

MALTA



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None identified x

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Palliative Care Services

Number of Palliative Care Services

	Inpatient Palliative Care Units	Hospices	Consultant Teams in Hospitals	Home Care Teams	Day Centres	Total
Adult/Children	0	0	1	0	0	1
Paediatric only	0	0	0	0	0	0
				Inpatient Palliative Care Units/Hospices	Chronic Hospitals/Nursing Homes	Total
Number of beds allocated to adult palliative care inpatients				0	0	0
				Adults	Children	Total
Number of Bereavement Support Teams				1	1	2

- The Malta Hospice Movement is the only provider of palliative care in Malta. The team provides home, hospital, and day care.
- Officially, there are no palliative care beds in Malta. The Malta Hospice Movement is home-care based. There are no inpatient services.
- There are oncology wards for children in the main hospital.
- Bereavement support is assessed by use of the Bereavement Risk Assessment Tool applied by key workers. This helps the movement to identify at risk members of family units. One-to-one Bereavement Support sessions are offered by qualified staff members that have a social work background and qualified volunteers who have a social work and psychology background. These staff members are also supported by trained bereavement care workers. Four support sessions are held each year.

[EAPC Palliative Care Facts in Europe Questionnaire 2005]

Adult Palliative Care Population

99%	of patients receiving palliative care have a cancer diagnosis		
1%	of patients receiving palliative care have other incurable conditions		
		Cancer	(n)
Number of patients who die at home		16.22%	-
Number of patients who die in a general hospital		72.30%	-
Number of patients who die in other healthcare institutions		11.48%	-

Comments/Sources

- The Malta Hospice Movement cares for cancer and motor neurone disease patients only.
- Place of death statistics refer to all illnesses (not just cancer)

[The Malta Hospice Movement Statistics 2004]

[EAPC Palliative Care Facts in Europe Questionnaire 2005]

Palliative Care Workforce Capacity

	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Physicians	0	0	0
Nurses	2	4	6
Social Workers	0	2	2
Psychologists	0	0	0
Physiotherapists	1	0	1
Occupational Therapists	0	1	1
Spiritual/Faith leaders	0	1	1
Volunteers	0	160	160

Comments/Sources

- Malta also has a fully qualified complementary therapist.

[EAPC Palliative Care Facts in Europe Questionnaire 2005]

Funding of palliative care services

Total number of palliative care services funded by the government	33%
Total number of palliative care services funded privately or by NGO's	67%

Comments/Sources

[EAPC Palliative Care Facts in Europe Questionnaire 2005]

Perceived use of main opioids in palliative care

Order of frequency	Opioid	Estimated cost per month (€)
First opioid	Morphine	-



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Second opioid	-	-
Third opioid	-	-
Comments/Sources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morphine is the only opioid used in palliative care in Malta. [EAPC Palliative Care Facts in Europe Questionnaire 2005]		

Key issues and challenges

- The lack of career structure for doctors and the lack of formal education for undergraduates often results in graduates not choosing to enter palliative care.
- Without specialist doctors, it is very difficult to open an in-patient unit in Malta.
- One-third of all palliative care referrals are from hospital doctors/general practitioners, and two-thirds of referrals are initiated by families.
- Due to being the only hospice service on the island, the Malta Hospice Movement is somewhat isolated.
- Morphine is available in state hospitals but not in privately owned pharmacies because of the fear of theft. Diamorphine is not available on the island.

[EAPC Palliative Care Euro-Barometer, 2005]

Palliative care accreditation

- “Unfortunately, we do not have accreditation for palliative care professionals in Malta. However, this is something that we at the Malta Hospice Movement are trying very hard with the authorities to start.”

[EAPC Palliative Care Facts in Europe Questionnaire 2005]

Palliative care milestones

- The Malta Hospice Movement is established in 1989 with the aim of introducing hospice/palliative care to the Maltese Islands.
- In 1990, the Malta Hospice Movement is twinned with Hayward House Macmillan Palliative Care Unit, Nottingham, England, providing a solid foundation for the organisation.
- A pain clinic is set up in the state general hospital in 1998 to manage chronic pain.
- Fentanyl patches are introduced in 2005 into the private health sector.

[EAPC Palliative Care Euro-Barometer, 2005]

Health policy

- The Malta Hospice Movement has initiated talks with the state Department of Health to introduce palliative care formally into medical practice in Malta.
- The Malta Hospice Movement is in the process of extending its vision and policy to include End of Life Care in accordance with WHO policy and recommendations on the global level. It is hoped that the movement will expand and develop according to the needs of the Maltese people.
- The Movement is also in dialogue with the faculty of medicine, as part of endeavours to include palliative care in the undergraduate curriculum.
- The Malta Hospice Movement did not officially mark the publication of the Council of Europe report on palliative care (Recommendation Rec (2003) 24 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the organisation of palliative care). However, the movement brought the publication to the



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attention of the state health authorities and to the faculty of medicine in 2005.

- The Malta Hospice Movement has not participated in any way in the Council of Europe discussions about euthanasia (the Marty Report).
- At the current time, there are no initiatives in Malta that are seeking the legalisation of euthanasia or assisted suicide.

[EAPC Palliative Care Euro-Barometer, 2005]

References

Naudi, T. 2002. Global perspective. Family support: a summer holiday programme for Maltese children. *Palliat. Med.*, vol. 16(2):159-61

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