

# NEWS & VIEWS

Down Syndrome Association Malta

December 2015 ISSUE NO. 42



Newspaper Post



# 21<sup>st</sup> March

Our Mission is to provide the means necessary to empower individuals who have Down syndrome to reach their full potential.

Our Vision is to become a model organisation that will not cease until every person who has Down syndrome is a valued member of society.

## SERVICES:

- Parental Support
- Aerobics, weekly
- Mass and Tombola, First Friday of month
- Social activities
- Talks and fora
- Christmas Party and Disco
- Book, audiotapes and video library
- "News & Views" magazine: yearly
- Members Newsletter

## MEMBERSHIP:

Full members:  
Annual: €2.50      Life: €25

Associate members:  
Annual: €5.00      Life: €35

## EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

Esperjenzi, artikli u ittri mill-qarrejja għal dan il-magazin huma dejjem milqugħa.

Experiences, articles and letters from our readers to this magazine are always welcome.

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Founded 1981

Member of the



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Persuni b'Dizabilità (F.M.O.P.D.)

Associate Member of



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Hbieb,

Bhalissa qeghdin nisimgħu hafna l-kliem 'Għixien Indipendenti' (*Independent Living*). Minħabba li kulhadd irid u qiegħed jgħid tiegħu fuq dan is-sugġett, aktar huwa faċli li persuna titħawwad. Kien għalhekk li hassejt li dan l-indirizz għandi nagħmlu fuq dan is-sugġett. Dan huwa dak li l-Assoċjazzjoni tagħna trid tgħidilna fir-rigward.

Għixien indipendenti jagħti s-setgħa lill-persuna b'dizabilità. Id-dritt li wieħed jgħix indipendenti u jkun inkluż fis-soċjetà huwa ggarantit fl-Artiklu 19 tal-Konvenzjoni tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti għad-Drittijiet tal-Persuni b'Dizabilità.

Għixien indipendenti ma jfissirx li persuna b'dizabilità tagħmel kollox waħedha, li ma tridx u jew m'għandha bżonn lil hadd, jew li trid tgħix waħedha. Għixien indipendenti jfisser li persuna b'dizabilità għandha l-istess htigijiet u l-kontroll ta' hajjitha bħal bqija tan-nies. Id-dritt li tgħix b'mod indipendenti jfisser id-dritt li tagħzel li tgħix kif trid, fejn trid, ma min trid u sa liema punt wieħed jixtieq jinteraġixxi mal-komunità. Ifisser ukoll li jkollok aċċess għal kull sapport li jkun hemm bżonn biex jintlaħqu dawn l-għażliet u biex jinkiseb standard adegwat ta' għixien.

Għall-persuni b'nuqqas intellettuali, għixien indipendenti jfisser li jkollhom kull opportunità li jkun awto-suffiċjenti kemm jista' jkun. Dan jistgħu jagħmluh bis-sapport. Skont ricerka li kienet saret mill-*European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2012*, il-*personal assistants* li jiġu magħzula mill-istess persuna b'nuqqas intellettuali jistgħu jippromwovu l-awtonomija u l-inklużjoni u dan billi



jgħinuhom jżviluppaw il-hiliet fil-hajja ta' kuljum, jiffacilitaw il-partecipazzjoni fil-komunità, jitrattaw kwistjonijiet finanzjarji u jgħinu biex jinfetaħ l-aċċess għal oġġetti u servizzi. Bl-istess mod, baġits personali u hlas dirett jista' jinkoraġixxi lil dawn il-persuni billi jagħtihom il-kontroll jagħzlu lil min ihallsu biex jassistihom.

Jekk il-*personal assistants*, jew aħna ta' madwarhom nagħmlu kollox għalihom u niddeċiedu għan-nom tagħhom, uliedna li għandhom nuqqas intellettuali qatt ma jkun jistgħu jtagħallmu jżviluppaw il-hiliet tagħhom għall-hajja adulta indipendenti u allura d-dipendenza tagħhom tiżied.

Il-ksur tad-dritt li wieħed jgħix b'mod indipendenti fil-komunità wkoll ta' spiss iwassal għal ksur ta' drittijiet oħra. Per eżempju, furzar ta' persuni b'dizabilità biex jgħixu f'ambjenti ssegregati ċċaħħadhom mill-opportunitajiet li jippartecipaw bis-siħ fil-hajja soċjali, kulturali u politika tal-komunità tagħhom.

Ix-xogħol huwa mod biex jingħeleb l-iżolament u jassikura l-inklużjoni fil-hajja tal-komunità u l-indipendenza. Għalhekk huwa ferm importanti li ninkoraġixxu u ngħinu lil uliedna fis-snin edukattivi tagħhom, inwassluhom u nippreparawhom għad-dinja tax-xogħol biex bil-għajnuna tas-servizz *tas-supported employment* isibu u jzommu l-impjieg tal-għażla tagħhom.

Nixtieq lil kull wieħed u waħda minnkom ferħ u paċi matul s-sena kollha!

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# Editorial



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Views expressed in this magazine may not necessarily  
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L-artikli u l-veduti miġjuba f'dan il-magażin mhux  
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It's that time of the year again! As you all know, the one when our Down Syndrome Association, Malta includes a copy of the News & Views in the Christmas parcels to all members and benefactors.



It is also the time when everyone; organisations and institutions take stock and make assessment of the past months in preparations to move forward.

Therefore, our Down Syndrome Association has taken part in this assessment strategy and is proud to state that 2015 was a year. A year whereby we have seen great achievements in encouraging members to be involved in the planning, implementation and participation in all activities geared to improving the well-being of our children who have Down syndrome.

These achievements and activities are echoed in the President's Address and the Administrative Report from the General Secretary at the 2015 Annual General Meeting.

I would like to ask everyone to read this Issue 42 as it has interesting articles and reports which are of utmost importance in the life of our Association and its members. One particular article showcases one of our members actively involved in hosting the Malta CHOGM 2015. There is also an article which is in place to help families

when they are told that they have a child who has Down syndrome "Early Intervention..."

May I invite you to join us on Face Book "Down Syndrome Association, Malta". On our Face Book Page, you will come face to face with the postings of activities, such as Camping 2015; Carnival 2015; Lourdes 2015 and Halloween 2015.

Other items of great importance are the message and reports from the President's desk detailing on the work and activities of the Association along with the Administrative Report from the General Secretary.

I am sure this year is probably one of the most beneficial regarding financial supports from our benefactors which have helped to sustain our income. We appreciate the newly registered members with their membership fees.

Best wishes!

**Mr. Patrick Umanah**  
M.A, B.ED (HONS), B.A (HONS) B.A.

# Positive Supported Employment Cooperative Ltd

## Min hija din il-Kooperattiva u x'inhu l-irwol tagħha?

Din il-Kooperattiva tnisstet mill-MASE – il-Malta Association of Supported Employment. Il-MASE twaqqfet wara snin ta' ħidma mill-Federazzjoni Maltija ta' Organizzazzjonijiet Persuni b'Diżabilità (MFOPD) biex hawn Malta jidhol u jibda jithaddem il-kuncett ta' *Supported Employment*.

