



Chairperson Report 2024

Presented 26th February 2025

During 2024, 9 board meetings were held on 19th January, 9th February, 15th March, 3rd May, 21st June, 26th July, 13th September, 25th October, and 9th December.

5 board meetings were held virtually and 4 in person. There was a quorum reached for all these meetings. In between meetings there was ongoing communication between board members and member organisations via emails and phone calls.

MHN Board for 2024 was as follows:

Gertrude Buttigieg (Chairperson)
Chris Vella (Vice- Chairperson)
Marcelline Warrington (Secretary)
Demis Cachia (Treasurer)
Dr. Christine Baluci (member)
Godwin Micallef (member)
George Sultana (member)
Mark Mallia (co-opted member)

We would like to thank the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) for approving once again the secondment of Ms. Melanie Agius Attard to assist MHN in administrative work and upcoming projects. Thanks also to the Malta Medicines Authority who are still supporting MHN through the MOU signed a few years ago.

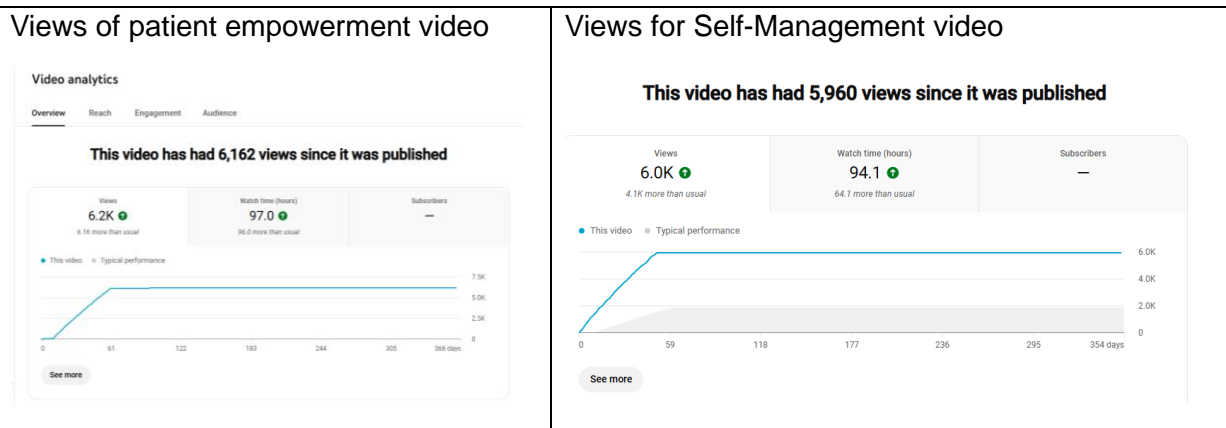
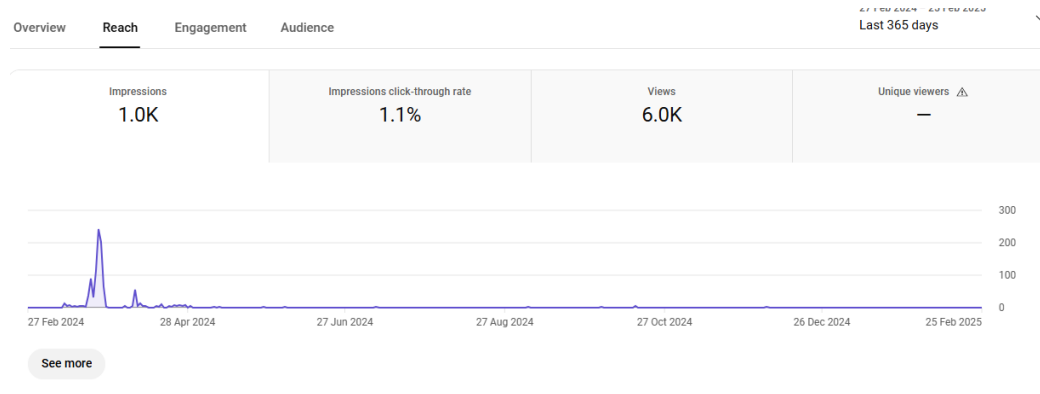
Funding and Support.

