

CMNHS Alumni perform Vanuatu's first successful ZMC surgery



Dr Nelson Tanghwa (right) and Dr. Mackenzie Sitobata with a colleague during their clinical sessions at the College.

Two alumni of the Fiji National University's (FNU's), College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) have created history by successfully undertaking Vanuatu's first ever 'reduction of the zygomatic complex fracture' surgery last week.

Dr Nelson Tanghwa and Dr. Mackenzie Sitobata (Class of 2018), who are both dentists, conducted the successful surgery at Vila Central Hospital.

The zygomaticomaxillary complex (ZMC) plays a key role in the structure, function, and aesthetic appearance of the facial skeleton. It provides normal cheek contour and separates the orbital contents from the temporal fossa and the maxillary sinus. The ZMC fractures are common after facial trauma.

"We did a one-point fixation at the zygoma-frontal fracture site (Obwegeser figure of 8 wiring) after reducing the fracture and elevating the zygomatic bone fracture transorally," said Dr Tanghwa.

"The two-hour procedure was a first of its kind to be done at the main hospital here in Port Vila and there were no post-operative complications," he added.

According to the FNU alumnus, similar cases were previously either ignored or managed by only elevation of the zygomatic bone without fixation.

The Postgraduate Diploma in Oral Surgery (PGDOS) graduate applauded the training provided at CMNHS which enabled them to master their skills and undertake such surgeries and bring comfort to the lives of patients.

"I hope you (CMNHS) will continue to strive for the best outcome in providing these postgraduate trainings," Dr Tanghwa said.

"We would like to thank you all (College Academic team) for facilitating this training. With the knowledge and clinical skills acquired, we can surely

make a difference in our communities and country."

The CMNHS Dean, Dr William May was proud to learn about this significant achievement by their graduates.

While congratulating the team, Dr May said the news was encouraging and highlighted the quality of training provided at the College.

"We value your feedback and contribution in making a difference to your country. I am sure the College and the academic staff will find your feedback very rewarding," Dr May added.

The Head of School Dentistry and Oral Health at CMNHS, Dr Osea Dukuno also praised both doctors.

"This is great feedback and reflection of the standard of training and the number of cases out there in the community that need quality oral surgery treatment," said Dr Dukuno.

"Your country has made a great investment in your training and I am very excited to see your courage to take up complicated cases," he added.

PGDOS Programme Coordinator, Professor Jayantha Weerasinghe, said he was glad to note that the former students were serving their communities with great pride.

"This programme (PGDOS) expects dentists with adequate training to treat minor to moderate uncomplicated oral surgery problems including facial bone injuries".

While thanking the College, FNU and the Colonial War Memorial Hospital for facilitating this training programme, Prof Weerasinghe said this was an example of transmission of knowledge and skills from classroom to clinics.