Il-MASE (VO/1159) hija assoċjazzjoni volontarja, mhux governattiva (NGO) magħmula minn entitajiet volontarji u oħrajn governattivi li jemmnu u jaħdmu biex persuni vulnerabbli jsibu impjeg addattat għall-ħiliet tagħhom u l-iktar importanti, li dawn il-persuni jibqgħu fl-impjeg.

F'Ġunju 2015 kien sar ftehim bejn il-MASE u l-Ministru għall-Familja u Solidarjetà Soċjali biex jiġi offrut s-servizz tas-*supported employment* lill-persuni vulnerabbli għal seba' xhur. Skont il-ftehim, il-mira tas-suċċessi għal dan il-perjodu kellha tkun ta' 80 – jiġifieri sa' Diċembru 2015, il-MASE kienet marbuta li tgħin 80 persuna vulnerabbli tidhol fid-dinja tax-xogħol.

In-numru ta' suċċessi fl-aħħar ta' dan il-proġett pilota kien ta' 180 persuna.

Dan in-numru ta' suċċessi ssarraf billi l-Gvern, permezz tal-Ministeru għall-Familja u Solidarjetà Soċjali, emmen fis-*Supported Employment*, emmen fl-għaqda volontarja MASE u fil-ħidma tagħha f'dan ir-rigward u ddecieda li jkompli jara hafna aktar persuni vulnerabbli jidhlu fid-dinja tax-xogħol. Dan seta' jsir billi nholqot il-Kooperattiva *Positive Supported Employment Programme* biex professjonalment thaddem l-iskema tas-*Supported Employment* ma' kull persuna vulnerabbli u dan skont mudelli Ewropej u Amerikani.

Dawn ir-riżultati li nkisbu, din il-bidla ta' ideat dwar is-*Supported Employment* li fl-aħħar jidher li diehla fl-imħuħ ta' min jista' jagħmel differenza fil-ħajja tal-persuni vulnerabbli, hija dovuta għall-ħidma bla heda u fuq bażi volontarja tal-Federazzjoni Maltija ta' Organizzazzjonijiet Persuni b'Diżabilità (MFOPD) u bis-sapport kontinwu u bil-konsulenza professjonali tas-Sur Michael Evans li kien il-President tal-European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE)



u llum jagħti konsulenza u *training* f'dan il-qasam ma' gvernijiet Ewropej varji.

Is-*Supported Employment Programme* ser ikun ta' għajnuna kemm għall-persuni vulnerabbli kif ukoll għal min ihaddem:

- Il-persuna vulnerabbli ser tiġi mgħejjuna issib xogħol... permezz ta' hekk issir indipendenti u tagħti lura lill-Istat minflok ma tibqa' dipendenti fuq l-Istat
- Min ihaddem ser iserrah moħħu li minbarra li sab l-impjegat addattat għax-xogħol li toffri l-kumpanija tiegħu/ha, għandu s-serħan il-moħħ li dejjem u f'kull ħin jista' jdur għand din il-kooperattiva għal kwalunkwe għajnuna li xi darba jista' jirrikjedi l-impjegat tiegħu

Barra minn hekk, is-*Supported Employment Job Coaches* tal-Kooperattiva jdumu jsegwu lill-haddiem li jkun għe mgħejjun jidhol fid-dinja tax-xogħol għal żmien

pjuttost twil. Dan igib u jfisser serħan il-moħħ kemm għal min ihaddem kif ukoll għall-haddiem innifsu.

L-għan tal-*Positive Supported Employment Programme* huwa li taħdem id f'id ma' min ihaddem (*l-employer*) u mal-haddiem (*l-employee*) biex b'hekk in-numru tas-suċċessi jibqa' dejjem jikber. Dawn is-suċċessi jissarrfu billi nbeġħdu hafna persuni 'l bogħod mill-*poverty line* jew f'riskju ta' hekk. Is-suċċess li persuna vulnerabbli tidhol fid-dinja tax-xogħol, u żżomm l-impjeg, ifisser serħan il-moħħ tal-istess persuna, u tgawdi kemm il-komunità kif ukoll l-ekonomija tal-pajjiż.

Għal aktar informazzjoni fuq il-*Positive Supported Employment Programme* tistgħu ċċemplu fuq **27036602** u tistaqsu għas-sinjura Venera Micallef, il-Project Leader ta' dan il-programm. Jew inkella tistgħu tibagħtu email fuq [venera.micallef@ma4se.org](mailto:venera.micallef@ma4se.org)



# Mawra ġewwa Lourdes

Lourdes famuża magħna l-Maltin mhux biss minħabba d-devozzjoni li ħafna minna għandna lejn il-Madonna, imma wkoll minħabba x-xenarju sabiħ li toffri. Għalhekk, jien u ommi li minn dejjem kellna x-xewqa li nżuru Lourdes, fl-aħħar, rajna x-xewqa tagħna ssir realtà, għax is-Sur Pio Fenech organizza din il-mawra f'isem l-Assoċjazzjoni Down Syndrome.

## Il-Ġimgħa, 28 t'Awwissu

Fis-19:00 iltqajna mal-grupp u mal-gwida tagħna s-Sinjura Dorothy Vassallo u ma' Fr Steven Magro. Għamilna *check in* u wara qgħadna ngawdu lil xulxin fil-*waiting area* sakemm il-*gate* numru sitta fetthet fit-20:15. Tlajna l-ajruplan u fid-21:00, il-kaptan tana l-merħba abbord u dlonk bdejna l-vjaġġ f'għoli ta' 33,000 pied. It-titjira għal Lourdes ħadet sagħtejn u kwart. Wasalna fl-ajruport ta' Tarbes fil-23:00 fejn irkibna l-*coach* li ħaditna l-lukanda Ariane. Hemm



issetiljajna fil-kamra, ilbisna l-piġama u dhalna norqdu.

## Is-Sibt, 29 t'Awwissu

Fis-6:00 inżilna għall-kolazzjon u wara, flimkien mal-grupp, bdejna l-avventura tagħna billi żorna l-banjijiet li jinsabu fil-grotta. Kienet esperjenza mill-isbaħ għax kellna l-opportunità ninzlu fl-ilma mirakoluż. Wara din l-esperjenza tant memorabbli morna nieklu lura l-lukanda qabel ma morna lejn il-mithna ta' Boly fejn twieldet u għexet Bernardina għal għaxar snin. Komplejna l-mixja sakemm wasalna l-Cachot li hija kamra f'ħabs abbandunata fejn Bernardina għexet mill-1856 sal-1860 flimkien mal-familja matul id-dehriet. Imbagħad mal-gwida morna naraw il-knisja parrokkjali fejn tgħammedet Bernardina. Il-mixja tagħna wasslitna go fabbrika tal-istatwi fejn ommi ħadet l-opportunità biex tixtri statwa sabiħa ta' Sant'Antnin. Galadarba tlaqna minn hemm żorna l-mużew tax-xemgħa l-ġmiel tiegħu. Lura l-lukanda smajna l-quddies tas-18:30 qabel ma' kilna flimkien.

