



Dear Members,

Welcome to the first edition of our Mental Health Association newsletter! We aim to provide valuable information, updates, and insights directly to your inbox. Carers play a crucial role in supporting those with mental health conditions, and together we can enhance the quality of life for everyone involved. This newsletter is a key step in strengthening our community and support system.

In this edition, you'll find:

- The Power of Social Connections.
- Board Members Corner: Meet the individuals behind our organisation.
- Upcoming Events: Stay informed about events and activities.

Part of our advocacy is to engage with policymakers to further our mission. Last August, the MHA board had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Health and Active Ageing, Hon. Dr. Joe Etienne Abela where we forwarded your concerns. We also had an important meeting with the Commissioner for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Rhoda Garland, where we discussed the UNCRPD guidelines on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) for people with mental health conditions and their caregivers. This meeting was a significant step in advancing our efforts and ensuring that mental health remains a priority at the highest levels of government.

Thank you for your support.

Warm regards,

*Mental Health  
Association Team*

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## The Power of Social Connections

A life filled with joy, shared experiences with someone else, and sincere conversations—this is the beauty of social connections. These relationships with others fill our hearts with strength and serenity, and they give deeper meaning to simple moments in life. When we spend time with those who are important to us, we build memories that last for years and strengthen the emotional bonds that make us more resilient in the face of challenges. Whether it is a time of happiness or a time of difficulty, social connections make it easier to navigate life more contentedly. Studies have shown that loneliness and social isolation can increase the risk of depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, and dementia. One might ask how to cultivate these important connections:

- **Dedicate Uninterrupted Time with your loved ones:** Set aside specific times each day or week to spend with friends or family without distractions from phones or other interruptions.
- **Engage in Active Listening:** Focus on truly understanding what the other person is saying, rather than just thinking about your response
- **Regularly Show Gratitude:** Frequently express your gratitude and appreciation for the roles your friends and family play in your life by sharing these positive thoughts with them.
- **Demonstrate Respect and Support:** Make it clear how much you respect, support, and value your loved ones by verbally acknowledging these feelings.
- **Plan and Follow Through:** Arrange activities or outings with your friends and family and ensure you stick to these plans to reinforce your relationships.

Whether it's a spontaneous coffee, a weekend getaway, or simply a conversation, these moments of connection create joy, support, and a sense of inclusion. Therefore, make plans and cherish these relationships, as the most beautiful moments in life are those shared with others.



## Board member Spotlight

### Meet Simone Borg MHA President

Simone Borg is a Coordination Psychiatric Nurse, has been with MHA for four years and served as president for the past two years. Her passion for supporting carers, inspired by their hardships, drives her vision is to see enhanced respite care and a dedicated support line for carers in time of need.

Thank you, Simon, for your dedication and leadership!



## Upcoming Events

Join us for the annual walk for mental health, in an atmosphere of community, support, and positive energy. Here are the details:

Date: 13th October 2024

Time: 10 am

Location: We will meet at Triton Fountain, Valletta, and walk to St. George's Square.

Bring along friends, family, and anyone who wishes to contribute to raising awareness about mental health.

*Thank you for reading!*

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