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## Contents

<i>Foreword by Conference Chairperson.....</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Foreword by Chairperson, Scientific Committee..</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Welcome by the Dean.....</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Detailed Scientific Programme.....</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Guest Speakers .....</i>	<i>xxiii</i>
<i>Oral Presentations .....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Poster Presentations .....</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Reviews and Case Reports.....</i>	<i>181</i>
<i>Author Index.....</i>	<i>231</i>

# Foreword

## *Conference Chairperson*

On behalf of the Organizing Committee I am delighted to extend a very warm welcome to all our eminent guests, invited speakers and registrants both local and overseas to the IX Malta Medical School Conference.

This triennial conference has become a regular feature in the Malta Medical School Programme and is now in its 26<sup>th</sup> year. It is the major academic activity of the Medical School outside the formal teaching programme. It has evolved over the years since its inception in 1989 and its success and popularity have increased due to the tireless work and dedication of various people.

This year's conference will follow the general format of the previous conferences in that it is a compilation of multidisciplinary sessions and plenary lectures. This year over 900 abstracts were submitted, 200 more than in the last edition. This confirms the extent and quality of ongoing academic activity taking place locally in the various disciplines as well as the growing popularity of this triennial event.

The large number of submissions has made the work of our Scientific Committee, most ably chaired by Professor S Montefort, more arduous than before and it necessitated that we have 6 parallel sessions running concurrently throughout the whole three day programme to give adequate exposure to all our participants. The Scientific Committee have produced a vibrant and exciting scientific programme.

This is my second term as Chairman of the Malta Medical School Conference and once again I was very fortunate to have a dedicated team of colleagues who worked assiduously together over the last twenty months. Their enthusiastic and passionate support has made this event possible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their sterling work and support throughout.

I must also thank all the Pharmaceutical Exhibitors and Conference Sponsors without whose financial support this event would have been impossible. Invaluable help has also been provided by Ms Zvetlana Zerafa, Conference Secretary, the staff at the Medical School competently lead by Ms Doris Mangion and various other individuals who supported and helped us with organising this event. For this I thank them.

A particular word of thanks goes to Professor Godfrey Laferla, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery for his continuous support and encouragement.

Last but not least I would like to thank you, the participants, who will be joining us in this event. May I wish you all an enjoyable conference.



**Dr. Raymond Galea**

M.D., F.R.C.O.G., Acc. Spec. O&G (Leuv.), Ph.D., K.M.  
*Chairperson*

# Foreword

*Chairperson, Scientific Committee*

I was very pleased to be appointed chairman of the scientific committee of the ninth Malta Medical school conference for the second time running. This me gave the opportunity to continue with the successful format that we had set in the last conference and also allowed me to collaborate with a number of reputable clinicians and scientists forming part of this illustrious committee.

Once again the response to our call for papers was very well received with a record number of submissions – well over 900. This is witness to the wealth of research activity going on in our Alma Mater and the quality of the studies submitted confirms that our Medical School and its members are on the right track. Due to the overwhelming response from the participants we had no option but to increase the number of oral and poster sessions within the scientific programme. A number of oral presentation sessions will be initiated and co-chaired by illustrious guest speakers who are internationally renowned, with a good number of them being fellow Maltese clinicians who have made a name for themselves and our country abroad. The conference will also host six varied plenary lectures delivered by very distinguished speakers who will honour us with presence.

The format of the discussed poster sessions introduced during the last conference was very well received and has been retained as this offers a great chance for our up and coming doctors and their work to get the exposure that they deserve. We are also pleased that work from our sister faculties of Health Sciences and Dentistry have been submitted and will be presented in sessions which are in conjunction with those from the Medical School. Such co-ordinated sessions will lead to increased collaboration in research among the various fields of Medicine.

In conclusion I hope these changes will be to the satisfaction of the majority. I wish all of you three interesting days at this much awaited conference which will hopefully continue running in this successful manner for years to come.



**Professor Stephen Montefort**

M.D., Ph.D.(Soton.), F.R.C.P.(Lond.), F.R.C.P.(Edin.),  
F.R.C.P.(Glas.), F.A.C.P., F.E.F.I.M., F.C.C.P.  
*Chairperson, Scientific Committee*

# Welcome from the Dean

This is ninth edition of the Malta Medical School Conference since 1988. The Conference has been growing from strength to strength with over 900 contributions are being showcased this year. A large majority of these are authored by Maltese researchers.

I am proud of the fact that over the past few years the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery has invested heavily in promoting and encouraging our scientists. This support is not only financial but includes upgrading of facilities. The increase in the number of students following PhD studies within the Faculty is evidence that this strategy is bearing fruit.

Although we are fortunate to be living in the digital era where communication barriers are virtually non-existent, the need for exposure, the need for discourse and sharing of experience and ideas with our counterparts from around the world, is of primary importance. This was the original purpose of this Conference.

I take this opportunity to warmly greet our international guests and colleagues who have come over specifically to share their vast experience in their respective fields with us. This will ensure that our medical standards remain at par with the best.

Getting together such a large gathering of medical and surgical specialists would not be possible without the unstinting work of our Organising Committee to whom I extend my most sincere thanks. Thanks must also go to all our sponsors without whose backing this triennial Conference would not be possible.

Last, but most assuredly not least, my thanks to the Medical fraternity whose participation and continuous encouragement make such events possible.

I wish the Ninth Malta Medical School Conference every success.



**Professor Godfrey Laferla**

M.D., Ph.D.(Glas.), M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Lond.),  
F.R.C.S.(Edin.), F.R.C.S.R.C.P.S.(Glas.), F.R.C.S.(Eng.)  
*Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery*

# Detailed Scientific Programme

## Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

7:30 **Registration**

09:00 – 09:45 **Welcome**  
Dr. R Galea  
*Chairman IX Malta Medical School Conference*

H.E. Mary Louise Coleiro Preca  
President of the Republic of Malta

### Plenary I

**Chairpersons:** *R Galea*  
The nature and nurture  
of professional excellence  
*I. Curran*

09:45 – 10:15 **Coffee Break and Exhibitors**

### Parallel Session 1

10:15-11:30 **Session 1A**  
**Clinical Pharmacy**

**Chairpersons:** *A Lau, LM Azzopardi*

**OP1.01** Contemporary clinical pharmacy practice and education  
*Alan Lau*

**OP1.02** Pharmacist-led personalisation of antiplatelet therapy  
*Francesca Wirth, Graziella Zahra, Robert G Xuereb, Christopher Barbara, Albert Fenech, Lilian M Azzopardi*

**OP1.03** Clinical implementation of the rheumatoid arthritis medication assessment tool – RhMAT  
*Louise Grech, Victor Ferrito, Liberato Camilleri, Anthony Serracino Inglott, Lilian M Azzopardi*

**OP1.04** Assessing the perception and awareness of clinicians on biosimilars  
*Kathlene Cassar, David Zammit Dimech, Louise Grech, Dustin Balzan, Anthony Cutajar, Paul John Cassar*

**OP1.05** Chronopharmacology in hypertension – valsartan and amlodipine administration  
*Sephora Falzon, Louise Grech, Anthony Serracino Inglott, Lilian Azzopardi*

10:15 – 11:30 **Session 1B**  
**Gastroenterology, Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** *M Vassallo, A Cuschieri*

**OP1.06** The role of biomarkers in determining clinical activity in inflammatory bowel disease  
*Nicholas Paul Delicata, Neville Azzopardi, Pierre Ellul*

**OP1.07** Upper gastrointestinal malignancy - a losing battle?  
*Maria Petra Agius, Marc Gingell Littlejohn, Jo Etienne Abela*

**OP1.08** Columnar-lined oesophagus and oesophageal cancer in Malta - results from the first national patient registry  
*Rebecca Dalli, John Schembri, Alex Attard, Mario Vassallo, Pierre Ellul, James Pocock, James Degeatano, JoEtienne Abela*

**OP1.09** Pregnancy outcomes in female patients with inflammatory bowel disease  
*Stefania Chetcuti Zammit, Mandy Caruana, Konstantinos Katsanos, Gerassimos Mantzaris, Monica Cesarini, Uri Kopylov, Louise Zammit, Godfrey LaFerla, Pierre Ellul*

**OP1.10** To assess the value of blue dye and radiological contrast tests after major oesophago-gastric and duodenal surgery  
*Maria Petra Agius, Kristian Micallef, Andre Navarro, Jo Etienne Abela*

**OP1.11** Cystic lesions of the pancreas: need for local guidelines?

*Julia Gauci, Kelvin Cortis, Neville Azzopardi*

**OP1.12** Temporal trends in the epidemiology, management and outcomes of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma in Malta

*James Gauci, Martina Muscat, Jonathan Gauci, Samuel Galea, Martina Wismayer, Richard Pullicino, Kelvin Cortis, Jurgen Gerada*

10:15 – 11:30 **Session 1C  
Paediatrics**

**Chairpersons:** *V Grech, S Attard Montalto*

**OP1.13** Group B Streptococcal Disease in infants in Malta

*Mandy Caruana, David Pace*

**OP1.14** Body maps and proformas in Safeguarding: ensuring best practice

*Kevin Borg, Manjari Tanwar, Mariella Mangion, Deborah Hodes*

**OP1.15** Additional 2D ultrasound views enhance the detection of congenital heart disease in the second trimester

*Maria Anna Zammit, Victor Grech, Miriam Gatt, Simon Attard Montalto*

**OP1.16** Introduction of a blood-spot screening programme for neonatal thyroid disease: Impact on safety and cost-effectiveness.