## Il-Hadd, 30 t'Awwissu

Wara l-kolazzjon bdejna l-ġurnata kif jixraq billi żorna l-Grotta ta' Massabielle, fejn il-Madonna dehret lil Santa Bernardette Soubirous. Hemm iċċelebrajna l-Ewkaristija u l-quddies ġiet imxandra fuq it-telewixin. Ma' tmiem il-quddies, ħafna minna ħadu ritratt ta' tiffkora quddiem il-grotta. Wara komplejna l-vjaġġ bil-*coach* għal Artouste. Wasalna fl-10:15 fejn permezz tal-*cable car* tlajna għoli ta' 2100 m. Hawnhekk qbadna t-tramm li jinsab fuq il-muntanji Franciżi hekk imsejja Pyrenees biex ingawdu xenarju mill-isbaħ. Jiena u Rosaline flimkien mal-ġenituri tagħna komplejna tilgħin il-muntanji bil-mixi biex inkomplu ngawdu l-għadira imsejja Lac d'Artouste. X'hin inżilna lura, flimkien mal-grupp qsamna l-fruntiera ta' Spanja biex

nixtru. Lura l-lukanda kilna malajr u mort norqod għax kont għajjiena. Però, kienet ġurnata sabiħa ħafna li żgur qatt ma ninsa.

## It-Tnejn, 31 t'Awwissu

Għal darb'oħra ġurnata mill-isbaħ li bdiet bi żjara tal-Betharram Caves. Dawn l-għerien Franciżi huma antiki ħafna. Biex niskopruhom kellna ninzlu ħafna taraġ f'Asson, imbagħad irkibna dgħajsa u ħriġna bit-trejn go Saint-Pé-de-Bigorre. F'dawn l-għerien stajna napprezzaw bosta stalaktiti u stalagmiti t'għamliet differenti, biċċa forma ta' labar irqaq u oħrajn ta' annimali jew bnedmin. Għal ħabta tas-14:00, eżatt wara l-pranzu ta' nofsinhar, morna naraw il-Lac (għadira) ta' Lourdes, u wara komplejna sejrjn Bartes. Bernardina għexet hawn għal wieħed u għoxrin xahar bħala tarbija u reġgħet żaret Bartes meta kellha tlettax-il sena biex tgħin lis-sinjura li kienet rabbietha billi haditilha ħsieb tat-tfal, tan-nagħaġ u tal-baqar tagħha. Fit-15:30 morna l-Meridian *shopping arcade* fejn kien hemm ħafna ħwienet sbieħ. Lura lejn il-lukanda kellna triq twila u għalhekk fil-*coach* qgħadna nkantaw. Fis-18:30, iċċelebrajna l-quddies ġewwa l-lukanda li kienet tinkludi s-sagrament tal-grizma tal-morda. Wara morna nieklu u aktar tard inghaqqadna ma' ħafna oħra għall-famuża purċissjoni Aux Flambeaux fejn kien hemm ħafna nies bix-xemgħa f'idhom jgħidu r-rużarju b'devozzjoni u b'kull lingwa. Il-purċissjoni bdiet fil-Grotta u ntemmet fil-pjazza ta' quddiem il-Bażilika tar-Rużarju.

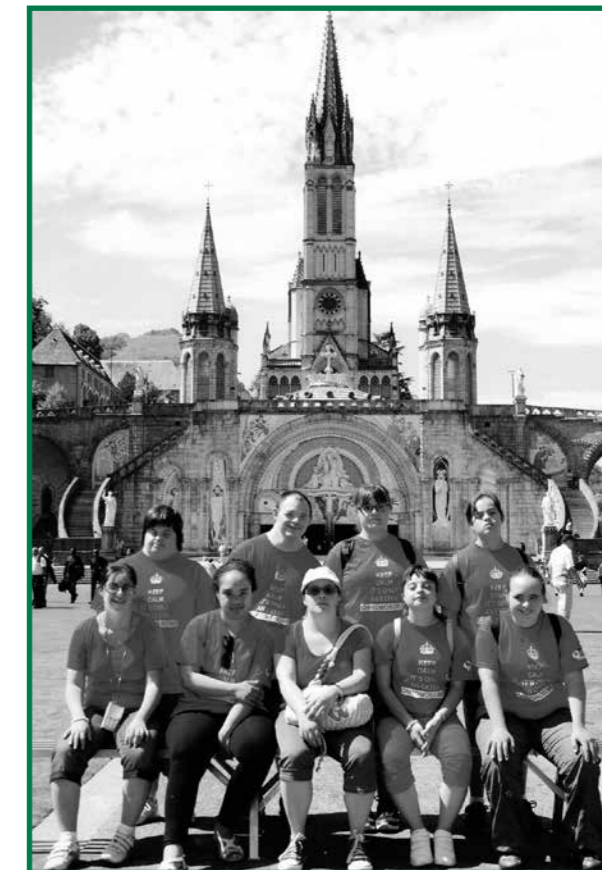
## It-Tlieta, 1 ta' Settembru

It-Tlieta, vjaġġ twil wassalna go Biarritz fejn rajna l-baħar Atlantiku u Spanja fil-bogħod. It-temp kien ikrah imma għal l-anqas m'għamlitx xita. Go Biarritz rajna l-*lighthouse* li hija l-*landmark* ta' Biarritz. Rajna wkoll il-palazz tal-imperatriċi Eugenia, il-mara ta' Napuljun III. Dan il-

palazz illum inbidel f'lukanda lussuża bl-isem ta' Hotel de Palais. Bqajna sejrjn sa hekk imsejja Madonna tal-Blata li kienet tipproteġi lis-sajjieda waqt is-sajda tagħhom. Żorna wkoll San Jean De Luz, post sabiħ qrib Spanja. Hemm rajna knisja ddedikata lil San Ġwann il-Battista. Kemm Biarritz u San Jean De Luz huma postijiet Baski. Filgħaxija żorna l-istatwi tal-Via Sagra l-għolja u wara morna norqdu.

## L-Erbgħa, 2 ta' Settembru

Wara l-kolazzjon fid-08:45, ivvjaġġajna bil-*coach* qalb xenarju meraviljuż sa Pont De Spagne. L-ewwel żorna Caunterets, belt żgħira qalb il-muntanji, fejn rajna żewġ kaskati kbar u sbieħ. Tlajna l-*cable car* f'għoli ta' 1495m fejn ergajna rajna iktar kaskati. Minn hemm bqajna sejrjn f'raħal żgħir ħafna jismu San Savin fejn rajna knisja antika ħafna li fiha kurċifiss mirakoluż. Wara l-ikel fil-lukanda morna



ma' Fr Steve nagħmlu l-Via Sagra ċ-ċatta. Qabel il-quddiesa tas-18.30 kellna f'it hin liberu. Fl-22:00 bdejna triqitna lura lejn l-ajruport ta' Tarbes biex nilhqu l-ajruplan li wassalna lura Malta.

