

Pacific Health Information Network

Strengthening Health Information Systems and Digital Health

TECHNICAL DOCUMENT: 9.3 Samoa a Member of the WHO Family of International Classifications (FIC) Network and opportunities for the Pacific Region.

1. BACKGROUND

As the first Pacific Island Country or Territory (PICT) to join the World Health Organisation Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC) Network, Samoa will share their experience on being part of the global discussion on the development and use of health classifications, and the importance of having PICT representations in global initiatives. Ms Kirisitina Etuale, Principal Medical Records Officer, Ministry of Health, has been appointed as the Samoan Country Focal Point to the WHO-FIC Network. ICD-11 Country Focal Points are member state-designated persons to participate (and vote) in Classification and Statistics Advisory Committee – International Classifications of Diseases (CSAC-ICD) processes, for countries who do not have an official voting member as nominated through a collaborating centre. CSAC-ICD is the WHO-FIC Network Committee supports WHO and the WHO-FIC Network in keeping the reference classifications of the WHO-FIC in line with current knowledge.

2. ACTION TAKEN

WHO has already begun to implement an updating process concerning the ICD-11. The Director-General has invited Member States to take part in the updating activities by nominating a national expert. The updating process is further described in Annex 3.8 of the Reference Guide to the ICD-11, available at <https://icd.who.int/icd11refguide/en/index.html>

In October 2022, Ms Etuale attended the WHO-FIC Network Annual Meeting in Geneva – the first Pacific Islander to do so. The event has clearly emphasized where Samoa and PICT stands in ICD and indicating the need for additional guidance for coders and technical improvement. With online courses funded by WHO, this would be a starting point forward for PICT coders to progress in ICD. Samoa's participation on WHO-FIC Network, meant coders will be kept in the loop in the developments of ICD and access to implementation

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platforms. ICD is rapidly moving forward in developed countries with Samoa a step behind, due to resources available.

Every year before the WHO-FIC Network Annual Meeting, there is a call for posters that will be available at the meeting. Posters may be submitted covering a range of topics, including for information only, and must be in line with the Network Strategic Work Plan.

It would be good if PICTs could work with the Samoan Focal Point to submit a paper to the Annual Meeting this year, which is being held in Bonn, Germany, 16-20 October 2023.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The participation of PICTs in the WHO-FIC Network is a good opportunity for the region to ensure that the ongoing development of health classifications is fit-for-purpose for the countries in the region. Having Samoa as a Focal Point member is a good first step, but it would be good to have other countries represented also. Collaborating on a Poster presentation for this years WHO-FIC Network Annual meeting would be a good first step in this direction.