

Applying for an Acupuncture Clinic licence Basic Information

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Introduction

Acupuncture is an important element of traditional Chinese medicine. It began to be used more than 2500 years ago. Over the past two decades, acupuncture has spread worldwide, and has encouraged the further development of this therapy, particularly through studies from modern medical perspectives and research methodologies. To practice as an acupuncturist in Malta one must be qualified and registered with the Council for the professions complimentary to medicine (CPCM). According to the Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance, section 98, paragraph 1, the premises within which an acupuncturist can practice needs to have a valid licence issued through the Superintendence of Public Health.

1. General information

- a. In Malta, acupuncture is regulated through the Health Care Professions Act (Chapter 464) and the Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance;
- b. Acupuncture is to be performed **ONLY** by registered acupuncturists;
- c. A valid acupuncture clinic licence must be displayed in a prominent place within the waiting room of the clinic where it may be easily observed by the public upon entering;
- d. The licensing office for acupuncture clinics is within the Health Care Standards Directorate at the Health Regulation Department;
- e. Opening Hours are from 7am till 2.45pm Monday to Friday
- f. Contact details are as follows:
 - Ms Simone Schembri – Tel: 25953330, email: simone.schembri@gov.mt (Inspection appointments, payment and collection of licences)
 - Ms Silvana Attard - Tel: 25953324, email: silvana.attard@gov.mt (Payment of licences)
 - Mr Mark Tonna – Tel: 25953343, email: mark.tonna@gov.mt (Procedure to apply/documents required for application)
 - Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine (CPCM) - Mr Arthur Camilleri – Tel: 25953364, email: cpcm@gov.mt (For registration of acupuncturists)
 - Further information can be accessed from <http://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/hcs/Pages/hcs.aspx>

2. The premises

- a. The premises must be kept clean and in a good state of repair;
- b. The clinic must be adequately equipped;
- c. The clinic must have adequate lighting and ventilation;
- d. The treatment area must provide total client privacy;
- e. The treatment area walls have to be painted with water repellent paint for easy cleaning;
- f. Toilet facilities must be available and must be kept clean at all times;
- g. Premises must have an efficient drainage system;

- h. Fire-fighting equipment must at least consist of a fire extinguisher with a valid expiry date;
- i. **IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT A VALID LICENCE IS DISPLAYED AT ALL TIMES.**

3. The work area

- a. Work surfaces must be kept clean and in a good state of repair, which must be washed with hot soapy water and wiped with a 70% alcohol solution. Work tops should be of an impervious material;
- b. There should be sufficient bench space to accommodate equipment;
- c. A wash hand basin must be available in the treatment area, and must be kept in a good state of repair, clean and connected to the main drainage system. Single lever taps must have a supply of hot and cold water;
- d. Soap/suitable detergent and adequate drying facilities such as paper towels are to be provided near each wash hand basin;
- e. Client couches must be upholstered with an impervious type of material, which can be easily cleaned;
- f. A proper sharps container must be available within each work station;
- g. A foot operated pedal bin, covered with a disposable garbage bag must be available for the disposal of other waste and soiled material.

4. Toilet facilities

- a. Toilet facilities must be connected with the main drainage system and must be kept clean at all times;
- b. There must be a proper functioning flushing apparatus;
- c. The wash hand basin within the toilet room must have a supply of hot and cold water;
- d. Adequate hand washing/drying facilities must be available at all times;
- e. Proper ventilation must be present within the toilet facilities (natural or mechanical);
- f. The toilet facilities must have adequate lighting;
- g. Where possible toilet facilities are to be accessible from the waiting room.

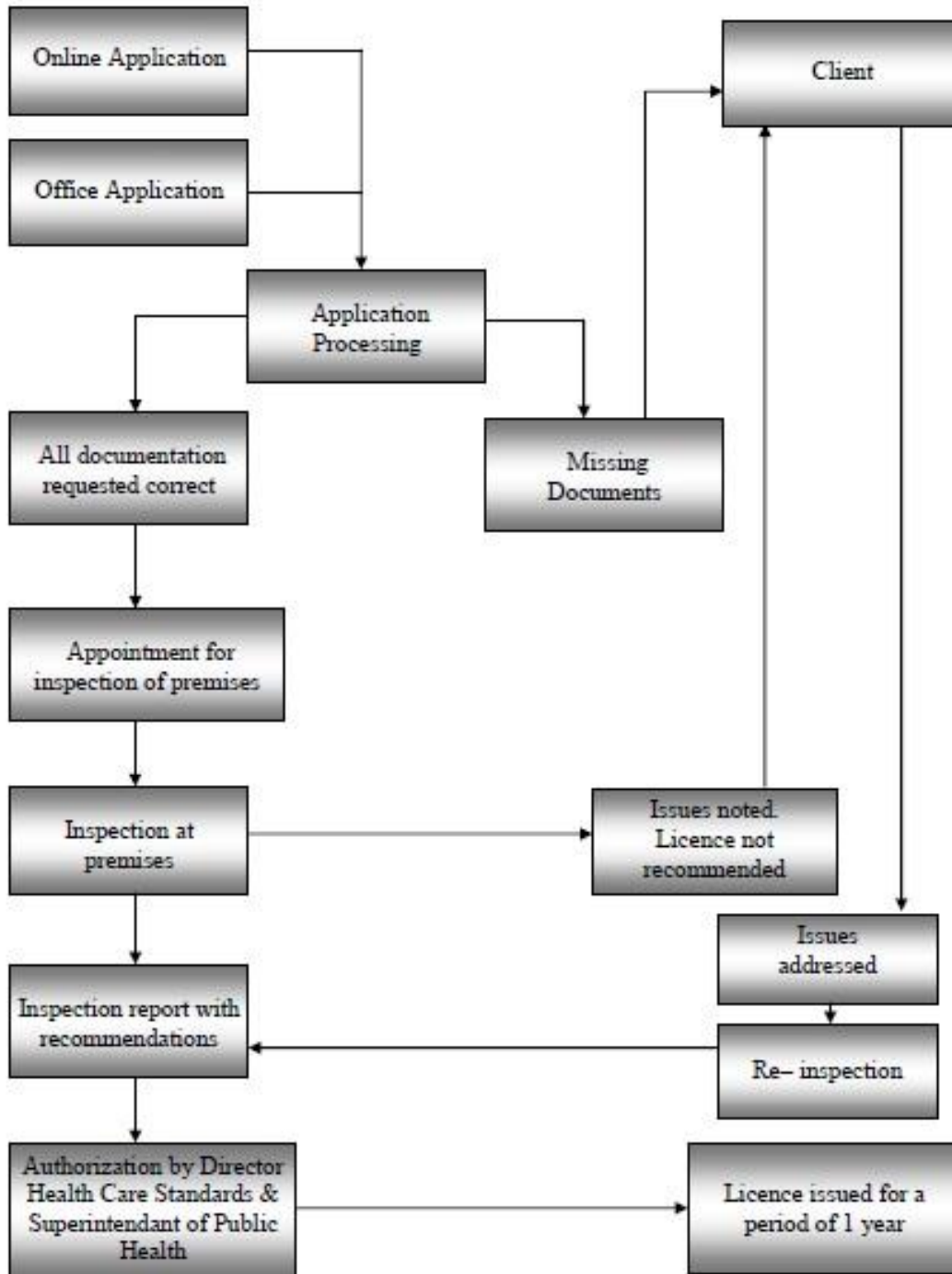
5. Acupuncture instruments and other equipment

