

# ESNO CONGRESS 2021



## The Road to Specialisation in Malta

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# Nursing in Malta



- œ Been around since the middle ages
- œ First Nursing legislation – 1936
- œ Autonomous recognition came in 2003
- œ Granting of a professional warrant in 2009

# Specialisation



- ❧ Relatively a recent development
- ❧ First call for Infection control nurses published in 1994
- ❧ and then in 2002 with calls for more posts namely:
  - ❧ Breast Care - 3 posts
  - ❧ Practice Development Nurse – 5 posts
  - ❧ Practice Development Midwife – 1 post

# Legislating the Practice



- ❧ Changes in practice, technology and complex medicine
- ❧ necessitated legislating the practice on the 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2003 –
  - ❧ Health Care Professions Act
- ❧ Acknowledging the concept of professionalism of all health professionals and the specialisation thereof

# Legislation



- ❧ The Act also served as the ground for laying down of legal foundation for the provision of specialist training for nurses & midwives.
- ❧ Was also an instrument for the training of Specialist nurses to learn their role and anchor their status within the profession.

# Legislation



- ❧ The use of the term specialist was now regulated by law and no one could make use of the term unless one was registered as a specialist.

# Terminology Dispute



- ❧ In 2008 however a terminology issue surfaced
- ❧ Specialist register was still not set up
- ❧ Technically the Specialist nomenclature could not be used
- ❧ Issue was temporarily settled and the nomenclature of Specialist Nurse/Midwife was changed to Practice Nurse/Midwife
- ❧ This meant to be a temporary stance in the preparation of the Specialist Framework for nurses and midwives

# 2019 Legal Notice



- ❧ In 2019 the Act was amended with a legal notice listing 18 nursing and 6 midwifery specialisations.
- ❧ This facilitated the way for the introduction of the Specialist Registers
- ❧ Will be regulated by the Specialist Accreditation Committee

# Post Graduate Training Committee



- ❧ The remit of the PGTC is of developing pathways leading to specific registers
- ❧ They are then presented to the SAC for endorsement
- ❧ The development of these pathways necessitated long hours of consultation with all stake holders to present them as a final draft to the SAC for consideration.

# Framework



- ❧ Consisting of 3 possible pathways
- ❧ 1<sup>st</sup> Pathway: Grandfathering
  - ❧ Practice Nurses/Midwives who have enough years of experience and specific academia within their area of specialisation
- ❧ 2<sup>nd</sup> Pathway: Enhance Practice/Academia
  - ❧ Practice Nurses/ Midwives who have enough years of experience but lack academia or vice versa

# Framework



## ❧ 3<sup>rd</sup> Pathway: Trainees

❧ Nurses/Midwives who start from scratch with lack of experience and academia

❧ Most challenging needing partners for holding the training in the different specialisations

