



Virtual 2020

**EAFP** EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF FACULTIES OF PHARMACY

# Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Seminar for Healthcare Professionals

## An interdisciplinary academic initiative

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## INTRODUCTION

The Academy for Patient Centred Excellence and Innovation in Regulatory Sciences serves as a key platform within the Malta Medicines Authority (MMA) through which educational planning and development unfold, enabling the delivery of academic initiatives tailored to evolving stakeholder needs. The Novel Coronavirus outbreak, reported in December 2019 in Wuhan, presented a need to develop an engaging initiative intended to strengthen preparedness and response.

## AIM

To develop an educational seminar which brings together healthcare professionals for interdisciplinary exchange of expertise, response plans and sharing of concerns.

## METHOD

In February 2020, the MMA Academy, in collaboration with the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, organised a two-hour interactive seminar on the Novel Coronavirus. The seminar was scheduled in the evening to facilitate participation of healthcare professionals. An invitation was circulated via email and through the active social media platforms of the MMA.

Key academic experts from the areas of pharmacy, virology, pathology, public health, infection disease and health promotion, addressed this seminar in an effort to consolidate a unified information strategy for prevention and control. Posters aimed at promoting contextual measures to restrain eventual spread of the virus (Figure 1) were provided to healthcare professionals for dissemination purposes.

## RESULTS

Over one hundred professionals working in the public and private health sectors participated actively in the seminar. Healthcare professionals included medical doctors, dental surgeons, nurses, pharmacists, radiographers and medical lab scientists.

The topics encompassed an overview of the global scenario; the presentation of the infection; threats posed by the virus in comparison to previous pandemics; containment measures; intricacies involved in laboratory analysis and clinical diagnosis; infection prevention and control; use of personal protective equipment; and procedures to be followed in case of suspected infection. Relevant exigencies and preparedness of the Maltese Health Authorities to counteract this global health emergency were presented. Posters distributed to aid in a public awareness campaign through pharmacies and clinics were well received.

## CONCLUSION

Collaboration, communication and training between various inter-professional healthcare spheres are fundamental to strengthen preparedness and mitigate health emergencies.

An interdisciplinary approach to education can enhance scientific knowledge at an individual level and aid in driving successful clinical practices, through enhanced competence, teamwork, and the integration of skills across various disciplines.

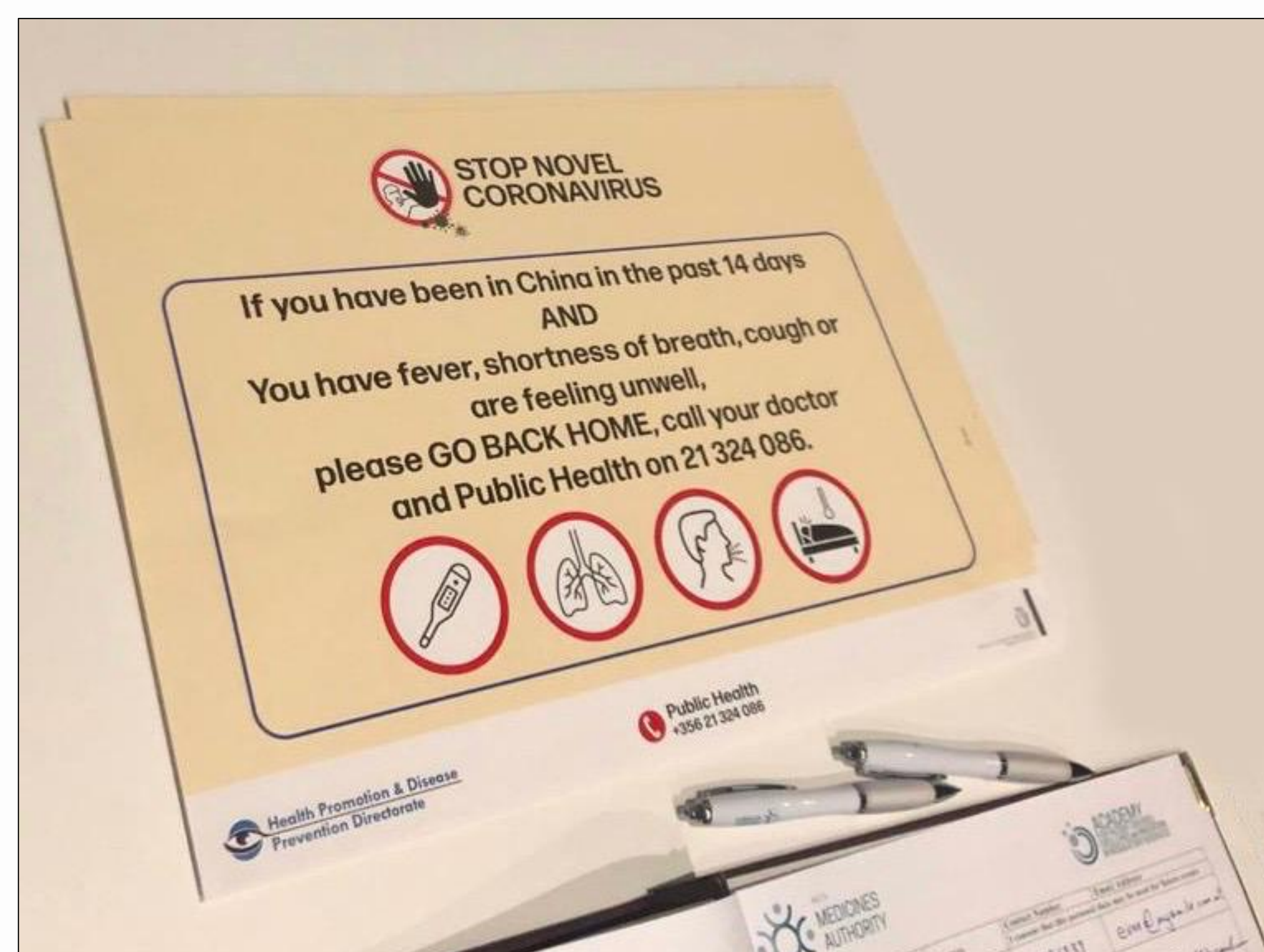


Figure 1: Stop Novel Coronavirus poster disseminated in February 2020