Ninsab kuntenta ħafna li fl-aħħar qajt xewqti li mmur Lourdes kif ukoll li nsiefer

ma' sħabi tal-Assoċjazzjoni. Kienet esperjenza indimentikabbli. Jekk qatt terġa' tiġini din l-opportunità, żgur li nerġa' nżur Lourdes għax verament ħadt gost. Għaliġa huwa post speċjali!

**Maria Gauci**

## Successful people with Down syndrome who prove life is worth living

Ninety percent of people diagnosed with Down syndrome are never allowed to be born. This is a staggering statistic that we hear quite often. Lives are struck down before they ever have a chance to fulfill their missions, succeed at their dreams, or even flash a smile at their parents.

This all started when people began to believe that those with Down syndrome are better off never being born. It's the most judgmental action our society does – deciding that someone's life isn't worth living. It's time we stop believing that lie. These individuals with Down syndrome prove that joy and success are attainable to anyone.

**Angela Bachiller.** In 2013 in Valladolid, Spain, Angela became the first person with Down syndrome ever to be elected councilwoman.

**Tim Harris.** Tim is the owner of his own restaurant called Tim's Place. Tim recently created Tim's Big Heart Foundation to help other people with disabilities start their own businesses.

**Pablo Pineda.** Pablo earned a bachelor's degree in educational psychology and has gone on to be a writer, speaker, and actor.

**Christian Royal.** School never came easy to Christian, but he is highly talented at making pottery. He sells online and at an art gallery in South Carolina.

**Bernadette Resha.** Bernadette is also an artist. In addition to creating beautiful paintings, she is a public speaker and violinist as well.

**Michael Johnson.** A painter, Michael is a self-taught Naïve Folk Artist. He has painted more than 500 commissioned portraits.

**Sujeet Desai.** A musician. He plays seven instruments including the violin, piano, trumpet and saxophone.

However, in this day and age, a person with Down syndrome is lucky to be born at all due to prenatal testing and recommendations from uninformed doctors. Thankfully there are many successful and happy people with Down syndrome sharing their story so that fewer and fewer parents who receive a prenatal Down syndrome diagnosis will be pressured into aborting their child.

**Quoted from Live Action News**

I am Thomas Buttigieg and I took part in the CHOGM Ceremony. I took part because I was nominated by the Down Syndrome Association. I was then interviewed and chosen.

We had a lot of rehearsals before the actual day, 27th November. On the day of the Ceremony, we waited for the Heads of Government at Dar il-Mediterran. I escorted the President of Sri Lanka and his wife. We were assigned to different Heads of Government. As they arrived, each person escorted their assigned leader to the Republic Hall. One by one, the Heads of Government were called on stage accompanied by the person assigned to them. When all the Heads of

Government were seated, the Opening Ceremony began. The Prime Minister and the Queen gave a speech. After, there was a performance - a dance including the national animal of each country and other performances. The song "The People We Are" was sung by local singers, a choir and the children who took part in the CHOGM.

When this was over, the Heads of Government were escorted to take a photo, then a coffee.

It was a great experience that I will always remember.

**Thomas Buttigieg**



# Il-Jum Dinji tad-Down Syndrome

## World Down Syndrome Day

**Kull sena, fil-21 ta' Marzu, jiġi ċelebrat il-Jum Dinji tad-Down Syndrome.**  
*Every year, on the 21<sup>st</sup> March, World Down Syndrome Day is celebrated.*

**Dan biex titqajjem kuxjenza dwar id-drittijiet tagħna.**  
*This helps raise awareness about our rights.*

**Din is-sena (2015), l-Assoċjazzjoni Down Syndrome organizzat l-attivitajiet tal-okkażjoni f'Għawdex.**

*This year (2015), the Down Syndrome Association organised the activities for the occasion in Gozo.*

**Ġiet organizzata konferenza bit-tema l-Kustodja, kienet ċelebrata quddiesa mill-Isqof t'Għawdex, u saret awareness walk u żjara fil-mużew ta' Karmni Grima.**  
*A conference about the Guardianship Act was organised and a Mass for the occasion was celebrated by H.E. the Bishop for Gozo. An awareness walk was held and we visited Karmni Grima's Museum.*



**Il-preżenza tal-Onor. Dr. Justyne Caruana, Segretarja Parlamentari għad-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Diżabilità u Anzjanità Attiva għenet ħafna biex inwasslu l-messaġġ tagħna.**

*The presence of Hon Dr Justyne Caruana, Parliamentary Secretary for the Rights of Persons with Disability & Active Ageing, helped a lot to send out our message.*

L-Onor. Justyne Caruana, Segretarju Parlamentari għad-Drittijiet tal-Persuni b'Diżabilità, il-President tal-Assoċ. Down Syndrome, Ms. Marthese Mugliette u Ms Marilyn Spiteri, Reġistratur tal-Bord tal-Kustodja



Waqt l-awareness walk fir-Rabat Għawdex

**Ġew camera persons minn stazzjonijiet diversi u ġibdu video u ħadu wkoll ritratti li ntwerew fuq it-TV.**  
*Several camera persons from various stations came to take photos and videos which were then shown on TV.*

**Anke aħna, it-Team tar-Radio Valo Malta, ħadna r-ritratti biex stajna naghmlu l-video tagħna.**  
*We, the Radio Valo Malta Team, also took photos to make our own video.*

**Is-sitwazzjoni preżenti ta' persuni Down syndrome f'Malta hija waħda tajba, għalkemm għad fadal xi jsir.**  
*The present situation for persons who have Down syndrome in Malta is quite good but lot more need to be done.*

**Aħna t-tim ta' Radio Valo aħna membri tal-Assoċjazzjoni Down Syndrome u bħala tim ngħinu wkoll biex inqajmu**

**kuxjenza dwar drittijiet u l-bzonnijiet tagħna.**  
*We, the Radio Valo Team, are members of the Down Syndrome Association and as a team, we also help raise awareness about our rights and needs.*

**Aħna ħadna ħafna gost li din is-sena morna niċcelebraw dan il-jum importanti għalina f'Għawdex għax kellna ċ-ċans niltaqgħu u nsiru nafu aktar lil sħabna l-Għawdxin.**  
*We were glad that this year we went to Gozo to celebrate this important day for us as this helped us meet and get to know our Gozitan friends better.*

**Radio Valo Malta Team**  
**David Cauchi**  
**Gayle Mugliette**  
**Maria Spiteri**  
**Nadya Gatt**  
**Thomas Buttigieg**



# Early Intervention Service

Development is a continuous process that follows an orderly sequence. However, one has to keep in mind that all children develop at their own pace and that there are individual differences. The development of children with Down syndrome follows the same pattern as those of typically developing children but usually at a slower rate. The principle behind Early Intervention is to minimize the delays and maximize the chances of reaching typical milestones in development by building on the child's strengths.

