

Wednesday October 2, 2013

MOU with Sydney University

Fiji National University has formalised its long-standing working relationship with the University of Sydney with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in Suva yesterday.

Signed at the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) main office at Hoodless House, the MOU will open up opportunities for both the universities to venture into collaborative research and joint working relations between their students and staff.

Representing the University of Sydney at the signing was Professor Iqbal Ramzan, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, together with several other academics from the University.

Professor Ramzan was optimistic the MOU will prove beneficial for both institutions.

“The University of Sydney through its International Portfolio has International Program Development Fund Grants and these small ceiling grants are given to researchers to initiate collaborative research networks within the region.

“We put these grants in to try and establish research within Fiji, principally with FNU, because we see FNU as the premier university within Fiji,” he said.

“We hope that by the time we leave, we have some concrete understanding that key areas underlined in this MOU can be achieved; we really want to see the output that will be achieved from this MOU.”

Professor Ramzan added that apart from research, there will be collaborations with CMNHS with an objective of addressing health issues.

“We want to establish collaborative links with Fiji National University so we can help with addressing health problems in Fiji.

“We want to look at health more generally, NCDs especially. We want to make sure we have enough health workers, so we are interested in training the different health professionals within Fiji and also in terms of academic work of the medical work force in FNU,” said Professor Ramzan.

Acting Vice Chancellor for FNU, Dr Mahendra Reddy said the signing legalises the existing relationship between the universities.

“Universities have the responsibility to create new knowledge and question the existing body of knowledge.

“You two have reconciled and have a common ground to create new knowledge and question the existing body of knowledge and open up the immense amount of opportunities that the two universities may have, with respect to the research and collective wisdom that exists in both the institution,” he said.

Dean Reddy said the decision to have a MOU is only possible when a university has a significant proportion of thinkers in the college.

“We need thinkers who look at things beyond the existing of knowledge, who have a curious mind and who would want to question the existing body of knowledge.”

CMNHS Dean, Professor Ian Rouse welcomed the development.

“I am very much in favor of MOUs that deliver; when you have close relationships, a MOU develops and an exciting thing about this MOU today is that we have an incredibly long standing relationship with the Sydney University.

“To me it is fantastic to get to a point where we recognize formally with the signing of the MOU what has been a very long positive relationship of developments in teaching and research,” he said.

For more information please contact Communications Office on 3393110.