

Working towards enhancing pharmacy practice in Malta

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In my first such contribution as President of the Pharmacy Council, the competent authority responsible for the Pharmacy Profession in Malta, may I start by saying that I consider it an honour for me to occupy this post.

Although the Council went through some changes with regards to its composition, in 2008, the Council maintained its momentum of work with a steady rate. In October 2008 the Prime Minister appointed me as President to replace Dr. Peter Fenech, together with the appointment of other members within the Council. On behalf of the Council and the entire Pharmacy Profession, I would like to thank the previous members for the sterling work that they contributed towards the profession.

One of the main achievements in 2008 was the conclusion of the Code of Ethics for the Pharmaceutical Profession. This Code was finalised after long and wide consultations with the stakeholders and the professionals themselves and now the Council can boast having a Code which lays down the principles of the practice of the Pharmaceutical Profession for the new millennium.

In 2008 the Council also nominated its disciplinary Committee following the enactment of the Disciplinary Action Procedures. This Committee, which now acts

independently from the Council has initiated its work on hearing disciplinary cases whilst the Council now only acts as prosecutor in such disciplinary cases.

The Council has also started discussing the issue of launching an information campaign about the pharmaceutical profession aimed towards raising awareness about the profession amongst the general public. In this regard a memorandum was drafted and the Council will now be seeking to launch this campaign together with other stakeholders.

In the past year the Council participated in a Twinning Light Project "The Free Movement of Health Care Professionals". This project gave the Council the opportunity to receive assistance from the Netherlands with regards to the new EU directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

The Council has initiated discussions with the University of Malta about the possibility of the University offering compensatory measures to applicants whose

qualifications are not in line with the EU directive or to those who hold a qualification from a third country.

In 2008 the Council organized the ceremony for the awarding of licences to pharmacists. This ceremony was presided by the Hon. Minister for Health the Elderly and Community Care. The Council has the intention to hold this annually as the official ceremony to mark the beginning of the pharmacists' professional career.

Apart from the projects mentioned above, the Council maintained its position as an active player in the pharmaceutical sphere by voicing its opinions on various issues concerning the profession. I can promise that the Council will maintain its momentum as was done in previous years and that it will also be seeking new challenges for the good of the profession.

I look forward to continuing on the good work that has already been done, and that the coming period will be productive for the good of the Profession and all its beneficiaries in our society.