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Palliative care provided within a care home - a SWOT analysis of the introduction of an innovative service offered through the private sector in Malta

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Just under 2000 persons are diagnosed with cancer every year in Malta, with the figure expected to shoot up to over 2,100 by 2020. At present, Hospice Malta offers a wide range of services for terminally ill patients and their families, including day care and home care however no residential or inpatient palliative care is provided in the country to date. Our only oncology hospital on the island constitutes of 24 beds which falls short of demand and supply when this caters for the whole population of Malta. As a result of this a number of palliative clients find themselves on acute hospital wards which are not able to cater for their specific needs during this period. Simblija Care Home is a private nursing home in Malta which seeks to address the needs of persons who need palliative care, including respite for their carers or end of life care. Within our model of care we adopt a holistic approach to both the individual and the respective family and the existent network of support. We hope to address physical needs, like pain control, and also to their psychological needs which often involves counselling services. Our services extend further and encompass spiritual assistance when requested. Different professionals are brought in the care cycles, as are occupational therapists and physiotherapists. In this way we assist the person to achieve better quality of life and their families to find support and assistance. This is a new residential service offered by a care home for elderly in the palliative stages. The paper provides a critical SWOT analysis of the introduction and rolls out of this innovative much needed service in Malta. It is believed that the reflective evaluation of this service is of interest to other parties who are gauging need or planning such services in other contexts.

Biography

Charmaine Attard achieved a BSc in Nursing in 1994 and went on to read an MSc in Nursing with the University of Manchester in 2006 and a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration with the University of Leicester in 2016. After graduating She worked for a number of years in the acute areas of care within St. Luke's Hospital and Capua Palace Hospital. In 1999 she went on into long term care, where she managed a private home for the elderly. In 2006 she went on to become Operations Manager and in 2009 she left long term care and took up the post of Director of Nursing and Midwifery at Mater Dei Hospital where in 2013 she was given the post of Director of Care at Karin Grech Rehabilitation hospital. In 2015 she joined AX Holdings as Director of Care of Hilltop Gardens overseeing care given both in the care home and in the apartments. Currently she is the general manager of Hilltop Gardens, an appointment given to her in 2017. She is also holds a part time assistant senior lecturer post at the University of Malta where she teaches nursing students within the Faculty of Health sciences.

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