The Early Intervention Service within the Ministry of Education at the Student Services Department aims to provide a family centred and comprehensive support system for children with developmental disabilities or delays and their families in the first five years of life. It also supports and implements screening procedures to increase the early identification of difficulties and provide the family support as early as possible.

## Early Childhood Intervention Service aims:

- To enhance the development of children at risk of Individual Educational Needs by targeting the main areas of development: *Physical development – Gross and Fine motor; Communication and Language Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Cognitive, Numeracy and Literacy Development*. This is achieved through Assessment and Intervention in the child's natural environment e.g. home or school.
- To ensure multi-disciplinary assessment procedures.
- To plan family centred intervention through Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), Individual Family support plans

(IFSPs) and support in transitions between home, preschool, and primary education.

- To promote social inclusion of the child together with the family and their engagement in community based systems as part of the commitment in supporting their children. This involves increasing awareness and building trust between families and service providers. Families will be guided through provision of material on how to navigate existing services and systems as well as supporting them to provide a safe environment for the children.
- To facilitate collaborative communities of families supporting each other. This includes facilitating play groups, training workshops, support helpline, as well as link families to the resources in the community.
- To enhance learning environments for children by providing on-site support for early childhood settings e.g. kindergartens in order to create inclusive learning environments. We provide support and training provision to early years educators as continuous professional development.
- To promote school inclusion through the Whole school approach.

## Early Intervention Services offered to children with Down syndrome:

- Babies with Down syndrome referred to the Early Intervention Services receive regular home visits whereby the Early Intervention Educator supports the parents/guardians in helping their children achieve developmental milestones.
- Community based services are also provided for babies and toddlers with Down syndrome who attend nurseries and child care centres.

- Children who attend kindergartens also benefit from the Early Intervention Services. We offer guidance to the educators working with the child with Down syndrome.
- During the summer period, we organise Baby and Toddler Groups. These consist of a six week programme for parents and their babies/toddlers. It is particularly of interest to families of babies or toddlers with Down syndrome who would benefit from singing and signing activities in order to encourage early Communication, interaction skills as well as infant stimulation. There is a focus on the child's gross and fine motor skills. Furthermore, this programme will focus on the learning of vocabulary

through a multimodal approach including visual signs, visuals, written and spoken word.

- Children with Down syndrome typically face delays in certain areas of development, so early intervention is highly recommended. It can begin anytime after birth but the sooner it starts the better. Whilst bearing in mind the individuality and uniqueness of each and every child, we can presume that children with DS need more intensive and directive interactions and though their genetic make-up plays an important role, a positive environment together with parental support will affect their developmental progress.

## Early Intervention Service Student Services Department Ministry for Education and Employment

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79210284  
laura-maria.busuttil@gov.mt

Lucienne Curmi  
99876944  
lucienne.curmi@ilearn.edu.mt

## Nota għall-attenzjoni tagħkom:

L-Assoċjazzjoni Down Syndrome  
ħadmet ħafna għal snin twal  
biex titwaqqaf il-Klinika għall-Adulti Down Syndrome  
(Adult Down Syndrome Clinic).

## Il-Klinika qiegħda tiffunzjona

Int irreġistrajt ruħek ma' din il-klinika?

Jekk le ċempel [21494960](tel:21494960)

jew ibgħat e-mail fuq [dsc.mhec@gov.mt](mailto:dsc.mhec@gov.mt)



# My Holiday in Malta

# Ringrazzjamenti

We flew to Malta in February for a brief holiday hoping to see a bit of sun. We arrived on Saturday and stayed in San Ġiljan. It was very busy and crowded.

On Sunday we took the bus to Valetta and explored the town including visiting St John's Co-cathedral, St Francis church, Fort St Elmo and St Paul's Shipwreck church and then we found the Down Syndrome Association office. But we couldn't go in because it was Sunday and so was closed.

The weather was mostly hot and sunny but there were some heavy showers. On Monday we took a bus to Mosta where we saw the dome and heard about the miracle of the bombs. From there we went

to Mdina. This looks very nice but by now it was raining on and off a lot so we couldn't see much. We then walked in to Rabat and saw the centre.

Finally we took a bus to see Dingli cliffs which were very impressive. On Tuesday it was time to go home to Woking.

This is the photo of the front door of the Down Syndrome Association Malta. I took photos of Mosta Dome and Mdina Cathedral. I thought the Dome was a wonderful building. I really enjoyed Malta and hope to go back again one day.

**Philip Craig**  
(typed by his parents)



L-Assoċjazzjoni Down Syndrome għandha benefatturi li sena wara l-oħra jgħinu bil-modi diversi tagħhom biex l-Assoċjazzjoni tkun tista' tkompli tiffunzjona mingħajr xkiel:

- Mrs Mary Runza and Little Angels
- Trelleborg Sealing Solution – Malta
- KPMG
- MSV life p.l.c

Matul din is-sena sibna wkoll l-għajnuna ta':

- Three Little Pigs – Sliema
- Institute of English Language Studies (IELS)
- Donations in Memory of Mr.Dino Stilon (Mrs Stephanie Stilon)
- Donations in Memory of Mrs Carmelina Axisa (Mrs. Mary Runza)
- Voices Foundation (Donation re-Leisure Club)
- Novartis
- The National Aquarium – Malta
- Street Life (Voucher)
- Carpisa
- Mario Optician
- Tramici
- Namaste
- B4 Textiles
- Mr. Wiggins
- Mrs Marysa Portelli

*Grazzi mill-qalb!*

# Sleep Disordered Breathing

Lizzie Hill BSc(Hons) RPSGT is a final-year PhD Research Student at the University of Edinburgh. She has been studying sleep-disordered breathing and has kindly shared a preliminary report.

Sleep-disordered breathing (SDB) is the commonest medical cause of sleepiness. Muscle relaxation during sleep leads to a partial or complete collapse of the airway, resulting in a repeated cycle of pauses in breathing. These breathing pauses disrupt sleep, leading to daytime sleepiness. A clinically-significant number of breathing pauses during sleep is known as obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA). Snoring can occur due to vibration of the narrowed airway.

Children and adults with Down syndrome are predisposed to SDB because some of the common features of Down syndrome overlap with the risk factors for SDB. These include a tendency to be overweight, generalised hypotonia, short midface, thick neck, large tonsils/adenoids and a relatively large tongue.

## **Early results suggest that around 20% of adults with Down Syndrome have Obstructive Sleep Apnoea**

SDB is common in the general population, affecting around 10% of children and 20% of adults. Approximately 2-4% of adults and 2% of children have OSA. We think that around 55% of children with Down syndrome have SDB. Two small studies found sleep apnoea in over 80% of adults with Down syndrome, but these included only 22 people in total (Resta 2003; Trois 2009). Here in Edinburgh, we have been running a research study to work out the prevalence of SDB in adults with Down syndrome. Early results from our survey

of over 1000 people (including many DHG members – thank you!) suggest that around 20% of adults with Down syndrome may have OSA, with over three-quarters of responders reporting snoring and over a quarter reporting breathing pauses.

