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MEDIWARN Project to help Mater Dei nurses respect social distancing rules

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(Photo: Ms Iva Borg Frkic, Dr Johann Scicluna, Dr Petramay Attard Cortis and Dr Stephen Sciberras at the Convegno MEDIWARN in Catania, Sicily in October 2019)

In the latest concrete example of European teamwork, a number of monitors and sensors purchased for the MEDIWARN project will allow patient parameters to be displayed in a central console at the nursing station, allowing nursing staff to monitor patients' vital signs without having to physically be at the bedside at all times.

MEDIWARN is a collaboration between the University of Catania (through its Faculty of Engineering), the University of Malta (through our [Faculty of Medicine and Surgery](http://www.um.edu.mt/ms)) (<http://www.um.edu.mt/ms>) and the Policlinico Vittorio Emanuele in Catania launched in 2018, is starting to bear fruit as the year 2020 progresses.

The MEDIWARN project, launched locally at the University of Malta Medical School, and sponsored by the European Regional Development Fund, aimed to use a continuous monitoring system for an acute nursing area, which would feed into an intelligent warning system, and would then analyse this information in real time. Through advanced fuzzy logic, the analysis done through these monitors would alert medical staff as to when a patient's

condition starts to deteriorate, allowing for earlier medical interventions, and thus higher chances of treating a patient successfully.

The equipment related to this project reached Maltese shores in January 2020, to start with data gathering. Permission for the data collection and clinical validation phases of the MEDIWARN project has been obtained from the Faculty of Medicine & Surgery's Research Ethics Committee. In the coming weeks, the equipment and system will be deployed at Mater Dei Hospital.

The University of Malta has had multiple roles within MEDIWARN namely the creation of a clinical vital signs database for use by the MEDIWARN fuzzy logic algorithm; clinical validation of the MEDIWARN fuzzy logic algorithm developed in conjunction with the other project partners; the development of the Graphic User Interface for the MEDIWARN system; writing up papers for publication and conference presentations; and the promotion of the MEDIWARN project. A video outlining the MEDIWARN project can be found on the [MEDIWARN Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/111669156933129/videos/1195923463926176/) (<http://www.facebook.com/111669156933129/videos/1195923463926176/>).

The Project Lead on behalf of the University of Malta is [Prof. Godfrey LaFerla](http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/godfreylaferla) (<http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/godfreylaferla>), Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery. The Research Support Officers working on MEDIWARN at the University of Malta are Drs [Stephen Sciberras](http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/stephensciberras) (<http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/stephensciberras>), [Petramay Attard Cortis](http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/petramayattard-cortis) (<http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/petramayattard-cortis>) and [Johann Scicluna](http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/johannscicluna) (<http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/johannscicluna>). MEDIWARN was also made possible thanks to the invaluable support provided by [Ms Iva Borg Frkic](http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/ivafrkic) (<http://www.um.edu.mt/profile/ivafrkic>) from the Project Support Office, University of Malta.

“This has been a great opportunity for us to meet regularly, albeit virtually, to share ideas, discuss protocols and information systems to be used for this project. MEDIWARN also enabled us to interact with our Sicilian counterparts at the University of Catania and the Policlinico Vittorio Emmanuele in a productive way”, said team members.

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