

McGrath honoured to serve on the FNU Council

Distinguished Australian academic Professor Barry McGrath believes with a wide range of skills and experience, he will be able to contribute positively as a member of the Fiji National University (FNU) Council.

Professor McGrath was recently in the country to attend the FNU Council meeting held in Nadi.

“I feel honoured to have been invited to join the FNU Council,” said Professor McGrath.

Prof McGrath MBBS (Hons) 1969 University of Sydney, trained as a Physician in nephrology and general medicine (FRACP 1975), and obtained Doctorate of Medicine by thesis (‘Hypertension in Haemodialysis Patients’ University of Sydney) in 1978 from studies in Sydney and Oxford UK.

The senior academic said having worked in the region for some time, the opportunity to serve on the FNU Council came at an opportune time.

“I have always considered that Australia needed to take a greater interest in collaborating with Pacific nations and Asia, and this was enriched by my own experiences as a young doctor in New Guinea and Singapore and as a supervisor of PhD and post-doctoral students from Japan and China,” said Prof McGrath.

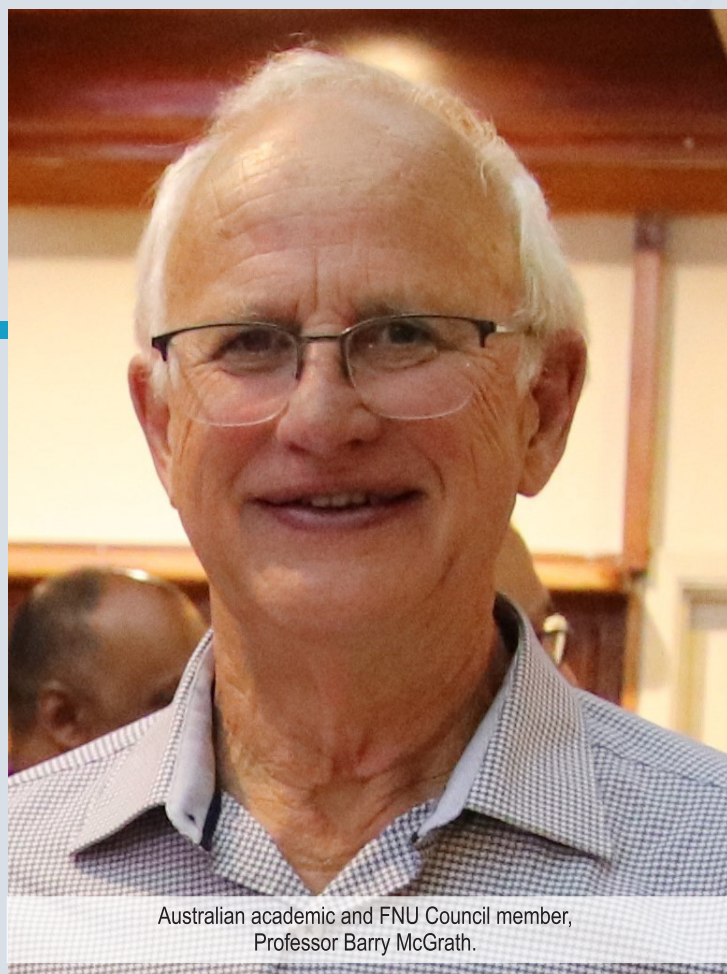
“Over recent years I have seen the need to better integrate migrant doctors into the Australian Healthcare System and worked to this effect as Chair of the clinical examinations panel for the Australian Medical Council (AMC).”

“I had been introduced to medical education in Fiji in the 1990s when I conducted a review of the Masters of Medicine program at Fiji School of Medicine for USP,” he added.

Reflecting on the composition of the FNU Council, Prof McGrath said there was an excellent range of expertise and experience and the Council dynamics appear to be very much attuned towards systemic growth and excellence of the university.

“The nascent new strategic plan is currently being worked on and already there are some very exciting and achievable goals defined. Financial sustainability will be one of those key goals and the University will need to achieve additional non-government sources for this,” commented Prof McGrath.

Given Professor McGrath’s vast experience in medical education and research across the spectrum, this places him in the right position to guide and share his knowledge in this area for the



Australian academic and FNU Council member,
Professor Barry McGrath.

future growth and development in Fiji.

“As a medical academic with extensive experience at Monash University and with postgraduate medical education in Australia I feel that medical education, research and leadership are the main areas in which I can contribute,” he said.

“The Fiji National University is young but the core Medical Faculty is well established and very well respected in the region. It will be exciting to participate as a member of the Council.”

A full-time clinical academic at Monash University, in 2000 Prof McGrath was appointed the first Chair of Vascular Medicine in Australia. Research interests include hypertension, vascular disease and heart failure. He has supervised 11 PhD students (5 became Professors in their fields in Australia, 2 overseas Professors), and 10 postdoctoral research fellows (8 internationals from Japan, France, China). Two long-time research assistants have become Professors in Australia. He is author or co-author of 6 books, 11 book chapters, 226 papers in referred journals and more than 250 abstracts. He has been invited plenary speaker in international meetings in the UK, France, Japan, China, South Africa.

Professor McGrath chaired the Postgraduate Medical Council of Victoria (1999-2004) and the Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils of Australia (2005-7); he oversaw the development of National Training and Assessment Guidelines, the Australian National Curriculum Framework for Prevocational Doctors, a National Accreditation Network and, with Jag Singh, a national program of Professional Development for Registrars.

He had a key role in workplace-based assessment programs for International Medical Graduates. Education reviews include the Masters of Medicine Program for USP. In 2007 he received the Geoffrey Marel medal for postgraduate medical education in Australia. He is Deputy Chair of the Australian Medical Council (AMC) Assessment Committee and Chair of the Clinical Assessment Panel (2015-19) overseeing the implementation and quality improvements to the AMC examinations at the National Test Centre in Melbourne, a world-class facility which collaborates with equivalent bodies in UK, Canada and USA.



(L-R) Babu Indrashekhar Singh, FNU VC Prof Nigel Healey, Australian academic and FNU Council member Prof Barry McGrath and Raymond Prasad.