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FNU trains medical staff

A group of five medical officers have undergone training in managing critically ill cardiac patients, in a programme run by the American Heart Association through Fiji National University's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

The medical officers are students at the College. As a result of the training, they are now instructors in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) in Fiji and are qualified to conduct the training for other doctors and nurses in Fiji and the region.

The specialist training was carried out by visiting American paramedic experts from Atlantic Partners EMS based in Maine, United States.

A week-long training programme was also held this week for close to 60 doctors and nurses from hospitals around the country.

The group also included three medical staff from Solomon Islands.

CMNHS Dean, Professor Ian Rouse said it was a fantastic collaborative project to boost the region's capacity in the area.

Dean Prof. Rouse said it was exciting that some younger doctors were trained as instructors.

Assistant Professor at the Department of Medical Sciences, Dr Anne Creaton said it was a rare opportunity for medical staff to train in managing critically ill patients in particular those of cardiac origin. She said the training was for medical staff to care for anyone with abnormality in their heart rhythm that makes them unstable and unwell.

"This training is for the care of anyone with critical cardiac illness, people that collapse in cardiac arrest, and people with heart attacks or have different heart rhythms that makes them unwell," she said.

Dr Creaton said training instructors help build capacity within Fiji to run our own courses.

"They can then train more staff within Fiji more regularly as is the case with Paediatric Advanced Life support courses, which are regularly run within Fiji."

She said bringing a group of doctors and nurses from 3 divisional and 4 sub-divisional hospitals will greatly benefit the people of Fiji.

Visiting team leader Rick Petrie said the team first came to Fiji in December 2010 and this was their third trip.

"This time we are focusing our efforts on ACLS, including the first -ever ACLS instructor course for qualified students," he said.

"We were initially invited as part of a joint venture between the American Embassy and Fiji National University School of Medicine to provide ACLS education to doctors and nurses that work in the Accident and Emergency Room. FNU has now continued that programme by bringing back the team for the second and third round of classes."