- a. All clean and ready-to-use instruments must be kept in a closed container, case, or storage cabinet while not in use. Sterile instruments must be kept in sterile packages or containers;
- b. New disposable needles must be used on each client. All purchased disposables/consumables must carry a brand name, batch number, lot number and expiry date. Such information must be found both on the outer box and also on the wrapping of each individual item;
- c. If an autoclave is in use, a vacuum type B autoclave must be available; the effectiveness of the autoclave must be regularly tested. Results of such tests shall be recorded for review during inspection. Proper cleaning and disinfection using the proper detergents must be carried out before sterilization;
- d. Any sterilized instruments must be wrapped individually. Each wrapper must have an expiry date;
- e. All sharps must be disposed of in a container that is rigid, puncture-resistant, and leak-proof. An approved Class D waste collector must collect clinical waste.

6. Applying for a Licence

- a. A person interested in opening an acupuncture clinic must apply for a licence;
- b. Applicants must not be less than eighteen (18) years of age;
- c. One can apply for a licence either by completing the application form or through the online application found at <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/hcs/Pages/temp/Application-for-a-licence.aspx>
- d. Documents required to apply for an acupuncture clinic licence include the following:
 - o A filled out application form;
 - o A copy of the registration certificate of all acupuncturists who will be practicing in the clinic;
 - o A permit showing the proposed premises including the site plan and sketch plan or a declaration by an architect certifying that the premises carry a Planning Authority (PA) permit and that the premises can be used as an acupuncture clinic;
 - o A Hepatitis B vaccination record and an Anti Hbs titre result of the acupuncturist/s who will be practicing in the clinic;
 - o A photocopy of the applicant's identity card;
 - o If applying on behalf of a company, a copy of the Memorandum and Articles together with a declaration by the Director/s of the same company indicating that it is agreed that a licence is to be issued on the applicant's name;
 - o If the applicant is not an EU citizen, a work permit is required. Kindly note that in order for a **third country national** to practice as an acupuncturist, one has to apply through the Employment Licences at Jobs plus. One can contact Jobs plus through telephone number 22201290 or email jobsplus@gov.mt
- e. Upon receiving the completed application together with all the relevant documents, the licensing officer will vet the application;
- f. At this stage an onsite inspection is organised and the client is informed; An inspection team holding an authorisation badge will visit the premises;
- g. In case of a new establishment, a pre-licensing visit may be requested by the applicant (recommended);
- h. A self-assessment of the requirements to operate an acupuncture clinic will be sent to the applicant ten days prior to the inspection. This self-assessment will guide the applicant on what the inspection team will be expecting to find during the planned visit;
- i. Following an inspection, the inspection team will verify that all conditions for licensing are satisfactory and will be in a position to recommend the issue of a licence;
- j. In cases where deficiencies/shortcomings are identified, a meeting with the applicant to advice and highlight the deficiencies needing attention will be held. This may necessitate a follow up visit;
- k. Once all conditions for licencing are satisfactory, an acupuncture clinic licence will be issued;
- l. The licensee must comply with the conditions of licence displayed at the back of the licence;
- m. Once the application is approved and licensing is recommended, the licence can be collected from the Health Care Standards Directorate, St Luke's Hospital OPD level 1, St Luke's Square, G'Mangia or the applicant can opt to receive it by registered mail.

APPLYING FOR A LICENCE



7. Additional guidelines

- a. **Record keeping:** records of each client must be kept at the clinic and made available to the inspection team as requested. The information in these records must include: the name, age, ID number, address of patient and date of when the acupuncture service was provided. These records must be signed and kept securely for a period of at least 10 years;
- b. A fully equipped first aid box must be available in the acupuncture clinic;
- c. All practicing acupuncturists must be familiar with the necessary precautions when coming in contact with blood and body fluids;
- d. No acupuncturist may practice unless he/she is covered by a professional indemnity.