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## Report

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### International Council on Alcohol and Addictions.

**42nd Institute on the Prevention and Treatment of Dependencies.  
31st August - 4th September 1998, Westin, Dragonara, St. Julians.**

During the first week of September some six hundred delegates from all over the world will descend on the Westin Resort, Dragonara to discuss alcohol and drug related issues as well as the theme of this years conference, *The Changing Face of Addictive Behaviours*.

Against a background of increasing numbers of users world wide of substances both licit (alcohol, tobacco and medicines) and illicit (narcotics) and the development of dependencies related to the use of such substances that impact on health and socioeconomic norms, the appearance of dependencies that hitherto do not emanate from traditional routes (as above) are also now emerging and impinging on the quality of life of the individual and as such that of society. The delegates will take a hard look at what we have learned from what may be termed as the "established" dependencies and question whether such knowledge acquired from such efforts may be used to tackle the so called "emerging" dependencies.

As can be appreciated the vast subject area has resulted in the meeting being divided into a number of sections that reflect the participant's interest in this diverse field. Some appreciation of the topics to be tackled may be obtained from the following list, which in fact covers the 23 sections on offer during the week.

- Alcohol Policy, Alcohol and Drug Treatment and its Organisation, Epidemiological Research on Alcohol Related Issues, Alcohol Education, Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety, Alcohol and Drug Problems in Business and Industry, Alcohol and Drug Problems of Indigenous Peoples, Communication in Alcoholology.
- Epidemiological Research on Drugs, Drug Education, HIV, AIDS and Substance Abuse, Therapeutic Communities and Rehabilitation Programmes.
- Tobacco Dependence.
- Gambling.

- Professional Management, Primary Health Care Providers, Social Work, Psychology, Family Therapy.
- Focus on Women, Youth, Ethnic Dimensions; Culture, Migration and Alcohol and Drug Issues.
- Information and Dissemination.

In addition to these 23 sections there are five special sessions which are directly relevant to the current situation in Malta, these are;

- The Mediterranean Situation.
- Responding to Addictive behaviours in Island States.
- Addictions and the Criminal Justice System.
- Narcotics Anonymous.
- Disulfiram for the Treatment of Alcoholism.

There are also two one-day symposia solely dedicated to:

- 1 Alcohol Research: From Basic Science to Public Policy.
- 2 The Hospitality Industry's Programmes for the Prevention of Substance Abuse.

Over 450 abstracts have been submitted which will provide the basis for the presentations to be made in the 23 sections. Malta will be represented (abstracts published in this issue pg 35-40) in most of the sections by leading protagonists in the field. The subject areas as the section areas are as diverse as one could hope in the light of the fact that as a nation we are at the early stages of getting to grips with problems of dependencies. However, the fact that the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions have come here to have their 42nd Institute probably reflects on our efforts in the area and our desire to do even better.

**Richard Muscat**