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PRESS RELEASE

Salt Advocacy Handover to MoH

Suva, Fiji Islands. Fiji National University's (FNU) Pacific Research Centre for the Prevention of Obesity and NCDs (C-POND) has completed its research identifying and confirming the key cause of high blood pressure, hypertension and other related Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Fiji and Pacific region is the high intake of salt.

NCDs are the main cause of premature deaths in Fiji and the region. The prevalence of raised blood pressure and other risk factors for NCDs have been increasing. Globally high intakes of salt have been shown to be a significant contributor to raised blood pressure, and intakes found to be far in excess of recommended maximum levels.

Fiji as the global pacific leader in medical research has been at the forefront of regional efforts to understand the risks from excess salt intake and to take measures to reduce salt intake.

The College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences of FNU had provided further support to existing efforts in Fiji through its cost effectiveness of Salt reduction in the Pacific Islands which commenced in 2012. This was a two-country study conducted in Fiji and Samoa that intended to look at salt intake and how intake could be reduced through a combination of efficient and effective approaches.

The research in Fiji included a baseline, intervention and a repeated collection of sodium for comparative analysis.

C-POND which led the work at FNU for Fiji, will hand over its report to the Ministry of Health & Medical Services on Tuesday, 28 March, 2017 at the Shangri-La's Fijian Resort.

The Minister for Health and Medical Services and her team in the Wellness and NCD Division is committed to continue the advocacy for reducing salt as a priority. This will include disseminating relevant information to the communities and working with food manufacturers on food labelling, re-formulation and educating of our consumers.

For further information, please contact [Susana Lolohea](mailto:susana.lolohea@fnu.ac.fj), AO-C-POND (Pacific Research Centre for the Prevention of Obesity and Non-Communicable Diseases, Tamavua Campus on Email: susana.lolohea@fnu.ac.fj | susana.lolohea@gmail.com OR Phone: (679) 323 3253 ext 3833.

About the Fiji National University: The Fiji National University (FNU) was established through the merger of 7 government-owned tertiary institutions in Fiji, and commenced operations from 1 January 2010. The constituent institutions are found at over 40 different locations across Fiji, and collectively offer Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate qualifications and Skills Upgrading for those who are already in employment. Approximately 30,000 students pass through the University each year. Over the last six years of its operations, the University has registered major achievements with regard to new programme delivery, quality improvements and contribution to research and publications via its 5 Colleges: The College of Humanities & Education (CHE), the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences (CMNHS), the College of Engineering, Science & Technology (CEST), the College of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (CAFF), the College of Business, Hospitality & Tourism Studies (CBHTS) and the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC).