

A Guest Editorial Perspective

PMA Hails PHD from New Zealand

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Pasifika Medical Association (PMA), to introduce this edition of the Pacific Health Dialog (PHD) on non-communicable and communicable disease. I would like to thank Professor Sitaleki 'A. Finau and his editorial Staff and Board, firstly, for the invitation to write this guest editorial and secondly to acknowledge the hard work, time and support that you have given to making the PHD the successful and sustainable journal that it is today.

It may not be immediately obvious, but rest assured that there is a connection with this editions theme and the PMA mission and focus on Pacific workforce development in New Zealand and the Pacific region. Strengthening Pacific health workforce capacity in the region is vital if we are to address the rise of non-communicable diseases and the resurgence and continued challenge of communicable diseases.

To achieve our long term goals in terms of improving health outcomes for Pacific peoples in the region it is important we continue to develop the Pacific health workforce, that we provide clinical leadership in health and that we work alongside Pacific health professional organisation, academic institutions and research organisation to leverage our relative strengths.

Recently, ownership of the PHD was transferred to the PMA. This is a very positive step for both the PMA and the PHD, whose combined visions will maintain the journal as a Pacific regional health journal supporting Pacific research and authors. In addition to supporting the work of the editorial team, the PMA will provide a more secure source of financial support to reduce the burden previously encountered in publishing editions of the PHD. I am grateful to Sitaleki Finau, Professor Ian Rouse of Fiji National University and the PMA Board for completing this process of ownership transfer seamlessly.

What does this mean with respect to the future publications? Nothing different in the immediate future however, I expect that there will be some changes in time as we all take stock of where we have all come from to the position we are in today. The immediate focus for the PHD executive group will be to strategically format the current structure and processes to enable the PHD executive to concentrate on the publications as well as continuing to enhance the reputation and audience of the journal. The PMA Board will provide the governance for the PHD at an organizational level leaving the management functions to the chief executive of the PMA and the editorial Board of the PHD.

The PMA is an organisation that has been active in the health sector promoting Pacific Health activities and assisting with the development of the health workforce through its networks and annual conferences in New Zealand and the Pacific region. Until recently the organisation had limited resources and relied heavily on the goodwill of the Membership to support our activities. The PMA Board is based around a medical executive with the membership inclusive of all healthcare workers in the sector. Having recently refocused our strategies and goals, we have now taken a significant challenge to assist the health sector in developing the Pacific health workforce through our programs with the secondary schools (Healthcare Heroes), universities (Students are our Future), District Health Boards and other Professional organisations. This has certainly increased the responsibility of the PMA with its contractual obligations and increased



revenue to deliver the outcomes and I have every confidence that we have the ability to deliver the programs. In turn this enables us to develop more infrastructure and have the financial resources to fund key activities for the organisation and at the same time being strategic in our investments. The outcomes of the current activities will take some years to determine however the initial findings from the secondary school and mentoring programs are encouraging. I will leave our website address www.pacifichealth.org should you wish for more detail on our activities.

How does this amalgamation benefit our members? There are not many organisations that have their own on-line medical journal and this opens the pathways for our members to participate in the publishing activities as well as having access to the journal through the various schemes that will be implemented.

I certainly feel that we are privileged to be in the position to have ownership and be able to provide a home and support the PHD. This is a significant responsibility and PMA is well aware of the expectations of the community who have supported the PHD to date. I want to acknowledge again the vision and determination of Sitaleki Finau and his colleagues in starting this journal and maintaining the publications through some very challenging times to what will now be a journal which will be of significant benefit for the future generations. I would also like to thank the sponsors for your ongoing support and we look forward to your continuing relationship with the PHD. A special thank you to FNU for continuing to maintain the website and Massey University for your ongoing support.

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