



# BREAST CENTRES NETWORK

Synergy among Breast Units

## ★ Agatha Breast Unit, Mater Dei Hospital - Msida, Malta

### General Information



**New breast cancer cases treated per year** 350

**Breast multidisciplinary team members** 15

Radiologists, surgeons, pathologists, medical oncologists, radiotherapists and nurses

**Clinical Director:** Gordon Caruana Dingli, FRCS, MD

The Agatha Breast Unit was established by Mr Charles Swain at St Luke's Hospital in 2000 and migrated to Mater Dei Hospital. The current head is Mr Gordon Caruana Dingli. Patients are referred by General Practitioners and from the Screening Programme for specialist care of breast disease. The unit offers multidisciplinary care by breast surgeons, oncologists, pathologists, radiographers, physiotherapists and breast care nurses. All patients are discussed at a weekly multidisciplinary meeting. The team aims to offer the best possible medical care and the best possible cosmetic outcome with oncoplastic surgery and plastic surgery and psychological support to the patient and her/his family. The Breast Unit carries out research and audit and supports continuing medical education.

### **Agatha Breast Unit, Mater Dei Hospital**

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Msida,

Phone: +35625454573

Fax:

E-mail: [breastcare@gov.mt](mailto:breastcare@gov.mt)

Available services

- ✓ Radiology
- ✓ Breast Surgery
- ✓ Reconstructive/Plastic Surgery
- ✓ Pathology
- ✓ Medical Oncology
- ✓ Radiotherapy

- ✓ Nuclear Medicine
- ✓ Rehabilitation
- ✓ Genetic Counselling
- ✓ Data Management
- ✓ Psycho-oncology
- ✓ Breast Nurses

- ✓ Social Workers
- ✓ Nutritional Counselling
- ✓ Survivorship Groups
- ✓ Sexual Health Counselling
- ✓ Supportive and Palliative Care
- ✓ Integrative Medicine

Radiology

- ✓ **Dedicated Radiologists** 4
- ✓ **Mammograms per year** 10000
- ✓ **Breast radiographers**
- ✓ **Screening program**
- ✓ **Verification for non-palpable breast lesions on specimen**
- ✓ **Axillary US/US-guided FNAB**
- ✓ **Clinical Research**

**Available imaging equipment**

- ✓ Mammography
- ✓ Ultrasound
- ✓ Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- ✓ 3 D Mammography

**Available work-up imaging equipment**

- ✓ Computer Tomography
- ✓ Ultrasound
- ✓ Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- ✓ PET/CT scan
- ✓ 3 D Mammography

**Primary technique for localizing non-palpable lesions**

- Hook-wire (or needle localization)
- Charcoal marking/tattooing
- ROLL: radio-guided occult lesion localization

**Available breast tissue sampling equipment**

- ✓ Stereotactic Biopsy (Mammography guided)
  - ✓ Core Biopsy (Tru-cut)
  - ✓ Vacuum assisted biopsy
- ✓ Ultrasound-guided biopsy
  - ✓ Fine-needle aspiration biopsy (FNAB, cytology)
  - ✓ Core Biopsy
  - ✓ Vacuum assisted biopsy
- ✓ MRI-guided biopsy
  - ✓ Core Biopsy
  - Vacuum assisted biopsy

Breast Surgery

- ✓ **New operated cases per year (benign and malignant)** 600
- ✓ **Dedicated Breast Surgeons** 3
- ✓ **Surgeons with more than 50 surgeries per year** 3
- ✓ **Breast Surgery beds** 15
- ✓ **Breast Nurse specialists** 3
- ✓ **Outpatient surgery**
- Intra-operative evaluation of sentinel node**
- ✓ **Reconstruction performed by Breast Surgeons**
- ✓ **Clinical Research**

**Primary technique for staging the axilla**

- Axillary lymph node dissection
- ✓ Sentinel lymph node biopsy:
  - Blue dye technique
  - Radio-tracer technique
  - ✓ Blue dye + Radio-tracer
- Axillary sampling