MHN does not carry out any fund-raising activities, our only source of regular income is the annual membership fees. In 2024 MHN received funds through the VOPS, SIS and CSF schemes funded by MCVS.

With funds mainly obtained by VOPS, MHN released 5 short information videos (3 in English and 2 in Maltese) under the project title **TO BE SEEN & TO BE HEARD**. These videos are targeted to create awareness on the 3 themes mainly **PATIENT EMPOWERMENT, SELF MANAGEMENT, and PATIENT-PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION**.

VOPS sponsored 80% funding for this project. Additional support was also obtained by Malta Bankers Association, Brown's Pharma Ltd, Charles Degiorgio Ltd and Pfizer.

The videos were promoted via YouTube with an estimated viewership of over 6,000 views per video.



With funds obtained mainly by Small Initiative Support fund 2024, (SIS) an information booklet (in English and Maltese) was produced under the project title UP TO YOU. This booklet 'To Be Seen & To be Heard'/'Arani u Ismagħni' is a follow up to the videos produced earlier under the VOPS project and gives easy information about the same 3 themes as the videos. This project was funded by SIS, however additional sponsors were Pfizer, Ganado Advocates and Brown's Pharma.



The Tony Guillaumier Award.

The Tony Guillaumier Award is a recognition and celebration of the impact of the work of organisations actively working in the field of health in general and active participation in the work of the Malta Health Network (MHN).

Its aim is to give recognition to the service done by a Voluntary Organisation towards the health aspects of the community. It also aims in creating awareness of the exemplary values displayed by the organisation with the goal of proposing role models to the wider society, to recognize the important contributions made in various fields and to work hand in hand with MHN in the health aspect. This award was announced by Mr Guillaumier himself in 2023. During 2024 the board has worked on establishing the criteria and nomination form. The nominations will open for the first time during 2025. **A cash price of €1,000 will be donated to the winning organisation. This price is sponsored exclusively by Mr Tony Guillaumier.**

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

8 members did not renew their membership. 2 of them not renewed for two years. Several attempts were made to get in touch with the Malta Chiropractors Associations over the past 4 years, however they never replied and thus they were removed from members.

However, 4 new Associations who joined MHN Membership in 2024 include the following:

New member organisations	
Entity	Date of Joining
Malta Association of Podiatrists	19 th January 2024
Amputees 4 Amputees Organisation	15 th March 2024
Malta Breathe Well Association	22 nd June 2024
Association of Medical Representatives	25 th October 2024
TOTAL IN ALL	4

ACTIVITIES ON LOCAL LEVEL

In February 2024 following MHN AGM we held the VOPS Project closing event where MHN launched the new videos to the public to create awareness on patient empowerment, self-management and patient-professional communication. The event was held on 26th February at the Hilltop Gardens Naxxar. The event was very well. The event was attended by the new Minister for Health Hon JoEtienne Abela and the Shadow Minister for VO sector Hon Graziella Galea.

Held meetings with important stakeholders.

Meetings held with	Date of meeting
Health Minister Hon. JoEtienne Abela	7 th February 2024
Profs. Anthony Seracino Inglott (Malta Medicines Authority)	23 rd February 2024
Advanced Care Planning with representatives from SVPR & interested entities	29 th January 2024
Total in all	3

Unfortunately, Hon Dr Adrian Delia, Shadow Minister for Health never acknowledged or replied to our request for a meeting.

ARTICLES FOR MALTA INDEPENDENT

Throughout 2024, the Malta Independent kept its support to MHN and its members by offering free publication of articles monthly.

