Primary health care reform up for consultation soon

The primary health care reform document, that been in the pipeline for about 20 years, is expected to be issued for consultation in the coming days, Social Policy Minister John Dalli said.

“This government has made it very clear that during the coming years our overall aim is to reposition primary care to the centre of our health care system. This no doubt requires deep changes both within primary care as well as in the way people interact with hospital services,” he said in the opening speech during a conference on primary health this morning.

For many years the authorities focused on secondary health care and little attention was directed towards primary health care.

The reform would ensure that this was placed at the centre of the health care system and aimed to target both private and public practices to ensure a continuity of care.

It would also stress on the prevention and educational role of primary health and that health care is accessible to everyone.

Speaking during the conference, Director of Primary Health Denis Vella Baldacchino spoke about the need to work on team spirit within primary health care. Unfortunately, he said, this was lacking to the detriment of staff motivation and the quality and continuity of the service offered.

He also stressed on the importance of having a primary health care system that was autonomous both financially and on a managerial level.

This is the fourth time the authorities have attempted to start a consultation process on primary health reform since 1988.