*Ryan Farrugia, Jelena Martic, Tara Grima, Paul Soler*

**OP1.17** The clinical burden of Phenylketonuria in a Maltese cohort

*Stephen Attard, Simon Attard Montalto*

**OP1.18** ‘You have to experience it...to truly understand it’ The voices of Maltese parents raising young children born with intellectual disability risks: Emotional needs

*Elayne Azzopardi, Jois Stansfield, Julie Marshall*

**OP1.19** Paediatric Emergency Severity Index and Time of First Medical Contact

*Paul Torpiano, David Cini, Paul Soler*

10:15 - 11:30 **Session 1D  
Cardiology**

**Chairpersons:** *S. Chetcuti, R. Xuereb*

**OP1.20** Door-to-balloon time in ST segment elevation myocardial infarction at Mater Dei Hospital

*John Bonello, Maria Farrugia, Philip Dingli*

**OP1.21** Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) Related Morbidity and Mortality

*Elton Pllaha, Matthew Mercieca Balbi, Alice May Moore, Kentaro Yamagata, Sara Xuereb, Matthew Bonello, Karl Camilleri, Richard Apap Bologna, Jeremy Fleri Soler, Robert George Xuereb*

**OP1.22** Prognostic indicators and risk estimation of ten-year and twenty-year mortality following acute coronary syndrome

*Caroline Jane Magri, Roberto Debono, Neville Calleja, Joseph Galea, Stephen Fava*

**OP1.23** Red blood cell distribution width & myocardial scar burden in coronary artery disease

*Caroline Jane Magri, Tan Xiao Tian, Liberato Camilleri, Robert G. Xuereb, Joseph Galea, Stephen Fava*

**OP1.24** The role of HIF-1 $\alpha$ , VEGF and Obstructive Sleep Apnoea in the Development of Coronary Collateral Circulation

*Mark Abela, Andrew Cassar, Graziella Zahra, Philip Dingli, Elton Pllaha, Chris Deguara, Stephen Montefort*

**OP1.25** Closing the audit cycle: Have cardiovascular risk assessment and management in rheumatoid arthritis patients improved?

*Rosalie Magro, Kyra Bartolo, Roberto Corso, Malcolm Buhagiar, Nikita Taliana, Andrew Borg*

**OP1.26** Estimation of Ejection Fraction by Ventriculography vs Echocardiography: A comparative study

*Elton Pllaha, Alexander Manche', Richard Pullicino*



10:15 - 11:30 **Session 1E**  
**Medical Education,**  
**Medical Ethics**

**Chairpersons:** *P. Mallia, T. Piscopo*

**OP1.27** Research Access and Involvement among Maltese doctors – a cross sectional study  
*Jacob Vella*

**OP1.28** e-Portfolio for postgraduate medical training: the Malta experience  
*Raymond Galea, Fabio Bajada, Emanuel Gatt*

**OP1.29** Is foundation training in Malta and the United Kingdom truly equivalent?  
*Samuel Debono, Arlette Marie Vassallo, Edward Joseph Caruana*

**OP1.30** Are medical graduates able to perform basic practical procedures?  
*Rebecca Amy Stoner, Edward Joseph Caruana*

**OP1.31** End of Life decisions by doctors: a national cross-sectional survey on views and experiences.  
*Jurgen Abela*

**OP1.32** An Art and medicine experiential learning laboratory in the Middle East to measure interdisciplinary problem-solving  
*Alan Weber, Stephen Scott, Thomas Himsworth, Amy Andres*

**OP1.33** The elicitation of Jung's shadow in Star Trek  
*Victor Grech*

10:15 - 11:30 **Session 1F**  
**Molecular Sciences I**

**Chairpersons:** *G. Grech, A.G. Fenech*

**OP1.34** N-acetylaspartate (NAA) induces neuronal differentiation: a possible escape from neuroblastoma tumor  
*Carmela Mazzocchi, Ruggieri Vitalba, Francesca Agriesti, Tiziana Tataranni, Ilaria Laurenzana, Claudia Piccoli*

**OP1.35** Effects of tumour suppressor gene 101 perturbation on T cell synaptic ectosomes and B cell activation  
*David George Saliba, Michael L Dustin*

**OP1.36** Camptothecin analogues and sirtuin inhibitors induce differentiation of HL-60 acute myeloid leukaemia cells *in vitro*  
*Sarah Bugeja Kissaun, Dale Brincat, Gianluca Maresca, Darren Micallef, Samuel Zahra, Laura Krasnova, Daniele Passarella, Pierre Schembri Wismayer*

**OP1.37** Investigation of antimicrobial activity of restorative materials in relation to material properties and methods used for antimicrobial activity assessment  
*Cher Farrugia, Julie Haider, Liberato Camilleri, Josette Camilleri*

**OP1.38** Multi-scale genomic, transcriptomic and proteomic analysis of colorectal cancer cell lines to identify novel biomarkers  
*Romina Briffa, Godfrey Grech, Inhwa Um, Dana Faratian, Ying Zhou, Simon P Langdon, David J Harrison*

**OP1.39** Mutational analysis of c-KIT and PDGFRA in GIST cases diagnosed locally  
*Charlene Busuttil, Maria Masini, Christian Saliba, Sharon Falzon, Godfrey Grech, James Degaetano*

**OP1.40** CYP2C19 loss-of-function \*2 allele and coronary in-stent restenosis  
*Francesca Wirth, Graziella Zahra, Robert G Xuereb, Christopher Barbara, Albert Fenech, Lilian M Azzopardi*

**Parallel Session 2**

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 2A: Imaging**

**Chairpersons:** *G. Storto, A. Mizzi*

**OP2.01** Diagnostic-therapeutic imaging through nuclear medicine: still discovering the egg of Columbus?  
*Giovanni Storto*

**OP2.02** CT examination of the abdomen and pelvis as a first-line investigation for iron deficiency anaemia – a study of local practice and diagnostic outcome  
*Lara Sammut, Kristian Micallef, Adrian Mizzi*

**OP2.03** Adequacy of ultrasound-guided fine needle aspiration (FNA) of thyroid nodules  
*Christine Jo Cannataci, Reuben Grech*



**OP2.04** A study of the efficacy of axillary ultrasound in nodal staging in symptomatic breast cancer

*Elaine Borg, John Agius, Jessica Muscat, Gordon Caruana Dingli, Salvina Zrinzo, Joseph Debono*

**OP2.05** Outcomes of endovascular treatment of critical ischaemia in the Maltese population

*Ian Said, Adrian Mizzi, Kenneth Saliba, Kevin Cassar*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 2B**  
**Pharmacy Practice**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Serracino Inglott, M. Zarb Adami*

**OP2.06** Physician and pharmacist perception on risks associated with potential antibiotic prescribing by pharmacists

*Maresca Attard Pizzuto, Anthony Serracino Inglott, Lilian M Azzopardi*

**OP2.07** Pharmacist prescribing

*Abigail Aquilina, Louise Grech, Lilian Azzopardi, Anthony Serracino-Inglott*

**OP2.08** Drug induced effects and hospital admissions

*Nicola Farrugia, Lilian Azzopardi, Anthony Serracino-Inglott*

**OP2.09** A cross-sectional analysis of drug-drug interactions retrieved from the medications of patients on presentation at an out-patient hospital pharmacy

*Denise Borg, Sara Jo Cassar, Anthony Cutajar*

**OP2.10** Pharmacist intervention in medication reconciliation during transfer of care

*Tresha Emelene Formosa, Lilian M Azzopardi, Anthony Serracino-Inglott*

**OP2.11** Association of medicinals to sleep apnoea

*Yanica Cassar, Anthony Serracino Inglott, Stephen Montefort, Christopher Deguara, Lilian Azzopardi*