Entity	Date of Publishing
MHN	28 TH February & 3 rd March 2024
ADHD Malta	14 th January 2024
Hospice Malta	21 st January 2024
Karl Vella Foundation	21 st January 2024
Coeliac Association Malta	4 th February 2024
GS1	25 TH February 2024
Caritas Epilepsy Malta	3 rd March 2024
Malta Dementia Association	24 th March 2024
Home Economists in Action	30 th March 2024
Malta Eczema Society	21 st May 2024
Association of Private Family Doctors	26 th May & 2 nd June 2024
Richmond Foundation	23 rd June 2024
Malta Obesity Association	7 th July 2024
SOS Malta	7 th July 2024
Europa Donna Malta	8 th September 2024
Association of Speech and Language Pathologists	27 th October 2024
Genetic and Genomic Counselling Association Malta	18 th November 2024
St. Jeanne Antide Foundation	1st December 2024
Friends of the Sick and Elderly Gozo	8 th December 2024
Total in all	19 member organisations including MHN but 21 articles in all since that MHN and Association of Private Family Doctors wrote 2 different articles in separate months.

Collaboration with European & International organisations

Thanks to the financial support of the Civil Society Fund we maintained full membership in European Patients Forum (EPF), European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), International Alliance of Patients Organisations (IAPO) and Volonteuropa. We maintained our connections with the Societal Impact of Pain (SIP), the European Patients' Academy of Therapeutic Innovation (EUPATI), World Patient Alliance (WPA) and Active Citizenship Network (ACN). Throughout 2024 we were honoured that George Sultana, MHN board member was elected on the board of EPHA and currently holds the position of treasurer.

With regards to SIP we have contributed to translate into Maltese the booklet - The Burden of Pain – A societal Impact of Pain (SIP) Book of Evidence, 2 leaflets – SIP Policy Framework for the Delivery of Pain Care and SIP Joint Statement on Pain and Mental Health.

Further for the 25th anniversary of IAPO, Gertrude Buttigieg was interviewed and clips from interview were included in 4 different videos. These can be found on MHN Facebook page.

We are participating in the SafePolyMed Project (<https://www.safepolymed.eu/>), specifically involved in the Patient Organization Hub for this project which aims to provide the patient's point of view into the development and validation of patient-reported outcomes (PROs) for safety assessment in polymedication. This project started in 2023 but is still on. Dr Christine Baluci is our main contact on this project.

On a regular basis we are requested by European or International organizations to contribute towards documents by revising content, replying to surveys, contributing to consultation documents or questionnaires and taking part in interviews, focus groups etc.

Entity	Person attended and no. of Conferences
EPHA	George Sultana (was also elected on EPHA board as treasurer) He is very active and attends for meetings which are held almost weekly
EPF	AGM represented by Demis Cachia
SIP	SIP Stakeholder Forum represented by Gertrude Buttigieg
ACN	Vaccination Informal Platform (V.I.P.) for Life-Course Immunization & ACN Training Webinar on Vaccines and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) #VaccinAction2023 EU project represented by Gertrude Buttigieg
EPF	Data Saves Lives 5-year Anniversary Event represented by Chris Vella and Marcelline Warrington
Total in all	6 in all

On a local level MHN participated in various events as follows

Entity	Date of Participation
Academy of Givers Expo	12 th March 2024 - MHN some MHN members had their own stand
MCAST fresher's week	7 th October till 10 th October 2024 (MHN together with Caritas Epilepsy Malta, Richmond foundation, Europa Donna Malta, ADHD Malta, National Alliance for Rare Disease Malta, SOS Malta and Mental Health Association Malta participated)
Med Tech Conference	7 th November till the 9 th November 2024. Gertrude Buttigieg participated on a panel discussing Patient Empowerment. NARD was also represented on same panel & also had a stand during the event.
Local Councils Expo	22 nd November till the 23 rd November 2024 (MHN together with ADHD Malta, Europa Donna Malta, Caritas Epilepsy Malta, Richmond Foundation and Mental Health Association Malta participated. Some organisations had their own stand others shared the stand with MHN
Bioethics Research Platform, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Malta and the Bioethics Consultative Committee, Ministry for Health and Active Ageing	EndCare2 Workshop on End-of-life and Care of the Elderly in the Community 19-20 September 2024 Gertrude Buttigieg & Chris Vella prepared presentation which was delivered by G Buttigieg. Event was attended also by Christine Baluci & Marcelline Warrington
MCVS	National Conference May 2024– represented by G Buttigieg
Cancer Research and innovation foundation conference	Dialogue 22 nd November 2024 Attended By Chris Vella
Total in all	7 events

MHN was also instrumental in promoting events of members on social media – Facebook & Website. We also share events organised by members among members. Disseminated various newsletters from our European Affiliations but also information from local entities which were considered of importance to members.

