

Research in progress for a revolutionary Mobile App

The Fiji National University's (FNU) College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) is working with Texas A&M University and the New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM) on a research to develop a groundbreaking mobile guideline application to assist nurses in identifying patients with risk of depression and suicide (mental health patients).

The ongoing research, in its final stages, is expected to be completed by the end of July 2019, with new phase beginning in early 2020, says NYAM's Director and Senior Research Scientist, Dr Vimla Patel.

"The mobile application will assist nurses in Fiji and the region in early detection of patients that require mental health diagnosis at the different stages of risks."



NYAM's Director and Senior Research Scientist, Dr Vimla Patel, delivers her presentation update.

"It (mobile app) will also help eliminate human error normally made during calculations using paper based guidelines," Dr Patel said.

According to her, the research on the mobile application was conducted in Fiji working with 40 nurses, with funding assistance from United States' National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

The School of Medical Sciences at CMNHS is spearheading this research.

The Head of School, Dr Odille Chang, said the app would be used by public health nurses to screen for suicide risk and depression.

Giving an update on the app, Dr Chang said: "so far, screening tools for depression and suicide have been developed and being used in laboratory setting using case scenarios that have been tested by nurses".

"This research is important because we hope it will improve the detection and treatment of depression and reduce suicide risk. It will also help nurses identify patients with mental health issues by reducing errors and maintaining patient safety."

"This project will end by July 31, 2019 and we have applied for another grant for the implementation of the app," Dr Chang highlighted.

While acknowledging the support of the College Dean-Dr William May, for encouraging Schools to participate in research, Dr Chang also commended the NIMH for their funding assistance.



NYAM's Dr Vimla Patel (sitting left), Head of Medical Sciences Dr Odille Chang (standing left), Associate Dean Research Dr Donald Wilson (standing right) with their team members.