**OP2.12** Formulary for non-British National Formulary (BNF) cited items

*Timothy Scicluna, Lilian Azzopardi, Anthony Serracino Inglott*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 2C**  
**Air Quality**

**Chairpersons:** *G. Viegi, S. Montefort*

**OP2.13** Environmental risk factors for chronic respiratory diseases.

*Giovanni Viegi*

**OP2.14** Impact of school characteristics on children's respiratory health

*Peter Fsadni, Frank Bezzina, Noel Aquilina, Stephen Montefort*

**OP2.15** An increase in the severity of rhinitis and a reduction in severity of wheezing and eczema in 12- to 15- year old Maltese children over two decades (ISAAC - Malta)

*Eleanor Gerada, Hugo Agius Muscat, Lliberato Camilleri, Stephen Montefort*

**OP2.16** Respira project: binary logistic regression model for 9 respiratory questions comparing 2 urban with rural areas in Sicily and Malta

*Martin Balzan, Gaspare Drago, Christopher Zammit, Silvia Ruggieri, David Bilocca, Fabio Cibella, Stephen Montefort, Giovanni Viegi*

**OP2.17** Respira project: the chemical fingerprint of outdoor PM<sub>2.5</sub> in Malta

*Martin Balzan, Fabio Cibella, Christopher Zammit, David Bilocca, Cinzia Perrino, Silvia Canepari, Stephen Montefort, Giovanni Viegi*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 2D**  
**Anaesthesia / Intensive Care**

**Chairpersons:** *C. Abela, M. Buttigieg*

**OP2.18** Auditing anaesthetic techniques and their complications with a special emphasis on post dural puncture headaches in Central Delivery Suite in Mater Dei Hospital

*Laura Vassallo, Josef Zahra, Federica Sant, Christabel Mizzi, Carl Tua, Jessica Sant*

**OP2.19** Caesarian Section Anaesthesia - Technique and Failure Rate.

*Tatyana Farrugia, Federica Sant, Christabel Mizzi, Karen Sapiano, Matthew Bonello*

**OP2.20** Day case surgeries at Mater Dei Hospital: are criteria being adhered to?

*Christabel Mizzi, Matthew Bonello, Daniel Farrugia*

**OP2.21** Post lower segmental caesarean section pain management and modified early obstetric warning system charting  
*Christabel Mizzi, Karen Sapiano, Glenn Abela, Daniel Farrugia*

**OP2.22** Introduction of a ventilator associated pneumonia (VAP) prevention bundle  
*Anne Marie Camilleri Podesta, Carmel Abela, Michael Borg, Peter Zarb, Patricia O'Brien, Deborah Maria Pace*

**OP2.23** A comparison of local anaesthetic procedures performed at the Plastic Surgery and Burns Unit of Mater Dei Hospital Malta between 2013 and 2014  
*Edward Muscat, Matthew Borg, Joseph Briffa, Francis Darmanin*

**OP2.24** Rate of critical care admission and 30-day mortality post-emergency laparotomy in Malta  
*Elaine Borg, Maureen Bezzina, Andrew Spina, Michael Buttigieg*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 2E**  
**Anatomy and Cell Biology**

**Chairpersons:** *P. Schembri Wismayer, C. Pomara*

**OP2.25** Using an objective morphological analysis to study differentiation induction in acute myeloid leukaemia  
*Nicola Darmanin, Caroline Camilleri, Jessica Axiak, Sarah Scerri, Stephanie Farrugia, Stephanie Pullicino, Analisse Cassar, Sherif Suleiman, Sonia Patricia Stoica, Pierre Schembri-Wismayer*

**OP2.26** To fool a factor: the use of decoy oligonucleotides to target transcription factors involved in hair growth  
*Elena Farrugia, Maria Grazia Grech, Rebecca Zammit, Francesca Rappa, Francesco Cappello, Pierre Schembri-Wismayer*

**OP2.27** Mononucleate cells from psoriatic patients exhibit altered mitochondrial respiratory activity  
*Rosella Scrima, Claudia Piccoli, Nazzareno Capitanio*

**OP2.28** Is there a biomechanical cause for spontaneous pneumothorax?  
*Aaron R Casha, Alexander Manché, Ruben Gatt, Wiktor Wolak, Krzysztof Dudek, Marilyn Casha, Pierre Schembri-Wismayer, Marie-Therese Camilleri-Podesta, Joseph N Grima*

**OP2.29** Inducing differentiation of HL-60 cells via a nucleoside analog and 3-bromothiophene  
*Maria Grazia Grech, Marie Adrienne Zerafa Simler, Stefano Corso, Thomas Gatt, Dale Brincat, Rachid Benhida, Nadine Martinet, Lucienne Gatt, Analisse Cassar, Pierre Schembri-Wismayer*

**OP2.30** A Hypothesis for Reactivation of Pulmonary Tuberculosis: How Thoracic Wall Shape Affects the Epidemiology of Tuberculosis  
*Aaron Casha, Liberato Camilleri, Alexander Manché, Ruben Gatt, Daphne Attard, Wiktor Wolak, Krzysztof Dudek, Marilyn Gauci, Christopher Giordimaina, Joseph N Grima*

**OP2.31** Ultrasound investigation of scalp thickness in a study of male pattern baldness  
*Ayrton Borg, Joanna Thompson, Jessica Axiak, Caroline Camilleri, Andee Agius, Janice Borg, Gillian Pace Moore, Raymond Galea, Jean Calleja Agius, Pierre Schembri Wismayer*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 2F**  
**Public Health / Psychiatry**

**Chairpersons:** *C. Gauci, D. Cassar*

**OP2.32** Involuntary care and the new Mental Health Act  
*John M Cachia*

**OP2.33** Congenital anomalies contributing to neonatal deaths in Malta  
*Miriam Gatt, Kathleen England*

**OP2.34** Self-efficacy, self-care and outcomes in persons with diabetes  
*Sascha Reiff, Natasha Azzopardi Muscat*

**OP2.35** An income divide? Monthly household income and prevalence of non-communicable disease  
*Dorothy Gauci, Neville Calleja*

**OP2.36** Terrorist attacks and the male to female ratio at birth: the troubles in Northern Ireland, the Rodney King riots and the Breivik and Sandy Hook shootings  
*Victor Grech*

**OP2.37** Problematic internet use among young people aged 18 to 30 years in Malta: are we worrying too much?

*Anna Maria Vella, Richard Camilleri, Marilyn Clark, Janet Mifsud, Mario Mifsud*

**OP2.38** Cigarette smoking and patients with severe mental illness

*Veronica Said Pullicino<sup>1</sup>, James Gauci, Kurt Magri Gatt, Rachel Taylor East, Anton Grech*

12:45 - 14:00 **Lunch**

14:00 - 14:45 **Plenary II**  
**Prof. Thomas D'Hooghe**

**Chairperson:** *Charles Savona Ventura*

14:45 - 15:15 **Coffee Break and Exhibition**

### **Parallel Session 3**

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 3A: Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Walthaus, C. Cini*

**OP3.01** Transanal total mesorectal excision: the way forward in rectal cancer surgery  
*Albert Wolthuis*

**OP3.02** Enhanced recovery after colonic resection at Mater Dei Hospital: a prospective pilot cohort study  
*Charles Cini, Anthony Pio Dimech*

**OP3.03** Oesophagectomies in Malta over the past eight years - an analysis of our results  
*Stephen Micallef Eynaud, Julian Delicata, Franklin Abela, Benedict Axisa*

**OP3.04** Umbilical/paraumbilical hernia repair: A new technique using the Ultrapro<sup>R</sup> Plug  
*Joseph Anthony Attard, Christine Azzopardi, Alexander Attard*

**OP3.05** Incidence and odds ratio of appendicitis as a manifestation of colon cancer; a retrospective analysis  
*Matthew Bonello, Tara Grima, Jonathan Cutajar, Josephine Psaila*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 3B**  
**Diabetes**

**Chairpersons:** *S. Fava, M. Cachia*

**OP3.06** Epigenetics and Type 1 diabetes  
*Alexia-Giovanna Abela, Duncan Ayers, Stephen Fava*

**OP3.07** An unrecognized variety of diabetes amongst the Maltese population, MODY  
*Ian Baldacchino, Lauren Abela, Keith Borg Xuereb, Gillian Pace Moore, Benjamin Thornton, Ruth Caruana, Josanne Vassallo*

**OP3.08** Diabetes in pregnancy: diagnosis, management, follow up, outcome and complications  
*Maria Petra Agius, Mark Gruppetta, Josanne Vassallo*

**OP3.09** Type 2 diabetes, bone and disc height  
*Rachel Agius, Raymond Galea, Stephen Fava*

**OP3.10** A national major amputation database for Malta  
*Kevin Cassar, Jesmond Attard, Daniel Schembri, Shawn Meilak, Maria Abela, Marcette Cassar, Francesca Muscat*

