

Pacific Heads of Nursing & Midwifery Meeting

Réunion des directeurs des soins infirmiers et obstétricaux du Pacifique

The Certificate IV in Nursing – (Enrolled Nursing) Programme.

The Fiji Ministry of Health & Medical Services (MHMS) has identified the need for another cadre of nurses to deliver basic bedside nursing care to patients in its various hospital wards. The Enrolled Nurses (ENs) work under the supervision and delegation of the Registered Nurses (RNs). MOH data confirms that there is a low ratio of RNs to population in comparison to other Pacific Island countries. This is despite the recent initiative to increase intake in nursing schools around the country. However, the migration of nurses in and out of the government service has necessitated innovative interventions including the introduction of a new cadre of nurses – the Enrolled Nurse. The introduction of the certificate level program would ease the MOH from its critical nursing shortage as the outcomes of the program would be delegated basic nursing responsibilities of patient care giving time and space for registered nurses to focus in highly technical and specialised patient care.

The programme aim is to educate a new cadre of nurses who would be responsible for carrying out basic nursing care on patients admitted into hospital wards. Contribute to the delivery of basic nursing care across the life span and also contribute to the nursing assessments, care planning, implementation, and evaluation of care for health consumers with the activities of daily living.

In 2018, the pioneering class of the programme graduated and to date, the School of Nursing has graduated 156 students. There is a need to build the enrolled nursing capacity in Fiji, which will translate to recognition of a new cadre of nurses in Fiji.

1. BACKGROUND

The Certificate IV in Nursing- Enrolled Nursing programme Curriculum caters for both theoretical, laboratory and clinical practice for students who have met the minimum entry qualification set out by the College of Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences, Admission Committee and passed by the Fiji National University Senate.

In 2013-2014, dialogue between the Fiji MHMS and the School of Nursing (SON) to develop and teach a level 4 Enrolled Nursing programme. The programme was first offered in 2017. The focus is on Mastery based teaching and learning in order for students to become competent enrolled nurses. The programme is taught in two semesters with three (3) theoretical courses taught in Semester 1 and a full Praxis of eighteen weeks duration in semester 2 of learning. Students must demonstrate mastery, defined as $\geq 90\%$ on a clinical skills assessment, to pass the praxis course.

From 2018, the enrolled nursing students' pass rates has been 97-100% and the programme completion rate of 100%. To date 156 students have graduated from the programme. The focus of this report is to inform on the needs of the programme in terms of recognition of the graduates as a cadre of nurses in Fiji and the provision of employment pathway/opportunities in locally and regionally.

2. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The vision of the SON is “To become a Regional Centre of Excellence for nurse education and research in the South Pacific.” One of the steps towards achieving this vision is to ensure we produce dynamic, innovative nurses who are highly qualified, competent, and safe practitioners with a sound theoretical knowledge and diversified nursing skills. The MHMS needs to be supported by an educated, experienced, and skilled nursing, midwifery, and nurse practitioner workforce to meet the needs of the population.

Programme Philosophy

The underpinning philosophy of the enrolled nurse program embraces the Orem's Self-Care Deficit nursing theory when nursing is needed. The utilization of Orem's theory stems from the fact that we believe that the EN is prepared to fulfil an important role in providing quality, cost-effective nursing care within the current and future healthcare delivery systems. In line with one of the programmes aims; to provide safe, competent basic bedside nursing care utilizing a number of processes. The programme uses the Orem model with the nursing process.

Aim of the Programme

There are two broad aims of the programme:

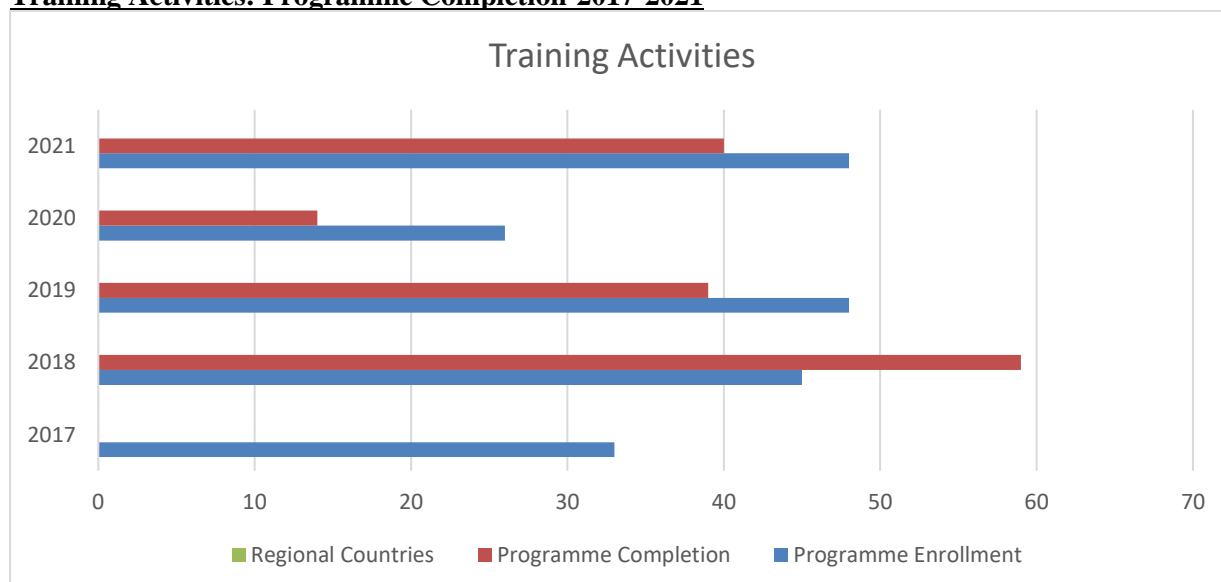
1. To educate a new cadre of nurses who would be responsible for carrying out basic nursing care on patients admitted into hospital wards. Contribute to the delivery of basic nursing care across the life span and also contribute to the nursing assessments, care planning, implementation and evaluation of care for health consumers with the activities of daily living.
2. Provide safe, competent basic bedside nursing care utilizing a number of processes, e.g., the nursing process including Orem's nursing system concept, and discharge planning

