

BULLETIN

Ottubru 1998 • Ghadd 4

..... • lehen il-multiple sclerosis society ta' malta •

Memorandum

FL-OKKAŻŻJONI ta' l-Elezzjoni Ġenerali li saret f'pajjiżna fil-5 ta' Settembru 1998, il-Federazzjoni tal-Organizzazzjonijiet għall-Persuni b'Diżabilità baghtet memorandum lill-Partiti Poliċi.

Huwa pjaċir tagħna nippubblikaw siltiet qosra minn dan il-memorandum sabiex il-membri tagħna jkunu nfurmati bl-isforzi tal-Federazzjoni fir-rigward ta' persuni b'diżabilità.

Il-Federazzjoni tal-Organizzazzjonijiet għall-Persuni b'Diżabilità temmen li l-qasam tal-persuni b'diżabilità għandu jkompli jingħata l-importanza li jixirqilha. Il-Federazzjoni tirrikonoxxi li f'dawn l-aħħar snin, il-Partiti Poliċi taw spinta 'l quddiem lil dan il-qasam, biss xorta ssostni li għad baqa' hafna x'isir, l-aktar meta wiehed jiftakar li, skond il-Ġnus Maqghuda, hawn madwar 10 fil-mija tal-popolazzjoni li għandhom xi forma ta' diżabilità.

Il-Federazzjoni, permezz ta' dan il-memo, tixtieq iġġib għall-attenzjoni tal-Partiti Poliċi dawn il-punti li nhossu li huma ta' importanza kbira għall-persuni b'diżabilità u l-familji tagħhom f'Malta u Ghawdex:

- Il-Federazzjoni temmen li l-Gvern għandu jirrikonoxxi b'mod konkret is-sehem li jagħtu l-Għaqdiet Volontarji f'dan il-qasam. Dan irid isir billi l-Gvern jikkonsultahom, jagħti każ tal-kritika ġusta li ssir minnhom, u jagħtihom għajjuna Prattika.
- Il-Federazzjoni tapprezza hafna li ż-żewġ partiti poliċi jaqblu li l-Parlament Malti għandu jgħaddi Liġi li tassigura li tiġi eliminata kull forma ta' diskriminazzjoni kontra persuni li għandhom diżabilità. Il-Federazzjoni thegħġegħ lill-partiti poliċi biex jassiguraw li Gvern futur jgħaddi din il-liġi mportanti mill-Parlament Malti fl-iqsar żmien possibli.
- Il-Federazzjoni temmen li post il-persuna b'diżabilità hu fil-komunità, u għalhekk għandhom jiġu żviluppati servizzi biex il-persuni b'diżabilità jkunu jistgħu jibqgħu jgħixu hemmhekk, anke meta l-familja ma tkunx tista' tkompli tgħin b'mod effettiv biex dan ikun jista' jibqa' jsehh.
- Il-Federazzjoni temmen li l-impjeg jagħti d-dinjità lil kull persuna, anke jekk din tkun persuna b'diżabilità. Għal dan il-għan il-Federazzjoni temmen li għandhom isiru sforzi akbar biex aktar persuni b'diżabilità jidhlu fid-dinja tax-xogħol.

Kull korrispondenza
għandha tintbagħat
f'dan l-indirizz:
Multiple Sclerosis Society
P.O. Box 209
C.M.R. Valletta

***Jekk għandkom xi
artikli, esperjenzi, jew
mistoqsijiet ta' natura
medika, u tixtiequ li
jiġu ppublikati fuq l-
MS BULLETIN,
intom mitlubin
tindirizzawhom
lill-Editor,
Mr. Kenneth Muscat,
fl-indirizz li jidher
hawn fuq.***

ATTIVITAJIET REĊENTI:

● Fl-okkażżjoni tal-50 anniversarju mit-twaqqif ta' l-Ghaqda Dinjija tas-Sahha (WHO) il-Ministeru tas-Sahha organizza serata mużikali fin-Naxxar. Ghal din l-okkażżjoni is-Socjetà taghna giet mistiedna flimkien ma' ghaqdiet ohra biex tiehu sehem permezz ta' information stand. Kellna stand sabih u peress li kien hemm pubbliku numeruż, tqassmu hafna fuljetti ta' informazzjoni dwar il-Multiple Sclerosis. Grazzi mill-qalb lil Carmel u Rose Grech li armaw l-istand u li ghaddeu is-sieghat twal jwiegħbu d-domandi tal-pubbliku.