**OP3.11** Predictors of diabetic nephropathy  
*Miriam Giordano Imbroll, Daniele Agius Laurretta, Trevor Tabone, Stephen Fava*

**OP3.12** Prediction of insulin resistance in Type 2 diabetes mellitus using routinely available clinical parameters  
*Caroline Jane Magri, Joseph Galea, Stephen Fava*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 3C**  
**Molecular Sciences II**

**Chairpersons:** *G. Grech, C. Saliba*

**OP3.13** Predictive genetics: the Maltese familial breast/ovarian cancer genetic screening programme  
*Jeanesse Scerri, Ritienne Debono, Christian Saliba, Godfrey Grech, Christian Scerri*

**OP3.14** CIP2A expression is upregulated in triple-negative breast cancer  
*Shawn Baldacchino, Laura Wastall, Christian Saliba, Thomas A Hughes, Valerie Speirs, Godfrey Grech*

**OP3.15** Novel molecular classifiers of basal-type subset in breast cancer patients  
*Shawn Baldacchino, Christian Saliba, Jean Paul Ebejer, James DeGaetano, Christian Scerri, Godfrey Grech*

**OP3.16** Molecular classifiers of breast cancer patients using multiplex assays  
*Christian Saliba, Shawn Baldacchino, Maria Pia Grixti, Vanessa Petroni, Robert Gauci, James DeGaetano, Anthony Fenech, Christian Scerri, Godfrey Grech*

**OP3.17** Isolation and characterization of Cancer Stem Cells from Malta patients with breast cancer.  
*Riccardo Di Fiore, Christian Saliba, Rosa Drago Ferrante, Daniela Carlisi, Giovanni Tesoriere, Godfrey Grech, Christian Scerri, Renza Vento*

**OP3.18** Differential expression of breast cancer signature genes following rapamycin treatment  
*Vanessa Petroni, Anthony G Fenech, Christian Saliba, Marie Therese Camilleri Podesta, Shawn Baldacchino, Godfrey Grech*

**OP3.19** The distribution and prevalence of HPV genotype in Maltese women diagnosed with CIN 3 and cervical cancer  
*Edward Falzon, Graziella Zahra, Charlene Busuttil, Christian Saliba, Godfrey Grech, James DeGaetano*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 3D**  
**Dentistry, Infectious Diseases, Microbiology**

**Chairpersons:** *J. Camilleri, B. Ellul*

**OP3.20** The local response to the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa  
*Charles Mallia Azzopardi, Tonio Piscopo, Claudia Fsadni*

**OP3.21** Novel tricalcium silicate cements: not just common cements  
*Maria Xuereb, Francois Paul Sorrentino, Denis Damidot, Josette Camilleri*

**OP3.22** A comparison of the microbiological flora in the oral cavity of type II diabetes mellitus vs non-diabetic adult dental patients  
*Gabrielle de Gray, Neville Calleja, Christopher Henry Barbara*

**OP3.23** Effects of steam, ethylene oxide, UV and alcohol sterilization and disinfection techniques on chemical and physical properties of selected dental filling materials  
*Cher Farrugia, Glenn Cassar, Vasilis Valdramidis, Josette Camilleri*

**OP3.24** Use of levofloxacin and piperacillin-tazobactam for empiric treatment of lower respiratory tract infections in Mater Dei Hospital: are we too trigger-happy?  
*Andrea Falzon Parascandolo, Michael Angelo Borg*

**OP3.25** Outcome of Mantoux screening in children in Malta: does BCG vaccination matter?  
*Ruth Farrugia, David Pace*

**OP3.26** Evaluating Fosfomycin as an alternative treatment for infections caused by highly resistant OXA-48 enterobacterial isolates in a Mater Dei hospitalized patients.  
*Nina Nestorova, Paul Caruana, Robert Cassar, Rosann Zammit Cassar, Elizabeth Ann Scichuna*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 3E**  
**Family Medicine, Public Health**

**Chairpersons:** *P. Sciortino, D. Vella Baldacchino*

**OP3.27** House visits in general practice: a cross sectional survey  
*Lorna Attard, Jurgen Abela*

**OP3.28** Health record documentation by doctors in a primary health care setting; a local audit  
*Adrian Mifsud, Andrea Luca Fenech, Anthony Livori*

**OP3.29** Use of lumbosacral spine radiographs in primary health care centre  
*Sean Francalanza, Glorianne Pullicino, Paul Sciortino, Philip Sciortino*

**OP3.30** Mental health in youth  
*John M Cachia*

**OP3.31** University of Malta SAHHTeK survey: results from the pilot study  
*Sarah Cuschieri, Fatemah Abdullah, Bader A Ali, Gary Bonnici, Yimeng Zhang, Anthony Cini, Christopher Barbara, Neville Calleja, Josanne Vassallo, Julian Mamo*

**OP3.32** Maternal age at delivery in Malta over the past 15 years

*Miriam Gatt, Neville Calleja*

**OP3.33** It's not all about time: factors implicated in food choices among Maltese mothers

*Elaine Dutton, Lynn B Myers*

15:15 - 16:30     **Session 3F**  
**Rheumatology, Nephrology**

**Chairpersons:** *B. Coleiro, E. Farrugia*

**OP3.34** Fluid prescription in acute medical admissions

*Jonathan Gauci, Stephanie Attard, Kyra Bartolo, Anthea Brincat, Justine Camilleri, Nicholas Paul Delicata, Darlene Muscat, Karen Anne Cassar*

**OP3.35** Treatment of psoriasis with biologic agents in Malta

*Liam Mercieca, Michael J Boffa, Eileen Clark, Lawrence Scerri, Susan Aquilina*

**OP3.36** Monitoring of patients with systemic lupus erythematosus in local practice

*Erika Cefai, Bernard Coleiro, William Camilleri, Edith Sciberras, Andrew Borg*

**OP3.37** Vaccination rates in adults with autoimmune inflammatory rheumatic diseases and the patients' perspective on their infection risk

*Rosalie Magro, Marilyn Rogers, Franco Camilleri*

**OP3.38** The outcome of kidney transplantation in anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibody associated vasculitis

*Jesmar Buttigieg, Dana Kidder, Lorna Henderson*

**OP3.39** Incidence of end-stage renal disease requiring renal replacement therapy in the Maltese islands

*Ian Baldacchino, Sarah Bezzina, Garbiella Balzan, Daniel Debattista, Emanuel Farrugia*

**OP3.40** Management, referral and outcomes of acute kidney injury

*Lara Delicata, Maria Angela Grima, Roberta Callus*

16:30 - 18:00     **Poster Session 1**

**P1 Obstetrics**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Scerri, J. Thake*

**P2 Paediatrics**

**Chairpersons:** *D. Pace, R. Parascandolo*

**P3 Cardiology**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Cassar, O. Aquilina*

**P4 Molecular Sciences**

**Chairpersons:** *B. Ellul, G. Grech*

**P5 Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** *M. Schembri, C. Cini*

**P6 Microbiology, Dentistry**

**Chairpersons:** *C. Cordina, N. Nestorova*

**Reviews and Case Reports:** *P.001- P.064*

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## Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> December

09:45 - 11:00     **Session 4C**  
**Infectious Disease,  
Microbiology**

**Chairpersons:** *B. Ellul, C. Mallia Azzopardi*

**OP4.13** An outbreak of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the MSM (men who have sex with men) population in Malta

*Valeska Padovese, Donia Gamoudi, Alexandra Gauci Farrugia, Lawrence Scerri*

**OP4.14** Analysis of changes in antiretroviral therapy regimens in the cohort of HIV seropositive patients followed up at the infectious diseases clinic

*Lisa Micallef Grimaud, Daniela Mallia, Tonio Piscopo, Charles Mallia Azzopardi*

**OP4.15** Assessment of antiretroviral drug resistance mutations in HIV seropositive patients in Malta.

*Lisa Micallef Grimaud, Ramon Casha, Daniela Mallia, Tonio Piscopo, Charles Mallia Azzopardi*

**OP4.16** Adherence to the European association for the study of the liver (EASL) and American association for the study of liver diseases (AASLD) guidelines in the management of hepatitis B

*Anette Portelli, Ramon Casha, Tonio Piscopo, Charles Mallia Azzopardi*



**OP4.17** Prioritizing the need for treatment of chronic hepatitis C patients in a methadone dispensing clinic in Malta.

*Moses Camilleri*

**OP4.18** Does continuous positive airway pressure influence respiratory infections in patients suffering from obstructive sleep apnoea?

