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Introduction by the President of the Pharmacy Council

2004 has witnessed the creation of the Pharmacy Council emanating from the new regulatory framework regulating the Pharmaceutical profession, the Health Care Professions Act. An act which sows the fabric for more cooperation and networking within the medical field.

This year has been a truly intense year for the Pharmacy Council, new members new and regenerated enthusiasm has seen the Council launch various and conclude a number of initiatives aimed at ensuring that Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians are given the appropriate environment to provide the most fitting service to the public at large.

The Council was immediately faced with a number of tasks to bring the Council in line with the above mentioned law and thus a number of sub-committees have been set up. These Committees have been working on the new Standing Orders of the Council, a New Code of Ethics, Pharmacy Technicians Education and Recognition and on other important matters concerning the Profession.

In line with Governments policy of autonomy the Council took the unprecedented step to introduce appropriate fees for services rendered by the Council, opening its own account which shall lead within the immediate future to self funding of the Council, thereby reaching the goal of autonomy in practice.

The Council has also been working on the Data Protection Act and its implications for both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and the public at large. A series of meetings have been held with the Data Protection Office for clarification of the most frequently asked questions and guidelines will be issued in the immediate future for the better regulation and compliance of all concerned with the Law.

As a result of Malta’s accession to the EU the role of the Council’s responsibilities have increased and we are now expected to be constantly in line with European standards, both in the level of service we give and in the collection of data. Here we will therefore require the utmost cooperation of people rendering service in the pharmaceutical industry. No doubt we shall all rise to the occasion as Maltese always do. This change shall necessitate the Council’s interaction with its counterparts within the EU for a variety of reasons amongst which compliance of our members for participation and work within the European Union.

This year will also be another challenging year for the Council concluding all the initiatives undertaken and embark on new projects. It is the Council’s intention to further strengthen collaboration both with other councils but also with the Department and its authorities enhancing further the professional service the pharmaceutical field provides.

Peter Fenech LL.D, MA.
1. Composition of the Pharmacy Council

Appointments and Elections

President Appointed by the Prime Minister:
Dr Peter Fenech LL.D., MA (Sussex)

Pharmacist Appointed by the Prime Minister:
Dr Patricia Vella Bonanno, B.Pharm (Hons.), MSc, PhD

Pharmacist Appointed by the University of Malta:
Profs. Anthony Serracino Inglott, B Pharm, Pharm D, MACCP

Pharmacy Technician Appointed by the Prime Minister:
Mrs. Tania Mizzi

Elected by Pharmacists:
Mr. Jurgen Azzopardi B.Pharm (Hons.)
Mr. David Camilleri B.Pharm (Hons.), MSc
Ms Mary Anne Ciappara B.Pharm, MPhil
Mr. Anthony Sammut B.Pharm (Hons.)
Mr. Peter Zarb B.Pharm (Hons.)

Elected by Pharmacy Technicians:
Mr. Michael Bajada
Mr. Jonathan De Bon Dip. Soc. Std. (O.H.S.)

Appointed by the Prime Minister:
Mr. Alfred Baldacchino
Mrs. May Borg

Registrar
Mr. Joseph Busuttil B.A. (Hons.)

i. Dr. Peter Fenech was appointed by the Prime Minister to serve as President for a period of three years as from the 25th. February 2004.
ii. Dr. Patricia Vella Bonanno was appointed as Pharmacist on the Council by the Prime Minister for a period of three years as from the 25th February 2004.

iii. Mr. Alfred Baldacchino and Mrs. May Borg were appointed by the Prime Minister, as lay members on the Council for a period of three years as from the 25th February 2004.

iv. Ms. Tania Mizzi was appointed as Pharmacy Technician on the Council by the Prime Minister for a period of three years as from the 25th February 2004. Ms. Mizzi attends the Council meetings when issues regarding Pharmacy Technicians will be discussed.

v. Professor Anthony Serracino Inglott was appointed on the Council by the University of Malta as from the 21st December 2003 for the period of three (3) years.

vi. No election was needed to elect five Pharmacists and two Pharmacy Technicians from amongst the Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians registered with the Council since the exact number of nominations was received.