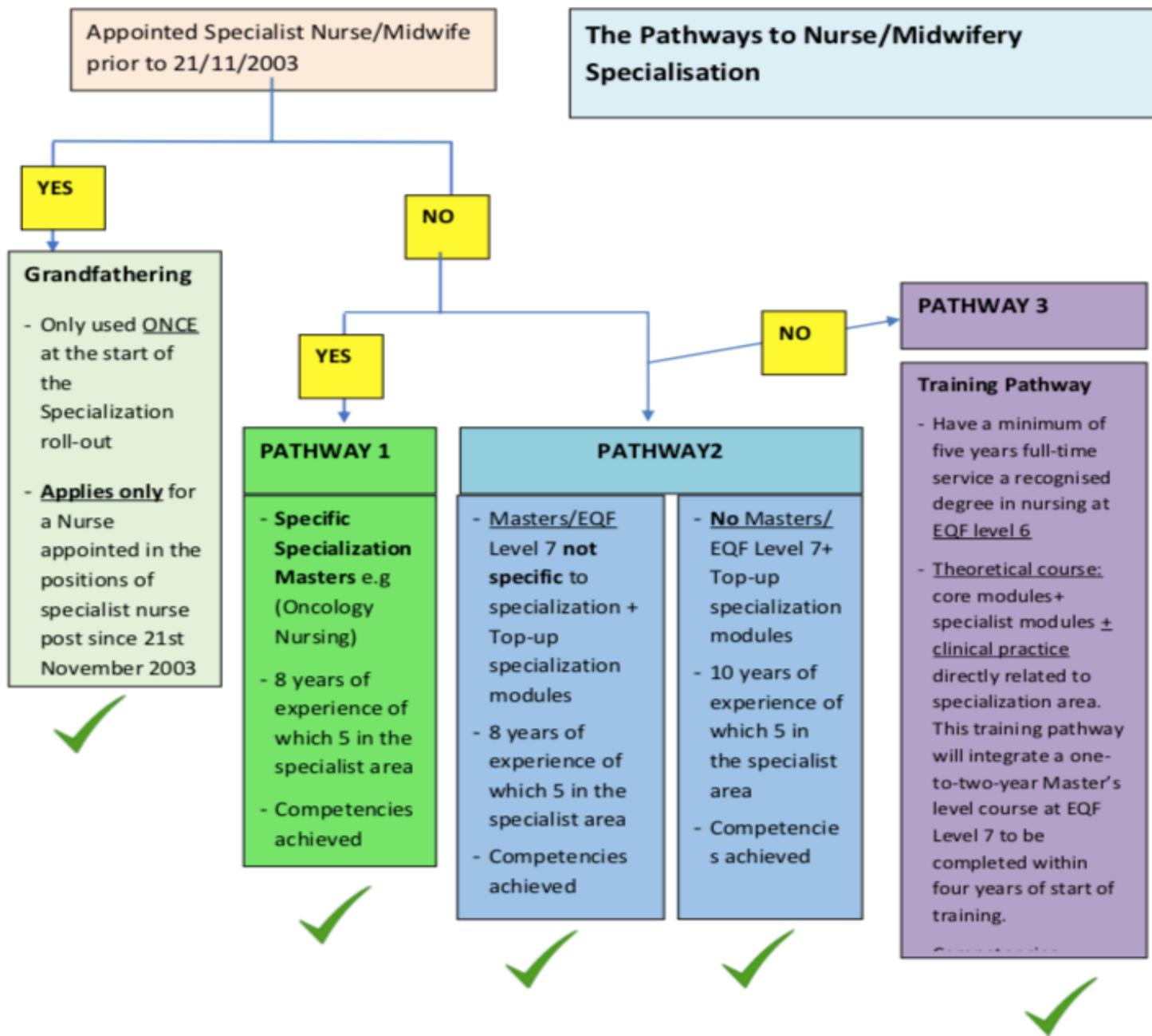


Figure 1.0 - Outline of the Pathways to Register as specialist nurses / midwives

# The Proposed Specialisation post- graduate training framework for Malta is based upon three main pillars being:



## 1. **Professional Qualifications**

An academic component, EQF Level 7 or above, that is relevant to area of speciality. Level 7 includes either a Masters' degree, a Postgraduate diploma or a Postgraduate certificate with the Master's degree at the highest level with level 7 and Level 8, includes a PhD qualification.

## 2. **Professional Experience**

A number of years of training as an apprentice or trainee within the specialty.

## 3. **Professional Competencies**

The satisfaction of advanced practice competencies for that specialty.

# Scope of Specialist Practice



- ❧ Works in progress
- ❧ Will aid in identifying the specific roles leading to responsibility and accountability.
- ❧ Will enhance autonomy of the specialist nurse/midwife
- ❧ Facilitate the development of nurse/midwife led clinics in our health entities.

# Vision



- ❧ Have our own training premises
- ❧ A team to coordinate the necessary programmes

# Take Home



- ❧ To collaborate with various stakeholders towards reaching a consensus of Minimum Training Framework across European Countries,
- ❧ Mutual recognition of specialist qualifications and recognition of specialities.

# Take Home



- ∞ To build bridges with different countries (healthcare systems/ centres of excellence) where there could be exchange of experiences between specialist nurse/midwives and training/apprentice opportunities.



Our Specialisation future  
depends on how well we lay  
these foundations.