*Kyra Bartolo, Liam Mercieca, Richard Pullicino, Rodianne Abela, Sean Apap Mangion, Julian Cassar, Matthew Zammit, Christine Gatt, Peter Fsadni, Stephen Montefort*

**OP4.19** Trends in meticillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bacteraemia, at Mater Dei Hospital, Malta; the importance of root cause analysis to drive improvement strategies.

*Andrea Falzon Parascandolo, Elizabeth Anne Scicluna, Rodianne Abela, Karl Galea, Claire Farrugia, Ermira Tartari Bonnici, Deborah Xuereb, Noel Abela, Simeone Zerafa, Michael Angelo Borg*

09:45 - 11:00 **Session 4D  
Neurosciences**

**Chairpersons:** *G. Rizzolatti, G. Digiovanni*

**OP4.20** Acute ischemic injury of astrocytes

*Robert Fern, Mario Valentino, Sarah Elwood*

**OP4.21** Pathogenesis of psychiatric disorders: role of redox dysregulation

*Luigia Trabace, Stefania Schiavone*

**OP4.22** Detection and analysis of real-time behavioural sequences of social interaction in rats

*Maurizio Casarrubea, Fabiana Faulisi, Aurora Cudia, Dario Cancemi, Maurizio Cardaci, Magnus S Magnusson, Filippo Caternicchia, Arcangelo Benigno, Giuseppe Di Giovanni, Giuseppe Crescimanno*

**OP4.23** In vivo imaging and monitoring astrocytes in health and disease

*Mario Valentino, Robert Zammit, Christian Zammit, Jasmine Vella, Richard Muscat*

**OP4.24** Modelling spinal muscular atrophy in *Drosophila*: a fruitful approach?

*Ruben J. Cauchi*

**OP4.25** Implication of inwardly-rectifying K channels in the pathogenesis of autism

*Maria Cristina D'Adamo, Elena Ambrosini, Federico Sica, Filippo Maria Santorelli, Mauro Pessia*

**OP4.26** Specific or synergistic effects of deep brain stimulation of subthalamic nucleus and L-dopa on TMS-evoked cortical reactivity in Parkinson's disease patients

*Alessandro Stefani, Giacomo Koch*

09:45 - 11:00 **Session 4E  
Orthopaedics**

**Chairpersons:** *R. Gatt, T. Azzopardi*

**OP4.27** Pre-operative intravenous fluid hydration in elective total knee and total hip replacement patients and the effects on peri-operative complications

*Alexia Farrugia, Maximilian Mifsud, Massimo Abela*

**OP4.28** Hip fracture mortality among osteoporotic patients

*Sarah Cuschieri, Stephan Grech, Ray Gatt*

**OP4.29** Comparison of the total care pathway for neck of femur fractures between Mater Dei Hospital, Malta and Barnet Hospital, London UK

*Stephan Grech, Sarah Cuschieri*

**OP4.30** Delirium and its management in hip fracture patients

*Joanna Grech, Caroline Galdes, John Cordina*

**OP4.31** Mortality following hip fracture in Malta

*Yimeng Zhang, Sandra Distefano, Neville Calleja, Kathleen England*

**OP4.32** Biochemical predictors of low bone mineral density and fracture susceptibility in Maltese postmenopausal women

*Melissa Marie Formosa, Angela Xuereb-Anastasi*

09:45 - 11:00 **Session 4F  
Molecular Sciences III**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Xuereb, R. Formosa*

**OP4.33** Aspirin impairs the carnitine shuttle pathway in redox-compromised yeast cells: implications for cancer chemoprevention and Reye's syndrome

*Gianluca Farrugia, Christian Saliba, Jelena Pistolic, Vladimir Benes, Neville Vassallo, Godfrey Grech, Joseph J. Borg, William H. Bannister, Rena Balzan*

**OP4.34** Probing the structure and tumour-suppressor properties of manganese superoxide dismutase

*Rosalin Bonetta, Gary James Hunter, Anthony Fenech, Chi Trinh, Therese Hunter*

**OP4.35** The interferon regulatory factor 5-RelA interaction targets inflammatory genes in macrophages

*David George Saliba, Irina A Udalova, Hayley L Eames*

**OP4.36** Amiloride induces alternative splicing of the PP2A $\alpha$  mRNA in haematopoietic cell lines

*Stephanie Gauci, Christian Saliba, Shawn Baldacchino, Anthony Fenech, Godfrey Grech*

**OP4.37** The effect of endoluminal treatment with c-fos oligonucleotide antisense on the expression of c-fos mRNA in human saphenous vein

*Joseph Galea*

**OP4.38** Serum amyloid A in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

*Anne Marie Bonello, Anabel Sciriha, Stephen Lungaro-Mifsud, Stephen Montefort, Bridget Ellul, Godfrey Grech, Anthony G Fenech*

**OP4.39** Dichloroacetate induces morpho-functional alterations and selective degradation of mitochondria in cells from oral squamous cell carcinomas

*Vitalba Ruggieri, Francesca Agriesti, Tiziana Tataranni, Carmela Mazzocchi, Claudia Piccoli*

11:00 - 11:30 **Coffee Break and Exhibition**

## **Parallel Session 5**

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 5A  
Gynaecology**

**Chairpersons:** A. Cameron,  
C. Savona Ventura

**OP5.01**  
*Alan D Cameron*

**OP5.02** A retrospective observational study of the causes and treatment of recurrent early pregnancy loss

*Heidi Gauci Grech, Mark Formosa*

**OP5.03** Awareness of the human papillomavirus (HPV) and HPV vaccines

*Bettina von Brockdorff, Lilian M Azzopardi, Anthony Serracino Inglott*

**OP5.04** The role of cytokines in cutaneous aging during menopause

*Marika Borg, Jean Calleja-Agius*

**OP5.05** Serum cytokines in Maltese women with miscarriage

*Christina Xerri, Edith Said, Jean Calleja-Agius*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 5B  
Respiratory**

**Chairpersons:** G. Cremona, M. Balzan

**OP5.06** C  
OPD as a multisystem condition  
*George Cremona*

**OP5.07** Predictors of inhaler technique in asthma and COPD

*Kyra Bartolo, Michael Pace Bardon, Emma Louise Schembri, Simon Mifsud, Darlene Muscat, Rachelle Asciak, Michael Sullivan, Stephen Montefort, Martin Balzan*

**OP5.08** An audit on the effect of a hospital oxygen therapy guideline on prescription and administration of oxygen therapy  
*Rachelle Asciak, Maria Ciantar, Julia Tua, Caroline Gouder, Valerie Anne Fenech, Stephen Montefort*

**OP5.09** Watching over the lung nodule  
*Jonathan Gauci, Elizabeth Cassar, Christabel Mizzi, Dillon Mintoff, Richard Pullicino, Mauro Sacco, Kay Vanhear, Andrea Vella Baldacchino, Adrian Mizzi, Stephen Montefort*

**OP5.10** Association between obstructive sleep apnoea and atopy in Malta  
*Caroline Gouder, Peter Fsadni, Jonathan Gauci, Claire Vella, Simon Gouder, Claudia Fsadni, Christopher Deguara, Stephen Montefort*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 5C  
Nephrology, Vascular  
Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** J. Farrugia Agius, K. Cassar

**OP5.11** Bacterial flora and peritoneal dialysis related infections in Malta  
*Angela Borg Cauchi, Jesmar Buttigieg, Marilyn Rogers, Mario Pio Vella, Joseph Farrugia Agius, Louis Buhagiar, Emanuel Farrugia*



**OP5.12** Incidence of dialysis-requiring acute kidney injury in the Maltese islands  
*Ian Baldacchino, Sarah Bezzina, Garbiella Balzan, Daniel Debattista, Emanuel Farrugia*

**OP5.13** Haemodialysis adequacy at the renal unit  
*Maria Bugeja, Jesmar Buttigieg, Paul Glynn, Joseph Farrugia Agius, Mario Pio Vella, Louis Buhagiar, Emanuel Farrugia*

**OP5.14** Is surveillance of native arteriovenous fistulae required in the Maltese haemodialysis population?  
*Chris Gauci, Paul Bezzina, Kevin Cassar*

**OP5.15** Endovascular abdominal aortic aneurysm repair in Malta  
*Ian Said, Francesca Theuma, Adrian Mizzi, Kevin Cassar, Louise Reichmuth, Nathania Bonanno*

**OP5.16** Recurrent varicose veins following surgical treatment in the Maltese population  
*Daniela Cassar, Pierre Demicoli, Frances Zarb, Kevin Cassar*

**OP5.17** Preliminary results of radiofrequency vein ablation programme at Mater Dei Hospital  
*Ian Said, Kevin Cassar*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 5D**  
**Haematology, Oncology**

