



EUROPEAN UNION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Alment Praktiserende Lægers Europæiske Organisation – UEMO
European Union of General Practitioners – UEMO
Europäische Vereinigung der Allgemeinärzte – UEMO
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This year was a very turbulent year for general practitioners in Malta. The Medical Association of Malta after years of sterile discussions with the government to try and remedy the poor financial package of government employed doctors had to resort to industrial actions. These involved a six week strike jointly by hospital based and primary health doctors until a final agreement was reached. One of the outstanding benefits from the strike was the recognition by the government as an employer in principle and in substance to shoulder the financial burden of CME.

The other main issue which GPs are currently still facing is the acute shortage of GPs in the free government run health centres mainly due to the lack of retention of doctors within the service. After discussions with the department of primary health care this was officially recognised and as a remedy there was a bilateral agreement with the Medical Association of Malta to curtail and centralise GP services rendered to the general public.

Another reform which today reached an advanced stage towards implementation is the Health Care Professions Act which includes the set up of a register for GPs and an accreditation committee whose composition includes all interested parties including; representatives of the Medical Association of Malta, the Malta College Family Doctors and the newly set department of Family Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Malta.

Discussions between MAM and government at the moment are centered on two issues: the renewal of the present agreement on the use of GPs private cars for government related work since the present agreement expired over a year ago. The other is the setting up of vocational training associated with better pay and at the same time safeguarding the interest of currently employed GPs even through acquired rights.

Private GPs are currently experiencing the effects of a newly set up Tax Compliance Unit and their general feeling is one of being prey to the tax authorities before other categories of workers.

UEMO – PRESIDENCY

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The Malta College of Family Doctors is currently engaging in the training of future trainers to set the ball rolling to introduce vocational training for future GPs in the Primary Health Department.

General parishioners are looking forward for great reforms in training redefining general practice as a speciality and CPD for the benefit of the profession and patients.

Dr. Tonio Xuereb
Head of Maltese delegation