

Enhancing healthcare delivery through ICTs: Project ENTER

New working practices that involve the increased use of modern ICT technologies and its various applications have been driving change in numerous organizations. St. Vincent de Paul Residence (SVPR) is no exception. It has embraced this change and placed ICT technology at the centre of its operations to allow it to effectively deliver its mission. Although the very nature of the work carried out by the large majority of the workers at SVPR is vocational and dependent more on interpersonal skills rather than technological competence, having such digital skills will assist these workers to be more efficient in the overall operational activity of the residence, to the benefit of the organization as a whole. Such skills will also allow the workers to give a more holistic service to the residence by being in a better position to help them stay in touch with family members through technology. The SVPR management fully acknowledges that ICT is essential for everyday working life. They believe that with training, their members of staff will become more effective and efficient ICT users and workers all round.

The Malta Communications Authority (MCA) is facilitating the delivery of such training by extending the ICT training programme launched in 2013, which aims to provide basic and advanced training to individuals aged 25 years and over and providing all the necessary resources including tutors, computers and printed material. The training is being delivered at the Community Technology Learning Centre within the residence, which was specifically setup to provide services for both the residents themselves, as well as the staff members. This centre was fully financed by the MCA.

Roderick Marmara, Senior Technical Specialist, MCA Information Society stated that “ICT skills are fundamental for workers outside of the ICT sector itself. Lower wage and lower skilled workers are becoming increasingly dependent on ICT skills to enhance their employability. The auto repair, retail and health care sectors are just some examples of industries where the incorporation of ICT into everyday operations has raised the bar considerably for such workers.”

Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, the Hon. Justyne Caruana said that this initiative is part of the Government’s work to train persons employed in the services sector for the elderly. She said that around 500 workers will be benefiting from this training. The Parliamentary Secretary also announced that new medical software will be used in the Residence and therefore, this training opportunity has come at just the right time to ensure that the staff members have the necessary skills to use this software effectively and confidently. In addition, Hon. Justyne Caruana made a reference to another project undertaken in collaboration with the MCA, which aims to familiarise elderly individuals attending Day Centres across Malta and Gozo with technology and the benefits this can bring them.. The Parliamentary Secretary also mentioned a number of other projects her Secretariat is implementing, such as

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setting up of new clinics and the refurbishment of several departments at St. Vincent de Paul Residence, aimed at further enhancing quality of care for the residents.

Parliamentary Secretary José Herrera said that a generation built on ICT knowledge may be the key to incentivise economic growth. Hon. Herrera stressed that whilst it is essential to have the availability of products and services reflecting cutting-edge technologies, at the right prices and highest quality, it is critically important that our citizens have the necessary skills to utilise these technologies, not only on a personal level but also at their place of work. There are many who for one reason or another shy away from technology, or do not necessarily understand and appreciate the benefits it can offer. The aim of this project is to bring these individuals closer to technology”, said Herrera. Putting this project into the context of the Digital Malta Strategy, Hon. Herrera said that “A governing board for the Digital Malta Strategy has recently been appointed and will be overseeing the delivery of the outputs outlined in the Strategy. In fact, to date, 52 % of the current proposals highlighted in this strategy have already commenced. This training is only part of the various initiatives of the said Strategy.”



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