● Ghalkemm il-laqghat formali taghna waqfu fix-xhur tas-Sajf, dan ma żammniex milli niltaqghu nformalment ghal Barbecue fir-Razzett tal-Hbiberija, M'Skala. Kienet okkażżjoni pjaċevoli hafna b'attendenza tajba, anke minn persuni li m'humiex membri. Nixtiequ nirringrazzjaw pubblikament lil Joe u Phyllis Tabone tax-xogħol kbir li hadu fl-organizzazzjoni ta' din is-serata u nisperaw li jerġghu jidhlu għaliha s-sena d-dieħla!

Editorjal ...

Happy Brithday to the MS Society!

LO and behold, the MS Society is about to celebrate its first birthday since being launched last October 26, 1997. Month after month, the Movement has gathered pace, both in term of public awareness of the medical condition and the increased support it has garnered from numerous individuals and society at large.

The MS Bulletin itself has been a key part of the enterprise, with lots of readers coming across the literature and simultaneously participating in spreading its existence.

Towards the end of the month, the MS Society is due to organise its Annual General Meeting (AGM). Well-known personalities will be invited for the occasion. I do believe and trust that the 1998 AGM would mark a new era of greater participation by everyone in the MS Society.

We are experiencing a smaller world where communication facilities have grown in efficiency and ease. We can already obtain and exchange information on the Internet, for the cost of a local telephone call. This will develop into greater national and international exchange of knowledge, but where better for us all actually to meet and interact than the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. We hope to see you there!

Multiple Sclerosis & Healthy Eating

Kenneth Muscat

A FREQUENT question posed by those with MS is: Can I eat some special things that will make me well? Is there a diet that will help my MS? The immediate answer of course is that many diets for MS, often claiming cures, have in past years been promoted by doctors and others. Nevertheless, although no specific diet has been proven beneficial for multiple sclerosis, it is just common sense to eat good nutritious food. You know you will feel better and have more stamina if you eat well. As for the diet, it should contain in balanced proportions each of the food groups - meat, vegetable-fruit, milk, and bread-cereal groups. A well-balanced diet can help you maintain a healthy lifestyle, lessen fatigue and minimise the chance of getting infections. Every day, one should try to eat a variety from each of the four groups indicated below:

Proteins are important for muscle-building, tissue repair, and energy. High protein foods are: lean meat, fish, beans, and dairy products.

Carbohydrates come as starches, sugars and celluloses which provide energy and should form the basis of one's diet. They are found in pasta, cereal-based and high-fibre foods. Fibre assists one to maintain health digestion and minimise constipation. Good sources of carbohydrates include: wholemeal bread, cereals (wheat, oat, corn), rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, dry beans, peas, all the green vegetables, fresh and dried fruit.

Dairy products are a good source of calcium, protein and vitamins A, D E and B (especially folic acid and B12), but are high in saturated fats (which raise cholesterol levels). It would be best to choose low fat versions where possible. Dairy products include: skimmed milk preferably, low-fat yoghurt, and cottage cheese. Cheese made with polyunsaturated fat, could be taken in moderation. Eggs yes, but no more than 3 or 4 a week.

Fruits and Vegetables are an important source of vitamins A, C and E, and minerals such as potassium, magnesium and calcium. One should consume fresh fruit and vegetables in generous portions. Salad/raw vegetables and green leafy vegetables daily. One should aim for 5 portions a day (1lb/500g). Potatoes - jacket, boiled or mashed - and, occasionally roasted or home-made fries cooked in suitable oil may be served.

Fats are concentrated sources of energy and give twice the energy per gram of protein and carbohydrate. There are three types but each have the same calorie content:

Saturated - associated with increased cholesterol levels. Found mainly in dairy products and meat, processed foods, palm and coconut oil. Keep intake to a minimum. If you eat snacks beware of processed foods, biscuits and cakes, which can be high in saturated fats.

Monounsaturated - Found mostly in avocados, olive oil and nuts (e.g. peanuts, hazel nuts and almonds).

Polyunsaturated - essential fatty acids found primarily in vegetable oils and seeds (e.g. sunflower, soya, safflower, corn and maize), oily fish and fish oils. Try to eat these in preference to other fats.

It is best to keep the total amount of fat ingested moderate and to include sources of polyunsaturated fat. All fats are high in calories, so if you are overweight, you should limit your intake, especially of saturated fat. One should use low fat products such as low fat spreads, low fat cheeses, and semi-skimmed or skimmed milk.

