

Health Day 2019 – #UniversalHealthCoverage: everyone, everywhere

World Health Day is a global health awareness day celebrated every year on 7th April led by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO was founded on the principle that all people should be able to realise their right to the highest possible level of health. This year's slogan 'UniversalHealthCoverage: everyone, everywhere' is ensuring that everyone can obtain the care they need, when they need it, right in the heart of the community.

Universal health coverage is guaranteed in Malta thanks to accessible health care that is free at the point of care for all.

This year, in view of World Health Day's slogan '#UniversalHealthCoverage: everyone, everywhere', the Ministry for Health is collaborating with local councils to continue to educate and empower the public in making healthy lifestyle choices. The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate and Primary Health Care are visiting different localities in Malta and Gozo to disseminate the message. By leading a healthy lifestyle, we can prevent the majority of chronic diseases and deaths. Moreover, by adopting a healthy lifestyle one can help manage such conditions and prevent or delay further complications. Early pick up of risk factors can lead to further prevention and a better quality of life.

This year, we are working on giving a fresher look to the community care clinics scattered around the island. New services are being introduced within these clinics, healthy lifestyle clinics, and podiatry, speech and language clinics amongst others, ensuring that a myriad of services are within reach.

Mental health is another area of prioritisation this year with the launch of the Mental Health Strategy 2020-2030, as seen with the introduction of 24/7 psychiatric support at the Accident and Emergency Department.

Other initiatives which are already underway include the improvement in services provided for people dealing with diabetes and cancer through the provision of new medicines, new equipment, new services, and an increase in the capacity for research. The recently launched transgender strategy is also to be noted – another example of the government's commitment to profoundly improve the quality of life of all groups within our society.