



# Medical Council Malta

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Circular 1/2026

To All Medical and Dental Professionals

Subject: **Professional Secrecy and Reporting Obligations**

The Medical Council hereby issues this circular as a formal reminder to all members of the medical and dental professions regarding their professional duties concerning the preservation of confidentiality and the legal parameters governing the reporting of criminal conduct.

Practitioners are reminded that, in accordance with both Maltese statutory law and the ethical standards governing the profession — as set out in ‘The Ethics and Regulations of the Medical and Dental Professions’ (<https://medicalcouncil.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/27-ethicsandregulations2012.pdf>) — all medical and dental professionals are strictly bound by the principles of professional secrecy and patient confidentiality. These obligations constitute the cornerstone of the fiduciary relationship between practitioners and their patients and must be observed at all times in the course of professional practice.

It is to be noted that under Maltese law, there is no general statutory duty imposed upon medical or dental professionals to report criminal offences disclosed to them by patients, save for narrowly defined exceptions prescribed by law outlined below. In other situations, practitioners may use their discretion in reporting a crime, keeping in mind that there is no legal obligation to do so and that as highlighted in the above-mentioned code of Ethics, the profession endeavours to place the needs of the patient above all else.

The principal exception is found in Article 9 of the Minor Protection (Alternative Care) Act, Chapter 602 of the Laws of Malta, which imposes a mandatory obligation to report in the following circumstances:

- Where a minor is involved, or
- Where there is reasonable belief that a person, including a minor, is or may be subject to violence, including but not limited to domestic violence or other forms of harm contemplated under the said Act.

In these cases, doctors and dentists are to file a report to the Police HQ - Domestic Violence Unit. Where minors are involved, a report shall be filed immediately to the Director (Child Protection) or the Executive Police ([pulizija@gov.mt](mailto:pulizija@gov.mt) - <https://pulizija.gov.mt/en/file-a-report/>).

This circular does not introduce new duties but serves to reaffirm and clarify the existing legal and ethical framework that governs the conduct of all members of the medical and dental professions in Malta.

The Medical Council thanks all practitioners for their continued adherence to these fundamental professional standards.

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Registrar

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