The Pharmacists elected were:

Mr. Jurgen Azzopardi B.Pharm (Hons.),
Mr. David Camilleri B.Pharm (Hons.) MSc,
Ms. Mary Anne Ciappara B.Pharm,
Mr. Anthony Sammut B.Pharm (Hons.),
Mr. Peter Zarb B.Pharm (Hons.)

The elected Pharmacy Technicians were:

Mr. Michael Bajada
Mr. Jonathan De Bon Dip. Soc. Std. (O.H.S.)

The elected professionals were elected for a period of three years as from the 18th February 2004.

2. Meetings and Attendances

i. During 2004 the Council held eight (8) Council meetings of an administrative nature. The first Council meeting was held on the 16th April 2004.
ii. It should be noted that Ms. Tania Mizzi did not attend one meeting for which she was not eligible to attend since there was no matters regarding Pharmacy Technicians to be discussed.

3. Sub-committees of the Pharmacy Council

i. Sub-Committee on Standing Orders

During the first meeting the Council felt the need to appoint a sub-committee to draft the Standing Orders of the Pharmacy Council under the Health Care Professions Act. The sub-committee was chaired by Ms. Mary Ann Ciappara. The other members were Mr. Jurgen Azzopardi, Mr. David Camilleri and Mr. Michael Bajada. The Registrar attended all the meetings and acted as Secretary to the sub-committee. The sub-committee met for seven sessions.
A draft was discussed during Council meetings and this will, in the near future be sent to the Minister for his consideration and eventual publication so that it would be enacted as a Legal Notice.

ii. **Sub-committee on Pharmacy Technicians**

The Council appointed a sub-committee to discuss the Pharmacy Technicians’ Education. This sub-committee was chaired by Prof. Anthony Serracino Inglott. The other members were Mr. Michael Bajada who was later substituted by Mr. Jonathan De Bon, Mr. Michael Bonnici and Mr. Maurice Zarb Adami. Ms. Marcon Cassar also formed part of this sub-committee but resigned due to other commitments.

The sub-committee had the task of evaluating the various Pharmacy Technician correspondence courses with which the Council was presented and subsequently make its recommendations on such. The sub-committee also met with MCAST officials to discuss any course which they were offering regarding Pharmacy Technicians and pharmaceuticals.

iii. **Sub-committee to draft a new Code of Ethics**

In 2004 the Council appointed a sub-committee to draft a new Code of Ethics for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians. The committee is chaired by Ms. Mary Anne Ciappara. The members are Mr. Jurgen Azzopardi, Mr. Jonathan De Bon and Mr. Anthony Sammut. The Registrar is assisting the committee members in administrative work. The expected date of conclusion of this report is the 31st. April 2005.

iv. **Working group on Data Protection and Pharmacists**

A working group was formed to discuss the issues regarding Data Protection and Pharmacists in view of the recently enacted Data Protection Act. The members of this group are Mr. Jurgen Azzopardi, Mr. Peter Zarb and Mr. Anthony Sammut.

This group will identify the areas for which Pharmacists will be obliged to register within the Data Protection office and further identify all their obligations under the law. Pharmacists will be made aware of their obligations once the group concludes its brief.

v. **Working group on Opening Hours of Pharmacies**

At the end of 2004, the Council started discussing the issue of Opening hours of Pharmacies. The Council appointed a working group to discuss this matter. This group is composed of six (5) Pharmacy Council members namely Mr. Anthony Sammut, Professor Anthony Serracino Inglott, Mr. Peter Zarb, Mr. Jonathan De Bon and Mr. Alfred Baldacchino. These will be joined by four (4) representatives from the industry.
4. **Elections Commission**

i. The Pharmacy Council Elections Commission was set up in January 2004 according to the Pharmacy Council (Elections) Regulations 2003. It was made up by Mr. Massimo Borg Millo, Mr. Etienne Cassar and Mr. Saviour Campbell. It received nominations for vacancies on the Pharmacy Council.