**Chairpersons:** *S. Laspina, A. Gatt*

**OP5.18** Survival after lung cancer surgery in Malta  
*Aaron Casha, Malcolm Buhagiar, Rachel Vella Critien, Katia Muscat, Liberato Camilleri*

**OP5.19** Personalized medicine: EGFR and ALK genotyping of lung adenocarcinomas in Malta  
*Jeanesse Scerri, Maria Mifsud, Malcolm Buhagiar, Dorianne Buttigieg, Allison Cordina, Catherine Grima, Claude Magri, Nick Refalo, James DeGaetano, Christian Scerri*

**OP5.20** Use of targeted therapies in advanced and metastatic non-small cell lung cancer - our local experience.  
*Donika Metaraku, Maria Mifsud, Stephen Brincat, James Mark Debono*

**OP5.21** Modulating regulatory T cells for treatment of cancer  
*Oriana Mazzitelli, Mark Farrugia, Pierre Schembri Wismayer, Byron Baron, Analisse Cassar, Lucienne Gatt, Christian Saliba*

**OP5.22** Androgens are involved in regulation of growth and differentiation in hepatocellular carcinoma cells in vitro  
*Francesca Agriesti, Tiziana Tataranni, Carmela Mazzoccoli, Vitalba Ruggieri, Rosella Scrima, Olga Cela, Giuliana Villani, Cristoforo Pomara, Nazzareno Capitanio, Claudia Piccoli*

**OP5.23** Survival data on acute myeloid leukemia in Mater Dei Hospital  
*Asterios Giotas, Mark Grech, David James Camilleri, Alex Gatt*

**OP5.24** Does dose intensity of chemotherapeutic agents have any effect on survival or relapse in patients with high grade B-cell lymphoma?  
*Melanie Cutajar, Thomas Borg Barthet, David James Camilleri, Alexander Gatt*

11:30 - 12:45 **Session 5E**  
**Pharmacology**

**Chairpersons:** *R. Ellul-Micallef, J. Mifsud*

**OP5.25** Gentamicin prescription at Mater Dei Hospital: are guidelines followed?  
*Anthony Pio Dimech, Francesca Spiteri, Peter Zarb, Michael Angelo Borg*

**OP5.26** Safety and tolerability of omalizumab in Malta  
*Caroline Gouder, Rachelle Asciak, Stephen Montefort*

**OP5.27** Investigation into the genetic and functional relevance of the association of rs12477314 with pulmonary function  
*Godwin M Grech, Godfrey Grech, Roger Ellul-Micallef, Ian Hall, Anthony G Fenech*

**OP5.28** Pharmacogenetic aspects of thiopurine methyltransferase in Maltese individuals  
*Sarah Tarhuni, Pierre Ellul, John Schembri, Godfrey Grech, Anthony G Fenech*

**OP5.29** The validation of a guideline algorithm for the antibiotic treatment of infected lower limb wounds or ulcers.  
*Claudine Farrugia, Michael A Borg, Janet Mifsud*

**OP5.30** Pharmacoepidemiology of epilepsy in a paediatric neurology clinic  
*Anne-Marie Scerri, Doriette Soler, Neville Calleja, Patricia Vella Bonanno, Janet Mifsud*

**OP5.31** The Belief about Medicines Questionnaire (BMQ) in the Maltese language  
*Ingrid Gatt, Neville Calleja, Charles Briffa, Robert Horne, Maria Cordina*

11:30 - 12:45    **Session 5F  
Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** *G. LaFerla, J. Etienne Abela*

**OP5.32** Red cell transfusion: Is one better than two?

*Denise Borg Aquilina, Dorianne Attard, Alicia Dimech, Nathan Mark Edwards, Gabriel Galea, Daphne Gatt, Rosanne Scerri, Stefan Laspina*

**OP5.33** A closed cycle audit of coagulation screen requests of patients admitted to the Emergency Department at Mater Dei Hospital  
*Alicia Dimech, Nathan Mark Edwards*

**OP5.34** Launching and running “SA Learn” - a safety alerting system for learning at Mater Dei Hospital.  
*Miriam Dalmas, Lilian Azzopardi, Emma Manduca, Dustin Balzan, Corinne Ward, Carmel Abela*

**OP5.35** Prophylactic use of antibiotics in inguinal hernia repair  
*Samuel Anthony Galea, Charles Cini*

**OP5.36** Appendicitis in the paediatric population: outcomes at Mater Dei Hospital  
*Ramona Camilleri, Colin Mizzi, John Cauchi*

**OP5.37** Bariatric surgery in Malta - a taste of our results  
*Stephen Micallef Eynaud, Franklin Abela, Julian Delicata, Benedict Axisa*

12:45 - 14:00    **Lunch**

14:00 - 14:45    **Plenary IV**

**Chairperson:**                *S Chetcut*

Percutaneous treatment of aortic stenosis, current state and future directions

14:45 - 15:15    **Coffee Break and Exhibition**

**Parallel Session 6**

15:15 - 16:30    **Session 6A  
Psychiatry**

**Chairpersons:** *S. Zammit, D. Cassar*

**OP6.01** Psychotic experiences in adolescents: causes and consequences  
*Stanley Zammit*

**OP6.02** Trends and patient characteristics of suicides in Malta  
*Elena Marie Felice, Ethel Felice, Marie Therese Camilleri Podesta, Dolores Gauci, Kathleen England, Neville Calleja, Lydia Grixti, Charlene Bondin, Sephora Santucci*

**OP6.03** A case control and follow up study of ‘Hard to Reach’ young people who also suffered from multiple complex mental disorders  
*Nigel Camilleri, Dorothy Newbury-Birch, Paul McArdle, Deborah Stocken*

**OP6.04** Mental health problems in medical students at the University of Malta. A *longitudinal study*  
*David Cassar, Mary Anne Lauri, Josef Lauri*

**OP6.05** A snapshot of child and adolescent inpatient psychiatric services in Malta: uptake and implications for future services  
*Anton Grech, Sally Jane Axiak*

15:15 - 16:30    **Session 6B  
Pharmaceutical Sciences**

**Chairpersons:** *F. Wirth, M. Attard Pizzuto*

**OP6.06** pH and steroid orthoester hydrolysis  
*Nicolette Sammut Bartolo, Theresa Hörnemann, Victor Ferrito, Janis Vella, Anthony Serracino-Inglott*

**OP6.07** Development of a greener selective acylation method for steroids  
*Darren Cioffi, Anthony Serracino-Inglott, Nicolette Sammut-Bartolo, Victor Ferrito, Janis Vella, Lilian M Azzopardi*

**OP6.08** Waste management in pharmaceutical processes  
*Shirley Tabone, Anthony Serracino Inglott, Lilian Azzopardi*

**OP6.09** Factors affecting the concentration of ciprofloxacin in ischaemic tissue  
*Janis Vella, Maria Vella, Kevin Cassar, Lilian M Azzopardi, Anthony Serracino-Inglott, Godfrey LaFerla*

**OP6.10** Design and optimisation of novel structures for the management of Alzheimer's disease  
*Neil John Bugeja, Claire Shoemake*

**OP6.11** Optimisation of novel selective cyclooxygenase-2 inhibitors using resveratrol analogues as lead molecules  
*Clarissa Caruana, Claire Shoemake*

**OP6.12** Design of novel non-steroidal structures capable of antagonism of the oestrogen related receptor alpha for the management of breast cancer.  
*Keith Muscat, Claire Shoemaker*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 6C**  
**Cardiology, Cardiac Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** *J. Galea, A. Borg*

**OP6.13** Audit of heart failure treatment in patients with an ejection fraction less than 50% on echocardiography  
*Amy Christine Chircop, Maria Bonnici, Alice Moore, Herbert Felice, Andrew Cassar*

**OP6.14** Predictors of outcome following myocardial perfusion scan  
*Caroline Jan e Magri, Dillon Mintofoff, Ramona Camilleri, Malcolm Mintofoff, Julian Cassar, Robert George Xuereb, Stephen Fava, Joseph Galea*

**OP6.15** Uptake of unhealthy habits among Maltese grown-up congenital heart disease patients  
*Carl Camilleri*

**OP6.16** Outcomes of transcatheter aortic valve implantation in Malta  
*Andrew Cassar, Elton Pllaha, Alexander Manche, Albert Fenech, Robert George Xuereb*

**OP6.17** Haematological parameters in a trial of percutaneous and mitroflow aortic valve implantation  
*Aaron R Casha, Stephanie Santucci, Liberato Camilleri, Kentaro Yamagata, Joseph Galea, Alexander Manché*