Night-time symptoms of OSA include snoring, breathing pauses, gasping/choking, restlessness, frequent awakenings, sweating and frequent trips to the toilet or, sometimes, bedwetting. Children with Down syndrome often sleep in unusual positions, such as sitting up, flopped over or with the neck extended. In the daytime, OSA can result in excessive sleepiness, irritability, hyperactivity, behaviour problems, morning headaches, dry mouth, poor concentration/memory and mood disturbances.

Unfortunately, many of the daytime symptoms of OSA may be overlooked and dismissed as “*just part of their condition*” – despite the increased risk of OSA in people with Down syndrome, only 7% of people in our study had been diagnosed with OSA, and only 5% were currently receiving treatment.

However, untreated OSA can have serious consequences. Impaired daytime function can result in problems with learning and memory, and is likely to worsen cognitive impairment already present in some people with Down syndrome - one study estimates that untreated SDB in children can lead to a 10-point reduction in IQ (Kohler, 2009). Sleepiness can lead to a generally reduced quality of life for the individual and their family. Repeated pauses in breathing causes surges in blood pressure, putting extra strain on the heart, and there is a high risk of developing pulmonary hypertension in children with OSA and Down syndrome,

especially if they already have co-existing heart problems.

## **Untreated OSA can have serious consequences**

National guidelines from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) state that all children with Down syndrome should be screened for OSA at age 6-9 months using a test called oximetry, which measures blood oxygen levels using a finger-clip. If the oximetry result is normal, screening should be repeated annually until the age of 3-5 years. If the oximetry is abnormal, a detailed sleep study at home or in hospital is recommended, recording information on breathing, oxygen levels, body position, snoring and sleep stages. The Down Syndrome Association’s “Health Book for Adults” includes sleep as one of the areas which should be reviewed annually by a GP.

## **Children should be screened at 6-9 months using the oximetry test**

The first-line treatment for OSA in children is removal of the tonsils and adenoids (T&A). This is a relatively straightforward procedure carried out under general anaesthetic, and cures OSA in the majority of cases. Treatment for OSA in adults, or in children who still have OSA after T&A, is continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP). This involves wearing a mask over the nose and/or mouth, blowing pressurised air in to hold the airway open from the inside. This is a simple, non-

invasive and generally effective treatment. However, it is a therapy rather than a cure and so has to be used every night to feel the benefit.

## **Sleep study continued...**

One study showed improvement in sleepiness, behaviour and quality of life in 10 children with neurodevelopmental disability (including Down syndrome) when using CPAP (Marcus 2012). In Edinburgh, we looked at 28 adults with Down syndrome and OSA to see how they got on with CPAP. Of the 28 people in the study, 20 were still using CPAP after 12 months. Overall, using CPAP leads to significant improvements in sleepiness, general health, cognitive function and behavioural/ emotional outcomes. The full results of this study will be available soon.

## **CPAP leads to significant improvements**

In summary, children and adults with Down syndrome are at an increased risk of SDB/OSA which, left untreated, can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing. However, effective treatment is available and should be offered to all children and adults who need it, whether they have Down syndrome or not. If you suspect someone you know has SDB, please visit your GP in the first instance.

**quoted from DHG Malta  
Summer 2015**

# Diskors Amministrattiv tas-Segretarju Ġenerali 23 ta' Mejju 2015

Għaddiet sena mill-aħħar Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali li rajnieha miexja taħt Kumitat b'učuh ġodda li nisperaw ikunu l-futur tat-tkomplija tal-Għaqda fil-ġejjieni. Hafna min-nies fil-Kumitat ilhom iservu għal bosta snin u jagħmel tajjeb li l-Kumitat jiġġedded kif rajna f'dawn l-aħħar sentejn kemm bhala membri ġodda fil-Kumitat u kemm bhala *helpers*. B'danakollu nixtiequ naraw aktar nies jersqu 'l quddiem biex jagħtu servizz fil-Kumitat għal ġid ta' kulhadd - mhux biss għall-membri imma wkoll għal dawk li mhumiex.

Din il-laqgħa illum sejra sservi għal żewġ għanġiet – barra li ssiru tafu bil-ħidma li saret matul is-sena li għaddiet, ikollkom ukoll l-opportunità li tressqu s-suggerimenti tagħkom.

Huwa ferm importanti, kemm għall-membri u kemm għall-għaqda, li l-interess, il-partecipazzjoni u s-sapport fix-xogħol tal-Kumitat jibqa' ħaj biex il-Kumitat ikompli jistinka għall-benefiċċju tal-persuni li għandhom *Down syndrome*.

Inkunu qed nonqsu jekk kull darba li niltaqgħu ma nappellawx lill-membri preżenti u anki lil dawk li mhumiex, biex hadd ma jibqa' lura milli jressaq xi suggerimenti jew problemi li jolqtu lill-persuni *Down syndrome* u li jhossu li l-Kumitat jista' jaħdem fuqhom. Bħal kull sena nappellaw biex il-membri juru interess f'dak li tagħmel u torganizza l-Għaqda, li fuq kollox isir għalina lkoll.

Wara sena ta' ħidma huwa importanti li niġu quddiemkom biex nagħtu rendikont tax-xogħol li twettaq u rendikont tal-qagħda finanzjara tal-Għaqda.

## **Co-Option fil-Kumitat**

Il-Kumitat, wara kuntatti mal-individwi konċernati, u b'deċiżjoni unanima, ikkooptjaw żewġ membri li għandhom *Down Syndrome*, Gayle Mugliette u Rachael Umanah. Ġie ukoll ikkooptjat Konrad Borg Myatt.

## **E-Mails**

L-ispejjeż tal-Għaqda dejjem jiżdiedu, waqt li l-introjtu jonqos apparti li l-introjtu finanzjaru tal-Għaqda mhuwiex fuq bażi regolari. Il-lotterija ta' kull sena ma kienix qiegħda trendi lill-Għaqda xi qliegħ li wieħed seta' jibbaża fuqu. Problemi biex insibu lil xi hadd biex jieħu ħsieb isib ir-rigali addattati biex nagħmlu l-lotterija attraenti, u d-diffikultà biex inbiegħu l-biljetti anke mal-membri tagħna, imbuttatna biex nieħdu d-deċiżjoni biex inwaqqfu l-lotterija. Bl-ispiza tal-pustaġġ dejjem tiżdied u l-bżonn li l-Għaqda trid iżzomm il-komunikazzjoni mal-membri xorta waħda, il-Kumitat stinka biex aġġorna l-informazzjoni li kellna tal-membri anke bl-indirizzi tal-*emails* tagħhom, biex hekk għaddejna għall-fażi oħra ta' komunikazzjoni bl-*emails* għax b'hekk ifrankajna l-ispejjeż tal-pustaġġ.