5. **Appeals Committee**

i. In May 2004 the Pharmacy Council appointed its Appeals Committee Elections Commission according to the Appeals committee (Elections) Regulations 2004. This Commission was composed of four members: Mr. Massimo Borg Millo, Mr. Etienne Cassar, Mr. Claude Farrugia and Mr. Jonathan De Bon.

ii. Since only one nomination was received, that of Mr. Owen Farrugia B.Pharm (Hons.), no election was needed. Thus Mr. Owen Farrugia was elected uncontested on the Pharmacy Council Appeals Committee for a period of three (3) years as from 26th July 2004.

iii. On the 20th October 2004, the Prime Minister appointed the rest of the members that compose the Pharmacy Council Appeals Committee for the period of three (3) years. These are Dr. Joseph Zammit Maempel as President, Dr. Ray Busuttil and Ms. Lilian Wismayer. Dr. Roger Ellul-Micallef was nominated by the University of Malta.

6. **Registers**

The Council wishes to improve and update its registers and this has been identified as a priority for 2005.

i. **Pharmacists**

The Register of Pharmacists comprised the names, addresses, registrable qualifications, date and number of registration of Pharmacists. The number of registered Pharmacists by the end of 2004 stood at 835 Principal List, 6 Commonwealth List and 1 Foreign List.

ii. **Pharmacy Technicians**

The Register of Pharmacy Technicians comprised the names, addresses, date and number of registration of Pharmacy Technicians. The number of registered Pharmacy Technicians by the end of 2004 stood at 407.

iii. **Temporary Register of Pharmacists**
The Temporary Register of Pharmacists included names, addresses, registrable qualifications, date, period of validity and number of registration of Pharmacists who did not yet receive their certificate. The number of temporary registered Pharmacists at the end of 2004 stood at 39.

7. New Registrations

i. In 2004 the Pharmacy Council registered 39 Pharmacists in the Temporary Register till the 31st. December 2004 in accordance with Article 17(4) of the Health Care Professions Act (Cap. 464 of the Laws of Malta.). Out of these, 34 were subsequently registered in the Register of Pharmacists.

ii. In 2004, the Pharmacy Council also registered 1 Pharmacist from an EU country. Apart from this the Council also registered 24 Pharmacists who graduated in 2003 but were still on temporary registration due to inactivity of the Council from December 2003 to April 2004.

8. Opening of Pharmacy Council Bank Account

2004 marked the opening of a below the line bank account for the Pharmacy Council. This enabled the Council to start levying fees in accordance with the Health Care Professions Act. This account together with the relevant Legal Notice regarding fees enabled the Council to become more autonomous.

9. Fees

In 2004 the Council made its recommendations to the Minister of Health, the Elderly and Community Care to start levying fees. These were proposed following wide consultation with all concerned. The Minister subsequently issued these fees in Legal Notice 501/2004 in accordance with the Health Care Professions Act (Cap. 464 of the Laws of Malta).

10. Certificates of Compliance

2004 marked the issue of the first certificates of compliance of the B. Pharm course to Pharmacists. The Council issued various certificates mainly to the United Kingdom on request by the Maltese Pharmacists who wished to be registered in other EU countries.

11. Complaints
In 2004 the Pharmacy Council received one (1) complaint from the Public. This was not inquired into since there were insufficient evidence in order for the accused to be investigated further.


The Pharmacy Council also raised the issue of Essential Equipment to be kept in a Pharmacy with the Health Department. The Council will also be making its proposals in the coming year.

13. Future Projects

During 2004 the Council was proactive. This can be seen namely in compliance to data protection; seeking to create a forum between all government bodies concerned with the practice / regulation of the profession / pharmaceutical sector; investigating pertinent matters concerning the practice of the profession such as opening hours, essential equipment etc.

Foremost among the future projects the Council will be embarking on is the collection of fees from the registered professionals while also updating its Registers. Together with their Annual retention fees, the registered professionals will be given their professional ID card. The Council will also be concluding its Standing Orders and Code of Ethics while presenting its proposals for the Opening Hours of Pharmacies and the Essential Equipment to be kept in a Pharmacy. The Council will strive to formulate a website which will include various resources to assist Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians while also keeping them informed of the work of the Council.

Joseph Busuttil B.A. (Hons.)
REGISTRAR