Training snapshot

The programme is into its 5th year of offer. Programme enrolments and completions of qualifications increased in 2019. There has never been a decline in enrolment into the programme and completion. Overall graduation statistics since the programme's inception is 159.

This year – 2022 enrolment peaked with the enrolment of 40 local students. Because of the Government's commitment to TVET education, students were able to secure a fully sponsored status for the government through the by the Tertiary Education Loan Scheme (TELTS)

Training Activities: Programme Completion-2017-2021



Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tuvalu Government

This is a new period of opportunity for Tuvalu pre-service students. MOU was signed to cater for the education of 16 Tuvalu Enrolled Nursing students. The programme is delivered virtually with in-country preceptors. The MOU was seen as a means in which the students can enhance their skills and knowledge

leading to a formal qualification. The programme is offered in the country and the teaching & learning components are assisted by preceptors from Tuvalu.

CMNHS plans to expand its reach to Pacific Island Countries (PICs) includes the delivery of teaching & learning via online mode and where needed periodical fly-in/fly-out support from key staffs to support training.

Students who want to further their career may come to Fiji for further training in the Bachelor of Nursing programme.

3. CHALLENGES

Regulation of Enrolled Nursing

Fiji Nursing Council (FNC) to review of Nursing legislation and include EN as another cadre of nurses. Presently the FNC has no mandate over the ENs. The Programme has been developed using an amended version of the draft Competency Standards for ENs intended for a diploma programme (ref. MOH (June 2013) establishing Enrolled Nursing in Fiji. Draft report for feedback). It is hoped that the FNC would adopt the draft Competency Standards to make this curriculum relevant.

Employment opportunities- Occupational Space.

MHMS services to reassign to ENs the current medial orderlies and ward assistant's position. (*Discussed in 4.1*)

4. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The EN is a valued and pertinent member of the healthcare workforce. According to the Health Workforce 2025 National projections (2012) EN have a higher retention rate compared to that of Registered Nurses (RN). (MyHealthCareer-Editor, 2019). Becoming an EN is often the platform of becoming Registered Nurse.

4.1 Recommendations for governments:

- Change in Legislation – ENs to be Recognized as a new cadre of Nursing in Fiji/ Register of Enrolled Nursing with Fiji Nursing Council (FNC)

Escalation of the amendments in the Nursing Legislation to include ENs as another cadre of nursing in Fiji. Any person that has successfully completed the theoretical and clinical requirements of the Certificate IV IN Nursing (Enrolled Nursing) be eligible to make they are eligible to make an application to the Fiji Nursing Council (FNC) for registration as an EN.

- **EN position to be created in Health Facilities, with Job Descriptions & remunerated accordingly.**
 - Whilst awaiting legislation amendments, consultations could be facilitated with MHMS to re-assign Medical Orderlies and Ward Assistants post to ENs. Due to the escalating nurse attrition, economic constraints and increasing patient acuity, the skill mix developed and acquired by students through the enrolled nursing programme will ensure patient care.
 - There also needs to be a clear demarcation of scope practice. With the SON embarking on journey from 2023 in the offering of specializations programmes in Fiji and PICs, specialization in nursing will allow nurses to focus in highly technical and specialised patient care, whilst, delegated basic nursing responsibilities of patient care is carried out by ENs.
 - Henceforth, it is vital that the practice parameters are ensured so that nursing practice are accommodated, needs of patients are holistically met and not fragmented.
- **Work opportunities and be part of the health workforce in ENs in PICs. (Enrolled Nurses Service)**
 - Employment opportunities with PICs to address eroding of skills through migration of Registered Nurses to hold temporary and permanent employment overseas.
 - Establish partnership with nursing education providers and health providers to place ENs in health settings (Hospitals & Public Health), this will increase the potential opportunity of employment.
 - This will support health systems to achieve their goals of improving health, address access to nursing care, support flow of remittances.
- **Expansion of Teaching and Training Sites of the programme.**

Training provisions to be made available with countries/hospitals that CMNHS has existing MOU. (Vanuatu, SI, Tonga, Cook Is, Kiribati) also develop new ones & conduct scoping with Nauru, Samoa & RMI)

- **Registration/Employment opportunities with partners.**

Australia has a significant health footprint in the Pacific region. SON will seek support and assistance from Professor Di Brown and WHO Collaborative Centre, Pacific Employment Scheme and Health X-Australian Home care provider.