

**Thursday 1 March, 2018**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FNU signs partnership agreement with Australian Government**

**Suva, Fiji Islands.**

A grant agreement between Fiji National University (FNU) and the Australian Government signed today aims to continue the work of strengthening specialized clinical services and improving health workforce development in Fiji and other Pacific Island countries (PICs).

The agreement signed this morning will see FNU's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) working with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and the Pacific Community (SPC) towards achieving the overall goals of improving basic secondary health care in PICs that is affordable, accessible, of good quality and appropriate to local needs. This is made possible through funding from the Australian Government over the next few years.

CMNHS Dean, Dr William May said the Australian Government's previous support from 2012 to 2017 to FNU through CMNHS has contributed to improving the quality of training programmes offered by the College, increasing the number of graduates, being instrumental in establishing and supporting post graduate education for doctors and all other health professionals at FNU.

"The Australian Government's previous support created several opportunities for the College to achieve its strategic priorities including expanding post graduate teaching infrastructure in Suva and Lautoka," he said.

Dr May said the Australian Government also supported the new Emergency Medicine programme and the first cohort of six postgraduate doctors who graduated in 2016 with Masters in Emergency Medicine - a new and very popular speciality at FNU's CMNHS.

Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, John Feakes, in his opening remarks, said Australia is proud to continue its long-standing partnership with FNU and its College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

"Supporting a healthy, productive Pacific population is in Australia's interests and we continue to invest in health as an enabler of participation in education and employment, and a contributor to the region's growth," Mr Feakes added.

The agreement will also facilitate the creation of the Office of the Associate Dean Regional at CMNHS to address the demand for appropriate health and medical training to meet the health workforce needs in Fiji and the Pacific region.

**For further information, please contact Riteshni Singh on Email: [mmco@fnu.ac.fj](mailto:mmco@fnu.ac.fj) or Phone: 3233000 ext. 3005**