The present nursing structure in Mater Dei Hospital, Malta (2016)
Practice Nurses

Specialist Nurses

Practice Development Nurses
2013 ...

Practice Nurse – have to complete a related Masters within 4 years

Senior Practice Nurse – after three years of practice – interview and all given post

Consultant PN – with a PhD call has to be issued ?? Will they continue to be hands on ??
Features and successes of specialist nursing in Malta

➢ Accessible to patients
➢ Empowering- helping people to help themselves
➢ Maximise nursing’s therapeutic contribution
➢ Complement medicine
➢ Patient-centred
➢ Cascading knowledge & skills to generalist nurses
What are the challenges for specialist nurses in Malta?

- Lack of regulation
- No shortage of doctors
- Intrinsic within the profession
- Lack of evaluation/research
- Leadership
- Politics
- Work Culture
- union
Specialist Nurses in Malta
International Challenges for Specialist Nurses

► Roles developed in an ad hoc manner
► Quick fixes to skill shortages
► No agreed definition or clear role descriptors
► Numerous different titles
► No agreed competencies or standardised education
► Lack of a structured clinical career framework
► Lack of workforce planning
My Findings

➢ The feeling of helplessness and lack of empowerment.

➢ Phrases like; ‘who shouts loudest gains’, ‘blue eyed person’ and ‘even the worst somebody will be handpicked’ - not transparent and that insecurities existed.

➢ A lack of curiosity in nursing and amongst the specialist nursing group themselves Why title had been changed to practice nurse???
We need to look at our work culture

- Focus on person-centred and evidence-based care, staff empowerment
- Work place characteristics that include: a transparent learning culture, shared beliefs that value stakeholders and leadership at all levels.
- Transformational and open
- Safe – no blame
Leadership at every level

To set clear Expectations.
To support staff in the delivery of care
To manage performance
To champion change
To create an environment where the courage to speak out is welcomed and encouraged.
Other factors affecting Nursing

- Lack of Strategic direction
- Promotional system
- Female Profession
- Medical Dominance
- Lack of transparent system
- Unions – Sectoral agreements
- Tall poppy syndrome
Four Pillars of Advanced Nursing Practice

► Education
► Practice
► Research
► Leadership/Management
Future

➢ The longer-term implications of having non-regulated specialist nurses to safeguard patients and the profession.

➢ Guidelines from the nursing council is required for the preparation of specialist nurses for urgent clarification of: the definitions of specialist nurses and the minimum requirements for specialist nurses (academic, practice and competence).

➢ An updated and maintained register should be set up with all nurses registered in the country and Europe; this should also be in public domain.

➢ Moreover, a system for revalidation to practice needs to be considered.
In Conclusion

- Health care and Nursing Roles have evolved
- Depends on the country and need: In UK nurses are prescribing, nurses have case loads, they are autonomous practitioners, perform biopsies, research/project work ....
- We are not in competition with our medical colleagues
- Work with all professions to empower nurses to improve Care and Health through effective teamwork.
- Evaluate our services and Perform research
- Be Business minded
- Become more knowledgeable - Knowledge is Power