

Office of the Chief Medical Officer - Department of Health Information and Research

Structure, Functions and Responsibilities

Functions

The Department of Health Information and Research will lead the collection, analysis and delivery of health related information in Malta. It will provide high quality epidemiological information and indicators on the health of the population and health services. Health information shall be made available for policy and decision makers, for the public in general, interested institutions and other that may require it. Research initiatives shall be developed and assistance shall be provided to the Chief Medical Officer by contributing the necessary evidence for the formulation of policy and strategy in the area of public health and health services for both existing and proposed programmes.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the DHIR are as indicated hereunder:-

- To gather, analyse and disseminate health information
- To conduct epidemiological surveys and maintain disease registers
- To maintain and develop the range of services and products that the department produces, ranging from reports to requests for customised information, accurately and in a timely manner;
- To co-ordinate and prepare reports identifying issues, problems, unmet needs and service gaps, and recommend initiatives, review of policies, and amendments to procedures and programmes as required;
- To develop the infrastructure needed for the provision of non-expenditure data for the System of Health Accounts;
- To promote and carry out research;
- To communicate relevant results and reports from the above initiatives to stakeholders and the public

The Department of Health Information and Research is responsible for the management of national health data sets on mortality, cancer, congenital anomalies, organ transplant, obstetrics, hospitals information system and accidents and injuries as well as for a number of other databases on health service activity.

This department is also responsible for carrying out Health Interview Surveys. The First National Health Interview Survey was done in 2002. The European Health Interview Survey was completed in 2008.

Structure

The Department is broadly divided into two sections dealing with health status and health care activity. An administration office supports the above sections. The Department currently employs 27 Officers.

General Description of the Categories of Documents Held

Statistical reports which constitute data pertaining to the under mentioned registries:

- Hospital Statistics
- Injuries
- Births
- Birth defects
- Cancers
- Deaths
- Transplants

Parliamentary Questions

Customised health data

Standardised Operations Procedures

Description of all manuals and similar types of documents which contain policies, principles or rules or guidelines in accordance with which decisions or recommendations are made in respect of members of the Public:

DHIR policy for data requests does not fall under the FOI Act

Standard Operations Procedures

Addressing requests in terms of the Freedom of Information Act

Members of the public requesting access to documents held by this Directorate should contact the FOI Officer on 22992381 or via e- mail address foi.healthpolicy@gov.mt.