**OP6.18** Long-term survival after aortic valve replacement: a twenty-year relative survival study  
*Alexander Manche, Liberato Camilleri, Dorothy Gauci*

**OP6.19** Galectin-3 levels in aortic stenosis patients  
*Andrew Cassar, Daniela Cassar Demarco, Graziella Zahra, Stephen Fava, Joseph Galea*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 6D**  
**Medical Education**

**Chairpersons:** *P. Mallia, T. Piscopo*

**OP6.20** Comparison of Extended Matching Questions and Short Answer Questions when testing student health professionals  
*Neville Calleja*

**OP6.21** Psychometric properties of the UMKC-SOM Climate of Professionalism instrument.  
*David M Mangion*

**OP6.22** Peer teaching in anatomy: does it really work? A cross-sectional, retrospective survey.  
*Andee Agius, Neville Calleja, Christian Zammit, Richard Pullicino, Christian Camenzuli, Roberta Sultana, Jean Calleja Agius, Cristoforo Pomara*

**OP6.23** The impact of the annual August trainee changeover on cardiac surgical outcomes in a single UK institution.  
*Edward Joseph Caruana, Samer Nashef*

**OP6.24** Cardiac surgical training is safe for patients.  
*Edward Joseph Caruana, Samer Nashef*

**OP6.25** Evaluation of a teaching programme in an acute medical unit  
*Jonathan P Mamo*

**OP6.26** Beware email invitations to submit a paper!  
*Justine Bugeja, Victor Grech*

15:15 - 16:30 **Session 6E**  
**Neurology, Medicine**

**Chairpersons:** *J. Aquilina, N. Refalo*

**OP6.27** Assessing frailty and anaesthetic risk in the older patient  
*Christine Debattista, Neville Aquilina, Peter Ferry*

**OP6.28** The use of enoxaparin in medical admissions to prevent hospital-acquired venous thromboembolism (VTE)  
*Nicholas Paul Delicata, Justine Camilleri, Jonathan Gauci, Darlene Muscat, Anthea Brincat, Stephanie Attard, Kyra Bartolo, Robert Camilleri, Karen Anne Cassar*

**OP6.29** An audit on testosterone therapy in adult males with androgen deficiency.  
*Josephine Bigeni, Mark Gruppetta, Yanica Vella, Matthew Zammit, Clayton Micallef, Maria Mifsud, Josanne Vassallo*

**OP6.30** Detailed epidemiology and radiological geometric assessment of pituitary macroadenomas: a population based study  
*Mark Gruppetta, Josanne Vassallo*

**OP6.31** A local study on patient knowledge on the use of botulinum toxin in neurological disorders  
*James Gauci, Maria Alessandra Zammit, Darren Sillato, Beatrice Farrugia, Maria Mallia*

**OP6.32** An audit of respiratory assessment and non-invasive ventilation management in motor neurone disease  
*Jonathan P Mamo*

**OP6.33** Male infertility at the male urology infertility clinic, Mater Dei Hospital Malta  
*Martha Anne Zammit, Gregory Philip Apap Bologna, Andrew John Mercieca, Jean Calleja-Agius*

#### 15:15 - 16:30 **Session 6F** **Surgical Oncology**

**Chairpersons:** *J. Degatano, C. Magri*

**OP6.34** Thyroid aspiration cytology: a three year correlation study with histopathology  
*Roderick Busuttil, Jonathan Galea, Mario Taliana, James DeGaetano, Alexandra Betts*

**OP6.35** Personalized medicine: KRAS genotyping of colorectal adenocarcinomas in Malta  
*Jeanette Scerri, Malcolm Buhagiar, Maria Mifsud, Dorianne Buttigieg, Allison Cordina, Catherine Grima, Stephen Brincat, Claude Magri, James DeGaetano, Christian Scerri*

**OP6.36** Cost comparison of oral capecitabine versus intravenous 5-fluorouracil/folinic acid in cancer based treatment  
*Lorna Marie West, Alison Brincat, Joseph Nicholas Sciberras, Rachel A. Micallef*

**OP6.37** Cost implications of current dose rounding in high cost parenteral anti-cancer treatment and potential cost savings with a 5% dose rounding  
*Alison Brincat, Joseph Nicholas Sciberras, Lorna Marie West, Ian Rapa*

**OP6.38** Uptake of unhealthy habits among Maltese grown-up congenital heart disease patients  
*Maryanne Caruana, Victor Grech*

**OP6.39** Assessing the quality and completeness of request forms in the histopathology department  
*Adriana Grech, Michelle Ceci, James Degaetano*

**OP6.40** The efficacy of lymph node fine needle aspiration cytology  
*Jason Attard, Jonathan Galea, Alexandra Betts*

#### 16:30 - 18:00 **Poster Session 2**

**P7 Gynaecology**  
**Chairpersons:** *M. Formosa, J. Mamo*

**P8 Gastrointestinal medicine**  
**Chairpersons:** *J. Pocock, J. Gerada*

**P9 Pharmacy**  
**Chairpersons:** *L. Grech, J. Vella*

**P10 Endocrinology & Diabetes**  
**Chairpersons:** *M. Gruppetta, S. Vella*

**P11 Surgery, Anaesthesia, Orthopaedics**  
**Chairpersons:** *P. Zammit, S. Sciberras*

**P12 Medicine**

**Chairpersons:** *P. Ellul, M. Vella*

**Reviews and Case Reports:** *P.065 - P.130*

## Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> December

08:00            **Registration**

9:00 - 9:45      **Plenary V**

**Chairperson:** *Dr George Galea*

### Parallel Session 7

09:45 - 11:00    **Session 7A  
Respiratory Medicine  
and Rehabilitation**

**Chairpersons:** *S. Singh, J. Micallef*

**OP7.01** Pulmonary rehabilitation - the evidence, the challenges and the use of technology  
*Sally Singh*

**OP7.02** An observational study of obstructive sleep apnoea in Malta  
*Darlene Muscat, Paul Torpiano, Matthew Mercieca Balbi, Peter Fsadni, Stephen Montefort*

**OP7.03** A local perspective on risk factors and short term outcomes in community-acquired pneumonia  
*Caroline Gouder, Michael Borg, Donia Gamoudi, Marija Agius, Nadia Gamoudi, David Farrugia, Josef Micallef*

**OP7.04** Pulmonary rehabilitation in pulmonary fibrosis patients - benefits of a 12 week programme  
*Anabel Sciriha, Stephen Lungaro-Mifsud, Rachelle Asciak, Darlene Muscat, Caroline Gouder, Simon Gouder, Peter Fsadni, Josianne Scerri, Liberato Camilleri, Stephen Montefort*

**OP7.05** The effects of pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) on inflammatory markers in stable chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients  
*Anabel Sciriha, AnneMarie Bonello, Stephen Lungaro-Mifsud, Josianne Scerri, Liberato Camilleri, Bridget Ellul, Anthony Fenech, Stephen Montefort*

09:45 - 11:00    **Session 7B  
Public Health**

**Chairpersons:** *M. Mackee, J. Mamo*

**OP7.06** The political economy of health: preparing a new generation for a changing world  
*Martin Mackee*

**OP7.07** Mental health literacy - what we don't know, we fear!  
*Miriam Camilleri, Natasha Barbara*

**OP7.08** Pilot testing international diabetes definitions  
*Sarah Cuschieri, Janice Abela, Tiziana Farrugia, Matthew Scicluna, Ayrton Borg, Ryan Camilleri, Russell Bonnici, Angeline Sapiano, Ritianne Buhagiar, Julian Mamo*

**OP7.09** Teenage delivery rates in Malta  
*Miriam Gatt, Nicholas Vella-Laurenti, Neville Calleja*

**OP7.10** Life expectancy, mortality and elections: are elections bad for our health?  
*Elaine Claire Lautier, Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat, Kathleen England, Neville Calleja*

09:45 - 11:00    **Session 7C  
Nephrology, Urology**

**Chairpersos:** *E. Farrugia, J. Sciberras*

**OP7.11** Catheter-related peritoneal dialysis infections in Malta  
*Angela Borg Cauchi, James Farrugia, Michael Borg*

**OP7.12** Seasonal variation in the peritoneal dialysis related infections in Malta  
*Jesmar Buttigieg, Angela Borg Cauchi, Marilyn Rogers, Emanuel Farrugia, Stephen Fava*

**OP7.13** A Maltese perspective on the microbiological prevalence, pathogenicity, distribution and metamorphosis of antibiotic susceptibilities of uropathogens over the past years  
*Edward Calleja, Andrew Sammut, Patrick Zammit*

**OP7.14** A re-audit of the management of acute infective admissions to Mater Dei Urology Unit  
*Tiziana Pirotta, Karen Sapiano, Gerald Busuttil*



