

MSc in Paediatric Infectious Diseases at Oxford University, 2016-2019: Dr Paul Torpiano

As a higher specialist trainee in paediatric infectious diseases in the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent health at Mater Dei Hospital, it is my responsibility to care for children with infections, some of which may be life-threatening. In the early stages of my training, I recognised the need to pursue further academic training in this field in affiliation with a leading international institution. I chose to read for a postgraduate diploma, and then an MSc, in Paediatric Infectious Diseases at Oxford University*, one of the few institutions worldwide offering such a degree. These studies would not have been possible without the support of the Endeavour B Scholarship Scheme.

From 2016-2018, I read for a postgraduate diploma in paediatric infectious diseases: the course consisted of various components spanning online tuition and fora, case-based discussions, literature reviews, residential courses, and a number of different written assignments, one of which was successfully published in an internationally respected scientific journal (*Torpiano P, Pace D. Clinically-diagnosed Mediterranean Spotted Fever in Malta. Travel Med Infect Dis 2018 Nov-Dec;26: 16-24*). The two years of study gave me the knowledge-base and grounding to found and pursue what I hope to be a very fruitful career in paediatric infectious diseases, and will help me serve my patients to the best of my abilities in the years to come. I was successfully awarded a postgraduate diploma in paediatric infectious diseases with distinction in 2018.

Following this, I immediately progressed to an MSc in paediatric infectious diseases with Oxford University, which consisted of working on a research-based thesis over the span of one year. My research was entitled “Meningococcal carriage in young adults at the University of Malta”.

In this work I assessed meningococcal carriage amongst university students, and compared the genomic profile of carried and invasive meningococci in the Maltese islands, with implications for understanding local meningococcal transmission and epidemiology, and implementation of meningococcal vaccination on a national scale. The results of my research promise to inform local vaccine policy in the coming years, and have set the stage for future research in meningococcal carriage and vaccinology in Malta. I was awarded the MSc in paediatric infectious diseases with distinction in November 2019.

Dr Paul Torpiano MD(Melit) MRCP(UK) MRCPCH(UK) PgDip PID (Oxford) MSc PID (Oxford)

Higher Specialist Trainee in Paediatric Infectious Diseases

Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Health

Mater Dei Hospital, Malta

***Acknowledgement:**

This degree was carried out following the award of an Endeavour B Scholarship Scheme funded through National funds.