**Reconstructive/Plastic Surgery**

- Reconstructive/Plastic surgeons** 4
- Immediate Reconstruction available**

**Type of breast reconstructive surgery available**

- Remodelling after breast-conserving surgery
- Reconstruction after mastectomy:
  - Two-stage reconstruction (tissue expander followed by implant)
  - One-stage reconstruction
  - Autogenous tissue flap
    - Latissimus dorsi flap
    - Transverse rectus abdominis (TRAM)
    - Free-flaps (free TRAM, DIEP, SIEA, gluteal, etc.)
- Surgery on the contralateral breast for symmetry

**Pathology**

- Dedicated Breast Pathologists** 2

**Available studies**

- Cytology
- Haematoxylin & eosin section (H&E)
  - Surgical specimen
  - Sentinel node
  - Core biopsy
- Frozen section (FS)
  - Surgical specimen
  - Sentinel node
- Immunohistochemistry stain (IHC)
  - Estrogen receptors
  - Progesterone receptors
  - HER-2
  - Ki-67

**Other special studies available**

- Fluorescence in-situ Hybridization for HER-2 gene (FISH)
- Oncotype Dx (21-gene assay)
- MammaPrint (70-gene microarray)
- Prediction Analysis of Microarray 50-gene set (PAM 50)

**Parameters included in the final pathology report**

- Pathology stage (pT and pN)
- Tumour size (invasive component in mm)
- Histologic type
- Tumor grade
- ER/PR receptor status
- HER-2/neu receptor status
- Peritumoural/Lymphovascular invasion
- Margin status

**Medical Oncology**

- Dedicated Breast Medical Oncologists** 2
- Outpatient systemic therapy**
- Clinical Research**

## Radiotherapy

**Dedicated Radiation Oncologists**

**Clinical Research**

**Available techniques after breast-conserving surgery (including experimental)**

Whole-Breast RT (WBRT)

Partial breast irradiation (PBI):

External beam PBI

Interstitial brachytherapy

Targeted brachytherapy (MammoSite, SAVI applicator, other devices)

Intra-operative RT (IORT)

## Multidisciplinary Meeting (MDM) / Tumour Board (TB)

**Regular MDM/TB for case management discussion**

Twice a week

Weekly

Every two weeks

Other Schedule

**Cases discussed at MDM/TB**

Preoperative cases

Postoperative cases

**Specialties/services participating in MDM/TB**

Radiology

Breast Surgery

Reconstructive/Plastic Surgery

Pathology

Medical Oncology

Radiotherapy

Genetic Counselling

Breast Nurse Service

Psycho-oncology

Breast Screening Unit, Radiographers, Trainees, Data Manager

## Further Services and Facilities

**Nuclear Medicine**

Lymphoscintigraphy

Bone scan

Positron Emission Tomography (PET)

PET/CT scan

**Rehabilitation**

Prosthesis service

Physiotherapy

Lymph-oedema treatment

**Genetic Counselling**

Specialist Providing Genetic Counselling/Risk assessment service:

Dedicated Clinical Geneticist

Medical Oncologist

Breast Surgeon

General Surgeon

Gynaecologist

Genetic Testing available

Surveillance program for high-risk women

**Data Management**

Database used for clinical information

Data manager available

Contact details

**Clinical Director**

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**Reconstructive Surgery**

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**Radiotherapy**

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How to reach us



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**From airport:**

By car, taxi or direct bus routes X1, X2, 117

**By train:**

N/A

**By bus or sub-way/underground:**

Frequent direct services from most locations in Malta [publictransport.com.mt](http://publictransport.com.mt)

**By car:**

The Agatha Breast Unit is situated at the Surgical Outpatients Department at Mater Dei Hospital which is centrally located on Triq Dun Karm (Birkirkara Bypass) leading off Triq Mikiel Anton Vassalli) Regional Road.

**Last modified:** 25 February 2020