## **Guardianship Act**

Il-Kumitat, bl-uniku interess quddiemu li jinforma u jaġġorna lill-ġenituri ta' persuni *Down syndrome* dwar il-Kustodja, organizza laqgħa biex persuna legali, Dr Anne Marie Mangion, fissret fid-dettal xi tfigħer din il-liġi. Peress li din hija liġi ġdida u importanti ħafna għalina, kien jinħtieġ li din il-liġi tiġi spjegata bi kliem faċli, pass wara l-ieħor u bil-ħin kollu li kien hemm bżonn biex verament tintfiehmin minn kulhadd. Fl-aħħar tal-laqgħa, dawk preżenti kienu nformati li fil-magażin li kien imiss *News & Views* Dicembru 2014 kien ser ikun hemm aktar informazzjoni biex jinforza dak li konna smajna mingħand Dr Mangion.

## **Sotto Kumitat għall-Attivitajiet**

Fl-aħħar Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali li kellna kien ġie suggerit li noholqu sotto kumitat għall-attivitajiet. Kemm il-membri kif ukoll il-kumitat il-ġdid li kien elett fl-aħħar Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali, fehmu li l-formazzjoni tas-Sotto Kumitat biex jieħdu ħsieb l-attivitajiet kien ferm importanti għaliex b'dan il-mod l-Għaqda tkun f'pożizzjoni aħjar biex torganizza u toffri attivitajiet matul is-sena kollha, b'ideat ġodda u għajnuna biex jiġu organizzati attivitajiet biex nakkomodaw lil kulhadd.

Is-sotto kumitat għall-attivitajiet huwa magħmul minn seba' persuni, fosthom tliet membri tal-kumitat ċentrali taħt it-tmexxija tas-Sinjura Debbie Borg bhala ċ-Chairperson.

## **Kalendarju tal-attivitajiet**

Biex il-membri jkun jafu bil-quddiem l-attivitajiet li l-Għaqda xtaqet torganizza matul is-sena, tfassal kalendarju tal-attivitajiet għas-sena 2015. Dan il-kalendarju, li ġie fformulat wara ħidma intensiva, diskussjonijiet bejn il-membri tas-sotto kumitat, il-Kumitat u mal-membri diġà ġie ċċirkolat u qiegħed jitwettaq. Hekk wieħed għandu stampa tal-attivitajiet li kienu sejrin jiġu organizzati għall-membri kollha mill-Għaqda bil-quddiem.

## **Radio Valo**

Il-grupp ta' Radio Valo jiltaqa' kull ġimgħa hawnhekk, fiċ-Ċentru tagħna fil-Belt Valletta. Il-grupp ilu mwaqqaf madwar sentejn u jieqaf jiltaqa' matul is-sajf. Kulma jsir tkun deċiżjoni mifthemja mill-grupp kollu wara diskussjoni bejniethom. L-xogħol tal-grupp jikkonsisti billi jiddeċiedu tema, jingibdu ritratti biex minnhom isir *video*. Il-grupp huwa ggwidat minn persuna/i mharrġa. Bħalissa l-għan tal-grupp huwa li jieħdu sehem u jkun parti

mill-attivitajiet tal-Valletta 2018. Il-parti l-kbira tal-membri ta' Radio Valo attendew l-attività ġewwa Għawdex għall-Jum Dinji tad-Down Syndrome u hadu bosta ritratti biex jagħmlu *video* għal Radio Valo.

## **Jum Dinji tad-Down Syndrome – 21 ta' Marzu**

Din is-sena l-Għaqda marret fil-gżira ta' Għawdex biex tiċċelebra mal-membri Għawdxin u mas-sotto Kumitat Għawdxin l-10 Anniversarju tal-Jum Dinji tad-Down Syndrome.

Il-programm ippreparat kien mifruq fuq jumejn – l-20 u l-21 ta' Marzu. Il-laqgħa pubblika pprogrammata għal dan il-jum saret fis-sala tal-Konferenzi fil-Ministeru t'Għawdex. Kemm is-Segretarju Parlamentari għad-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Diżabilità u Anzjanità Attiva l-Onor Dr. Justyne Caruana u kemm il-Ministru għal Għawdex l-Onor Dr. Anton Refalo kienu preżenti u għamlu l-indirizz tagħhom. It-taħdita ttrattat il-Ligi tal-Kustodja u xi tfigħer il-Kustodja. Il-kelliema prinċipali kienet Ms. Marilyn Spiteri, Registratur tal-Bord dwar il-Kustodja. Wara l-għeluq saret l-*Awareness Walk* mill-Ministeru sa Villa Rundle fi Triq ir-Repubblika, fir-Rabat. Wara l-ikel saret żjara fil-Mużew ta' Karmni Grima. L-aħħar attività kienet quddiesa fis-Santwarju Ta' Pinu kkonċelebrata mill-E.T l-Isqof t'Għawdex Mons Mario Grech. Din saret fl-okkażjoni tal-Jum Dinji tad-Down Syndrome u ta' Jum iż-żgħażaġh. Din il-quddiesa ġiet imxandra *live* fuq TVM 2.

## **Attivitajiet**

Waħda mill-attivitajiet saret fl-*Splash and Fun Park*, Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq fid-9 ta' Lulju 2014. Il-prezz li thallas kien jinkludi l-prezz tal-entrata, l-ikel ta' nofsinhar u te / kafè fil-5.00pm.

L-ikla tal-Milied saret fil-Lukanda Santana fid-19 ta' Diċembru 2014. L-ikla kienet *buffet* u l-mużika kienet f'idejn *Commanderjay Music Entertainment* bil-partecipazzjoni ta' Enzo Gusman. L-Għaqda ħallset hija stess għall-membri kollha li għandhom *Down syndrome* u tfal taħt il-ħames snin kienu b'xejn.

Id-*disco* tal-Milied, li huwa tant mistenni mill-membri tagħna sar fil-Lukanda Qawra Palace, Qawra fid-9 ta' Jannar 2015. Il-mużika waqt din l-attività wkoll kienet f'idejn *Commanderjay Music Entertainment*. Għal din l-attività l-Għaqda ma kinitx f'pożizzjoni li tħallas għall-membri li għandhom *Down Syndrome*.

Id-*disco* tal-Karnival sar fit-13 ta' Frar fil-Kumpless tal-Platinum Fitness Centre, B'Kara. Il-membri kienu maskerati u kien hemm numru sabiħ ta' membri għad-*disco*.

Il-*picnic* fil-Buskett għall-familja tas-26 ta' April 2014 kellu jiġi kkanċellat għax ma kienx hemm domanda għall-attività. Hasra li wara x-xogħol kollu li kien għamel is-sotto kumitat din l-attività ma saritx. Affarijiet li jistgħu jiġru.

