



Association of Speech-Language Pathologists

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10 March 2011

European Speech and Language Therapy Day 2011: "Hearing challenges in a noisy world"

The Association of Speech-Language Pathologists (ASLP) in collaboration with the Speech-Language Department (SLD) organized a half day seminar to mark the European Speech Language Therapy Day celebrated annually on 6 March. This year's theme is "Hearing challenges in a noisy world."

The European Speech and Language Therapy Day is celebrated in 28 different European countries by 31 Speech-Language Pathologists organizations in Europe, members of CPLOL, the Standing Liaison Committee for Speech and Language Pathologists in Europe. Each year a theme is chosen and promoted in these countries, on the day and throughout the month of March.

To celebrate this event, a seminar for Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) was organized on **Thursday 10 March, between 8:30am and 1:00 pm at St Vincent De Paule Residence, Luqa.** The participants were addressed by local and foreign experts in the field of hearing impairment. The important role of SLPs in the (re)habilitation programme of individuals with hearing impairment was highlighted. For individuals who have a hearing impairment, the technological advancement in the area of hearing aids, cochlear implants and other devices is considered an important development. However the role of the SLPs in the development of language and communication skills of these individuals cannot be underestimated. During this seminar the latest therapeutic techniques were discussed together with local current research findings.

A leaflet with practical advice on how one can communicate better with individuals with hearing impairment was devised to be distributed amongst the general public. Practical tips such as how one is to talk to an individual with hearing impairment and things to watch out for such as room lighting and unnecessary background noise are addressed. An electronic copy of this leaflet may be downloaded from www.aslpmalta.org or a hard copy can be requested by sending an e-mail to info@aslpmalta.org

The Speech-Language Department (SLD) is also celebrating 30 years of speech-language services in Malta and Gozo. This is an important milestone in the development of services for individuals with communication difficulties. Over the past years service delivery has increased considerably and with more SLPs employed by the Health Division today, the SLD extends its services to most localities in Malta and is present in all hospitals in Malta and Gozo. Further details on the SLD may be accessed on www.speechlanguage.gov.mt.

The ASLP and SLD would like to thank all speakers of the seminar for their contribution and the main sponsor Trebee Ltd for making the necessary arrangements for the foreign speakers to come to Malta and make this seminar a successful event. Thanks to the administration of St Vincent De Paule Residence since without their support it would not have been possible to hold this seminar. Special thanks go to Ms Catherine Gonzi for honouring us with her presence and her much appreciated support in the work carried out by SLPs.