GENERAL RULES:

- 1. Drink at least three glasses of water daily.
- 2. Do not use excess fats in preparing foods. Trim all fat foods of meat, and remove skin from poultry before cooking.
- 3. One should have at least three servings of fruit and vegetables daily, including one serving of leafy green vegetables (such as lettuce, spinach).
- 4. Limit eggs to four per week. Try to have at least five fish meals per week.
- 5. Any weight reduction production would be most efficient when combined with a moderate daily exercise schedule. A beneficial schedule is 20 minutes of exercise daily, performed within 30 to 60 minutes of eating a meal. Experts feels that exercise boosts the body's metabolic rate, enabling it to burn calories more efficiently.
- 6. Avoid foods such as mayonnaise, salad dressing, jams, jellies, and honey. Use mustard, vinegar, lemon juice, and herbs to flavour foods.



***“If you eat well,
you will feel
better and have
more stamina!”***

● **Wara l-pawsa tas-sajf,
il-laqqhat ta' kull xahar
reġghu b'dew
f'Settembru b'tahdita
nteressanti u video fuq
ir-rwol tal-fiżjoterapija
fil-multiple sclerosis.
Sa llum jidher li ftit mill-
membri taghna jużaw il-
fiżjoterapija iżda jidher
li hemm interess
sostanzjali li din tintuża
aktar jekk is-soċjetà
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skema ta' għajjuna
fiżjoterapewtika għall-
membri. Fuq dan
nitkellmu iżjed 'l
quddiem.**

This is one of the talks which Fr. Michael Buckley had on the Derek Jameson show aired on the BBC Radio 2's programme "Pause for Thought". Fr. Michael later edited this and other stories in a book called "Stories that Heal".



A Prayer

God,
you are a loving Father
who will not cause us
a needless tear.

You know the right time
to lift the burden
that oppresses me,
and so with a peaceful heart,
at rest in your love for me,
help me to concentrate more
on your loving care
rather than on my own
preoccupation with physical pain
and emotional disturbance.

I place the present moment,
as I do my whole life,
in your tender care.

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**P.E.G. Ltd.,
San Gwann**

Spirituality...

Acceptance

ONE of the most difficult things in life is to accept ourselves as we are, especially if we suffer some permanent physical disability. Michael is a typical example of what I mean.

Several years ago at the age of twenty-nine he contracted a rare virus which affected the base of his spine. From the waist down he was totally paralysed. Confined to a wheelchair he sighed for the old days when he was a powerful athlete. Being a very devout Christian he prayed earnestly that he would be able to walk again. He wrote to me describing what happened.

'When the virus struck', he wrote, 'I couldn't believe it was happening to me. It was like a sick joke. It never sank into my mind that the paralysis was anything other than temporary. In the early days I would try to get out of bed in the normal way, only to find that my legs wouldn't obey my mind. I just lay there and cried my heart out. I was unhappy and bitter man. My poor wife, May, and my children became the target for my anger and frustration. For months I hardly ventured outside my home. I was too proud to let anyone see me the way I was. Soon I began to realise that I was wasting away deep inside. 'Then I heard of *people being healed* and I stormed heaven for an answer to my prayer, "Lord, make me walk again." I went to prayer groups twice, even three times a week, and everyone prayed over me. They lifted me out of my wheelchair time and again and encouraged me to walk, but my silly legs just wouldn't budge. I am six foot three and weigh sixteen stone, so it was a minor miracle that no one suffered a slipped disc or something on my account. Eventually I gave up the prayer groups, and became very angry with God. I went through a period of emptiness, of blackness, which affected every aspect of my life.

'Finally, as if in despair, I came to a healing session, and for the first time in years I did not wheel myself forward for healing. I just sat there and *allowed* God to have his way with me, to speak to me. Suddenly a huge weight seemed to lift off my shoulders, and I felt a peace I had not experienced since I became disabled. It flooded my whole body, and very gently tears began to flow, not of anger but of joy and release. I knew I was changed as a person, and had a new life to live. May and the children were sitting quietly behind me and they knew that something beautiful was happening to me. From then on our whole family life has changed, and there is real laughter in our home again. I shall probably never walk again, but there's lots of other things I can do, and I no longer resent my wheelchair.'

There are many Michael's in our world, people who have come to terms with their problem of multiple sclerosis. They bravely face the future with Christian courage, because they can identify with Christ on the cross. With Him they rise to a new form of life in which they not only accept their situation, but use it to grow into people of peace and happiness. ■