Fis-17 ta' Mejju 2015 l-Għaqda organizzat ħarġa ta' gurnata fil-Lukanda Paradise Bay bħala ċelebrazzjoni għal Jum l-Omm. L-attività kienet tinkludi quddiesa li ġiet iċċelebrata fil-lukanda stess, l-ikla ta' nofsinhar, l-użu tal-*indoor pool* u l-*afternoon tea*. Il-membri *Down Syndrome* ħallsu nofs prezz. Ġejna nfurmati li għalkemm kien hemm 30 ruħ għal din l-attività, min mar ħa pjaċir ħafna.

## Servizzi tal-għaqda

### Lezzjonijiet fil-Computers

Il-lezzjonijiet qed isiru regolari kull nhar ta' Ġimgħa bejn 4.45pm u s-6.15pm fiċ-Ċentru tal-Għaqda, il-Belt Valletta. Bħal kull sena dawn il-lezzjonijiet sejrini jieqfu fl-aħħar ta' Mejju u jerġgħu jibdedew f'Ottubru.

### Lezzjonijiet tal-Aerobics

Il-lezzjonijiet qed isiru fil-Platinum Fitness Centre, B'Kara kull nhar ta' Tlieta mill-5.00 pm sas-6.00 pm u huma miftuħin għall-membri kollha. Huwa maħsub li dawn il-lezzjonijiet ser jibqgħu għaddejnin fis-sajf ukoll.

### Il-Quddiesa tal-ewwel ġimgħa tax-xahar

Il-Quddiesa ssir fiċ-Ċentru tal-Għaqda fil-għodu. Wara l-Quddiesa jkun hemm tè u kafè u tintlagħab it-tombla.

### Klinika tal-Adulti

Għaddew iżjed minn tliet snin li dan is-servizz beda jopera kull nhar ta' Sibb mill-Poliklinika ta' Birkirkara għall-benefiċċju tal-persuni kollha *Down syndrome*. L-iskop ewlieni tal-klinika hu li jsir *screening* mediku lil kull individwu *Down syndrome* mill-età ta' 16-il sena 'l fuq, fuq bażi annwali jew aktar spiss, skont il-bżonn tal-individwu. It-tabiba Dr. Dorothy Zammit u t-tim ta' nurses magħha qed jagħtu servizz professjonali u b'dedikazzjoni. S'issa kellna *feedback* inkoraġġanti ħafna mill-ġenituri li diġà bbenefikaw minn dan is-servizz.

Ħafna mill-membri qegħdin jibbenefikaw mill-*Adult Down Syndrome Clinic* li permezz tagħha wliedna minn sittax-il sena 'l fuq ikollhom saħħithom iċċekkjata u mmoniterjata. Dan kollu jibqa' jsir sena wara l-oħra matul ħajjithom kollha.

Huwa importanti li dawk minna li għadhom ma rreġistrawx ruħhom ma' din il-klinika jagħmlu dan kemm jista' jkun malajr għall-ġid ta' uliedhom.

L-Għaqda minn dejjem kienet wara l-klinika għall-Adulti, u tħabtna ħafna biex il-ħolma tagħna ssir realtà. Sfortunament bħalissa r-relazzjoni tad-dirigenti tal-Klinika mal-Għaqda mhumiex tajba kif u kemm nixtiequ. L-Għaqda qed tħossha li qiegħda tiġi mwarrba. Għalkemm saru diversi tentattivi biex l-affarijiet jittranġaw u biex jerġa' jkun hemm l-armonija bejn iż-żewġ naħat, is-sitwazzjoni għadha ma ttranġatx. L-Għaqda trid tħares lejha dak li qiegħed isir, tiddiskuti u tressaq is-suggerimenti tagħha għall-benefiċċju tal-membri, imma bħalissa kolloxx għadu wieqaf. Kienu saru laqgħat mal-ex Ministru tas-Saħħa Dr Godfrey Farrugia, diversi laqgħat mad-dirigenti tal-Klinika, kif ukoll mal-Hon. Dr Fearnie Segretarju Parlamentari tas-Saħħa. Ftit ġimgħat ilu kellna laqgħa ma' persuni awtoritattivi oħra fejn ġiet diskussa din is-sitwazzjoni xejn pjaċevoli. Nittamaw li l-affarijiet jerġgħu jmorru għall-aħjar fl-inqas żmien possibbli – l-Għaqda terġa' tiegħu postha u l-irwol li jixraqilha fit-tmexxija tal-Klinika.

### Magazine

Il-magażin, b'determinazzjoni kbira, joħroġ darba fis-sena għall-ħabta tal-aħħar tas-sena, u għal kull ħarġa nipubblikaw 1500 kopja. 50 fil-mija tan-nefqa fuq il-pustaġġ jiġu mogħtija lura mill-KNPD fuq applikazzjoni. Il-flus biex jithallas dan il-magażin iridu jiġu mill-ġbir ta' fondi għax reklami biex intaffu l-ispejjeż tiegħu m'għadniex insibu.

Nixtieq infakkar fil-bżonn kbir li jeżisti biex nixtiequ xi esperjenzi, ritratti u/jew xi artikli sabiex jiġu ppubblikati fil-magażin. Jekk ikollkom bżonn ta' xi għajnuna, il-membri tal-kumitat ikunu lesti jgħinukom b'xi kitba u/jew intervista jekk hemm bżonn, fid-dar tagħkom stess.

### Social Club

Il-Kumitat huwa kommess li b'xi mod jew ieħor isir *club* għall-membri tagħna, fejn ikunu jistgħu jissocjalizzaw ma' xulxin u jibdedew isiru *disco parties* f'dan il-post li jrid ikun ukoll aċċessibli għal kulhadd. Sa issa, għalkemm saru ħafna sforzi, il-ħolma għadha ma saritx realtà. L-Assoċjazzjoni qiegħda taħdem id f'id mal-Federazzjoni Maltija ta' Organizzazzjonijiet Persuni b'Diżabilità biex iż-żgħażaġ tagħna fl-aħħar ikollhom il-post ta' rikreazzjoni addattat għalihom.

### Laqgħat tal-President

Il-President tal-Għaqda, waħeda jew akkompanjata minn xi membru tal-kumitat, ħadet sehem f'diversi laqgħat li jirrigwardaw diversi temi jew proġetti, u ħadet sehem f'diversi programmi fuq il-mezzi tax-xandir, li kienu ta' interess jew ta' importanza għall-Għaqda u għall-membri kollha tal-Għaqda.

### Konkluzjoni

Nixtieq nagħlaq billi nringrazzja lilkom preżenti talli ġejtu illum u lill-membri kollha tal-Kumitat u lill-familji tagħhom għall-paċenzja li jieħdu u għas-sapport tagħhom, lill-*helpers* għall-hidma tagħhom fi ħdan l-Għaqda u lill-benefatturi kollha tal-Għaqda li mingħajrhom ma nkunux nistgħu niffinanzjaw proġetti u nħallsu l-ispejjeż ta' kuljum biex immexxu l-Għaqda 'l quddiem.

**Antoine Gauci**  
**Segretarju**



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