Posts on MHN website page	
Entity	Number
MHN general posts	9
Europa Donna Events	4
Arthritis and Rheumatism Association Malta	3
Association of Podiatrists Malta	1
Association of Speech and Language Pathologists	3
Malta Dementia Association	2
Malta Association of Physiotherapists	4
GS1 Malta	1
TOTAL IN ALL	27

Apart from sharing information about events with members, occasionally MHN board members attended for events organised by members. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to attend all activities and accept all invitations for events and meetings, but we try to do our best to participate as much as possible. We also share Facebook posts of member organizations on MHN Facebook page. We can't always share all posts but when we are tagged or there is something important, we do share.

Posts shared on Facebook	
Entity	Number
MHN general posts	45
Friends of Mount Carmel Hospital	6
Malta Diabetes Association	3
Karl Vella Foundation	5
Malta Association of Occupational Therapists	1
Richmond Foundation	6
Mental Health Association Malta	1
Action for Breast Cancer Foundation	2
Europa Donna Malta	5
Caritas Epilepsy Malta	3
Multiple Sclerosis Society	5
Hospice Malta	4
Association of Speech and Language Pathologists	2
SOS Malta	1
National Alliance for Rare Disease Malta	6
Malta Medical Student Association	1
St. Jeanne Antide Foundation	1
Coeliac Association Malta	2
TOTAL IN ALL	100

Member organisation events sent via email	
Entity	Number
Malta Dementia Society	8
Association of Podiatrists Malta	2
Arthritis and Rheumatism Association Malta	3
Association of Speech and Language Pathologists	3
Malta Association of Physiotherapists	1
Europa Donna Malta	8
Malta Eczema Society	5
Friends of Mount Carmel Hospital	5
Genetic and Genomic Counselling Association Malta	2
GS1	6
Hospice Malta	2
Karl Vella Foundation	1
Mental Health Association Malta	2
SOS Malta	1
Malta Association of Occupational Therapists	1
Richmond foundation	3
Coeliac Association Malta	1
TOTAL IN ALL	54

MHN email to member organisations	
Entity	Number
MHN emails	2
Academy Of Givers	6
Active Citizen Network (ACN)	2
Cittadinanza Attiva	13
ECH Alliance	9
European Patient Forum (EPF)	26
European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	9
EUPATI	1
IAPO	2
ISAL Foundation	1
Malta Council Voluntary Sector (MCVS)	6
SIP	4
WPA	15
ELPA	1
General email to members	65
European Lung Foundation (ELF)	9
TOTAL IN ALL	171

Proposals for funding – We had been asked by University of Malta and other local organisations to participate as partners or collaborators in EU Funded projects. Unfortunately, none of these projects made it for funding.

The Future

1. We are planning to keep our campaign on Patient Empowerment by submitting and application for a TIS funds & also collaborating with other entities to keep the information going.
2. Access to Medicines – There are many things happening at the moment, revision of Formulary as announced by the Minister we will be looking into the matter and consulting you. Option of the possibility of buy prescription medicine online in view of HTA directive & Pharma directive. To hold meetings with Commissioner for Health, Malta Medicines Authority, MCCF and other stake holders including Minister about the matter to ensure that this matter is improved.
3. Started very positive collaboration with Mater Dei new administration and being actively involved in Patient Safety Committee – to launch in the coming weeks feedback form which patients/carers/citizens in general can fill in and submit with their feedback on in-patient care especially focusing on safety aspects.
4. Collaborating with MCVS on a European Project – SPACE – which will be looking at Social Prescribing in Cancer patients
5. Partners in a project proposal submitted by SOS Malta as lead partners to host an international conference in Malta on Child wellbeing and also collaborating with Ministry for Health for the National event on Rare Disease and MAPHM on the Symposium being organised later this year.