**OP7.15** Nephrolithiasis, stone composition, meteorological conditions and seasons. Is there any connection?

*Jesmar Buttigieg, Stephanie Attard, Ruth Galea, Alex Carachi*

**OP7.16** Adverse events following intravesical Bacillus Calmette-Guérin therapy in Mater Dei Hospital, Malta

*Gerald Busuttil, Luke Zammit, Christine Debattista*

**OP7.17** Quality of informed consent for elective transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) in Mater Dei Hospital

*Keith Pace, Petra Mallia*

09:45 - 11:00 **Session 7D  
Obstetrics**

**Chairpersons:** *R. Galea, Y. Muscat Baron*

**OP7.18** Demographic changes Impacting obstetric practice in Malta: a review of 61,336 births

*Ramona Camilleri, Miriam Gatt, Yves Oscar Muscat Baron*

**OP7.19** Who gets pre-eclampsia in Malta?

*Andee Agius, Miriam Gatt, Neville Calleja, Roberta Sultana, Rena Balzan*

**OP7.20** The first 100 cycles

*Jean Calleja Agius, Mark Brincat, Mark Sant, Olivianne Cassar, Johann Craus, Max Dingli, Heidi Gauci Grech, Josephine Xuereb*

**OP7.21** Advanced maternal age and pregnancy outcome – a review of 39,683 births

*Mandy Caruana, Miriam Gatt, Yves Oscar Muscat Baron*

**OP7.22** Maternal weight gain in pregnancy

*Silvaine Marie Dalli, Theresia Anne Dalli, Estelle Abela, Isabelle Saliba*

**OP7.23** Risk factors analysis as a diagnostic aid for the diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus

*Johann Craus, Charles Savona-Ventura, Josanne Vassallo*

**OP7.24** Thyroid dysfunction in pregnancy – a pilot analysis of a Maltese cohort

*Katia Vella, Mark Formosa, Sandro Vella*

09:45 - 11:00 **Session 7E  
Neurology, Neurosciences**

**Chairpersons:** *J.A. Aquilina, R. Muscat*

**OP7.25** Pathophysiological mechanisms of absence seizures

*Vincenzo Crunelli*

**OP7.26** A critical role for serotonin 2A (5-HT<sub>2A</sub>) and 2C (5-HT<sub>2C</sub>) receptors in modulating experimental absence seizures

*Giuseppe Di Giovanni*

**OP7.27** Transient modulation of olfactory information processing by the brainstem dorsal raphe nucleus

*Szabina Furdan, Magor L Lőrincz*

**OP7.28** Impairment of synaptic homeostasis in Parkinson's disease: a high-density EEG study in different stage of the disease

*Salvatore Galati*

**OP7.29** Guillain-Barré syndrome in Malta

*Marilyn Rogers, James Gauci, Malcolm Vella, Maria Mallia*

**OP7.30** A retrospective cross-sectional analysis of CT brain scans in elderly patients presenting with acute confusion at the emergency department

*Julian Sammut Alessi, Anna Spiteri, Richard Apap Bologna, Sarah Darmanin, Joel Pollacco*

**OP7.31** Recurrent cerebrovascular events in the Maltese population

*Kurt Magri Gatt, Sean Mizzi, Maria Mallia*

09:45 - 11:00 **Session 7F  
Plastic Surgery,  
Breast Cancer Surgery**

**Chairpersons:** *F. Darmanin, G. Caruana Dingli*

**OP7.32** Breast cancer patients diagnosed by national breast screening programme

*Sarah Ellul, Kay Vanhear, Ramona Camilleri, Gordon Caruana Dingli*

**OP7.33** Timeframes in the management of new case breast cancer patients undergoing surgery with intention to treat in Malta in 2014: a retrospective analysis

*Daniela Magri, Joseph Debono, Gordon Caruana Dingli, Danika Marmara'*

**OP7.34** Pre-operative axillary ultrasound staging in breast cancer surgery

Keith Sacco,  
*Kirsten Schembri, Shawn Baldacchino, Elaine Borg, John Agius, Joseph Debono*

**OP7.35** Bilateral breast reduction surgery at Mater Dei Hospital: analysis of physical and psychological symptoms using the BREAST-Q  
*Juanita Parnis, Duncan Aquilina, Matthew Borg, Francis Xavier Darmanin, Joseph Emanuel Briffa*

**OP7.36** Improving skin graft meshing  
*Daphne Attard, Aaron R Casha, Ruben Gatt, Joseph N Grima*

**OP7.37** A review of cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma excisions: a 5 year follow-up study  
*Matthew Borg, Tara Grima, Juanita Parnis, Duncan Aquilina, Francis Darmanin, Joseph Briffa*

**OP7.38** Audit of the introduction of a see-and-treat clinic in the Plastic Surgery and Burns Unit, Mater Dei Hospital  
*Kurt Magri Gatt, Matthew Borg, Gary Magri Gatt, Victoria Rizzo, Joseph Briffa*

12:15 - 13:45 **Poster Session 3**

**P13 Respiratory Medicine and Infectious Disease**

**Chairpersons:** *B. Caruana Montaldo, C. Fsadni*

**P14 Geriatrics, General Medicine**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Fiorini, A. Borg*

**P15 Psychiatry, Public Health**

**Chairpersons:** *D. Cassar, C. Gauci*

**P16 Pharmacology**

**Chairpersons:** *A.G. Fenech, L. West*

**P17 Imaging**

**Chairpersons:** *A. Samuel, K. Saliba*

**P18 Haematology, Oncology**

**Chairpersons:** *D.J. Camilleri, C. Magri*

**P19 Neurosciences**

**Chairpersons:** *G. Rizzolatti, V. Crunelli*

**Reviews and Case Reports:** P.131 – P.204

13:45 - 14:00 **Closing Ceremony**



# Guest Speakers

**Prof. Alan D. Cameron**

*Consultant Obstetrician and Honorary Professor of Fetal Medicine  
The Ian Donald Fetal Medicine Centre, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow*

**Prof. Stanley Chetcuti**

*Associate Professor, Internal Medicine  
Eric J. Topol Collegiate Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine  
Director, Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory  
Co-Director, Structural Heart Program  
University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center*

**Prof. George Cremona**

*Professor of respiratory medicine, University of Milan  
Head of respiratory medicine and pathophysiology,  
Istituto scientifico universitario San Raffaele*

**Dr. Ian Curran**

*Assistant Director of Education & Professional Standards  
UK General Medical Council  
Professor of Innovation & Excellence in Healthcare Education  
Queen Mary University of London  
Honorary Senior Research Associate, University College London*

**Prof. Sir Alfred Cuschieri**

*Professor of Surgery, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa  
Chief Scientific Advisor, Institute of Medical Science and Technology (IMSaT), Dundee*

**Prof. Thomas M. D'Hooghe**

*Coordinator Leuven University Fertility Center, Leuven, Belgium  
Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Leuven University, Belgium  
Professor Adjunct, Faculty of Medicine, Yale University, New Haven, USA  
Chair, International Advisory Board, Institute of Primate Research, Nairobi (WHO CC), Kenya  
Editor in Chief, Gynecologic and Obstetric Investigation, Basel, Switzerland*

**Dr. George Galea**

*Independent consultant on tissue and cell banking*

**Prof. Alan Lau**

*Professor and Director, International Clinical Pharmacy Education  
University of Illinois at Chicago*

**Prof. Martin McKee**

*Professor of European Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
President, European Public Health Association*

**Prof. Diego Peroni**

*Professor in Paediatrics, Università degli Studi di Verona  
Pediatric allergologist and specialist in neonatal respirology*

**Prof. Giacomo Rizzolatti**

*Professor of Human Physiology  
Dipartimento di Neuroscienze  
Università di Parma*

**Prof. Sally Singh**

*Professor and Head of Pulmonary/Cardiac Rehabilitation and Consultant Clinical Scientist  
University Hospitals of Leicester*

**Dr. Giovanni Storto**

*Ancien Chef de Clinique CHUV Lausanne Suisse  
European Fellowship in Nuclear Medicine  
Certification Board of Nuclear Cardiology  
Researcher for National Council of Research (CNR) University "Federico II" Naples, Italy  
Nuclear Medicine Section IAEA- Wien  
Chief Nuclear Medicine IRCCS - CROB*

**Prof. Giovanni Viegi**

*Pulmonary Environmental Epidemiology Unit, CNR Institute of Clinical Physiology, Pisa, Italy.*

**Prof. Albert Wolthuis**

*Abdominal surgeon  
University Hospitals, Gasthuisberg Campus*

**Prof. Stanley Zammit**

*Professor of Psychiatric Epidemiology, University of Bristol & Cardiff University*

