank them.

The future of pharmacy in Malta is extremely encouraging. Not only are established members of the profession working hard to improve pharmacy locally, but are also leading members of international professional organisations. Undergraduate pharmacy students are also very active locally and internationally. Recently Ms. Sarah Caruana was elected vice-president of the European Pharmaceutical Students Association (EPSA).

The mission of the Malta College of Pharmacy Practice is to deliver a product which will help pharmacists increase their confidence in their field of practice. We look forward to the time when continuing professional development will be looked upon positively by all pharmacists. ★

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