



Dr. Robert Abela
Prime Minister

MUMN is writing to your office regarding the dire situation of nurses who are raising children and are currently utilizing their Vacation leave and therefore cannot attend for work. This is more serious when both the parents are nurses and these families certainly need more support. Although MUMN is aware that childcare facilities have been provided for children between the age of 3 and 12 years during the day, these childcare facilities can only address a small percentage of the nursing work force who are raising children. MUMN would like to point out that 38% of the nurses are raising children so this is a very important issue. Nurses with babies and small children, together with those who work night shifts do not benefit from such childcare centres.

One must keep in mind that in the current situation nurses are also apprehensive and worried and are not so eager to take their children to a childcare centre. In the current situation every nurse needs to have their minds at rest regarding the wellbeing of their children if they are to attend to the patients in all hospitals of Malta and Gozo. The Health services in Malta and Gozo, before the outbreak of the Coronavirus was already 400 nurses short when associated with the demands of the national service.

This outbreak will surely increase the demand for nurses therefore resulting in not having enough nurses to cater for all the extra beds being added in all hospitals and Elderly institutions in Malta and Gozo. Drastic measures must be taken in these desperate times. MUMN is appealing to consider seriously two important measures to address the huge shortage and pressure on the nursing work force.

The two measures being proposed by MUMN are:

1. A chosen relative of a nurse who has children up to the age of 12 should also be given a two months' vacation Leave paid so that such relative will be in a position to care for these children while the nurse (parent/s) is at work being on the day shift or night shift. This incentive was also provided rightly so to the private sector.
2. All overtime worked by nurses during these times should not be taxed at all to encourage nurses to work overtime. For the Government it is useless adding extra beds in hospitals if there will be no nurses to attend to the patients using them.

Dear Prime Minister, the nursing profession is the only profession who is caring for our patients 24/7 and the demands and the sheer scale of work ahead of us is something that none of us nurses have ever experience. All countries affected by the Coronavirus have all appealed that the nursing work force needs to be protected by adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other incentives should be provided. Statistics have shown that in affected countries, 8% of the nursing work force contacted the Coronavirus during their line of duty. So as our Prime Minister please consider seriously MUMN's proposals since these proposals could save the lives of a lot of people. There is a great possibility that the management of every hospital will face the difficulty of not have enough nurses to distribute to much needed areas of care, so please in the name of the nurses and patients consider MUMN's proposals.

Awaiting reply,

Paul Pace

MUMN President

22/03/20

Colin Galea

Secretary General